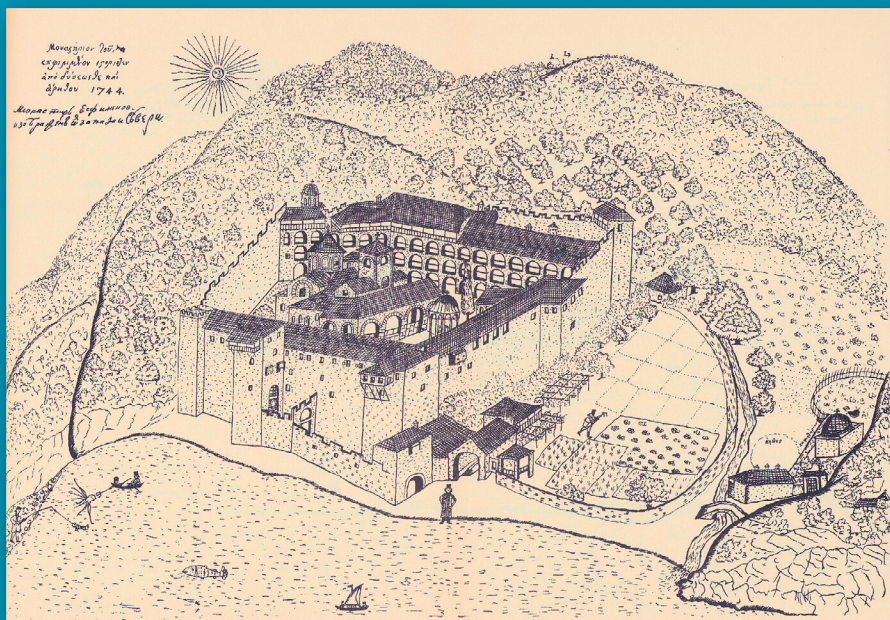


Medieval Mount Athos between Wealth and Poverty

Edited by
Zachary Chitwood



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Medieval Mount Athos between Wealth and Poverty

The Medieval Mediterranean

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Introduction

Zachary Chitwood

“Our fate is that of the economy (*Die Wirtschaft ist unser Schicksal*)”—this succinct aphorism, uttered by Walther Rathenau a century ago to emphasize the profound impact that economic developments could have upon politics, is a truism that can be profitably applied to many different historical contexts. While this quote is normally invoked to describe the relationship between the state and the economy, long-term economic trends are no less relevant for non-state actors. For the specific historical context described in this collective volume—Mount Athos over the course of the Middle Ages—the economy of this monastic republic had profound implications on its social structure, cultural life and, not least of all, the type of monasticism that could be practiced there.

Wealth and poverty: it is between these two poles that the history of Mount Athos and its monastic communities have often fluctuated. These two extremes could be expressed in a variety of senses: the actual property (or lack thereof) or the ‘net worth’ of a monastery or individual monk; but also of ideals, between Apostolic Poverty and abundance. In addition, the question of monastic property on the Holy Mountain also had important implications for what sort of monastic life was practiced: a hermit might legitimately possess a few meagre items for his own use, while a monk at a communal monastery could not do so, even if his institution was wealthy.

1 Mount Athos and the Debate about (Landed) Wealth

The juxtaposition between wealth and poverty can be represented in the Hagiorite context via the persons of Peter the Athonite (8th–9th century) and Athanasios the Athonite (925/930–997/1000): the former seen as the Holy Mountain’s first monk, who reputedly lived in solitude on Athos for five decades, the latter the principal proponent of communal monasticism and founder of the Great Lavra. Peter the Athonite, a legendary figure whose life was strung together from a number of hagiographic works, represented the hermit ideal, including the virtue of Apostolic Poverty.¹ The first text to describe

1 On Peter the Athonite, see in particular his entry in the *PmbZ*, no. 6080/corr., no. 26427.

Peter the Athonite, a *kanon* ascribed to Joseph the Hymnographer, also mentioned his poverty: “Of divine blessedness/ you are truly worthy, pious Peter,/ becoming destitute willingly,/ and persevering, o wise one,/ in mourning,/ you became meek,/ and inherited/ the land of the meek.”² Peter’s legend, which represented the eremitic ideal of absolute poverty, would remain a reference point for debates about monastic wealth over the following centuries on Athos.³

By contrast, one of the principal objections to Athanasios the Athonite’s founding of the Great Lavra in the 960s and the increasing prominence of communal monasticism upon the Holy Mountain thereafter was that he had upset the system of monastic poverty practiced by the communities of hermits there.⁴ After the murder of Athanasios’ imperial patron, Nikephoros II Phokas (r. 963–969), these hermit communities attempted to turn back the clock, as it were, to the days when the Holy Mountain’s ascetics had, as they saw it, lived in poverty. According to Athanasios’ *vita*, the devil moved the Hagiorite elders to action by claiming that the saint “[had] erected luxurious buildings and [had] constructed churches and harbors, and channeled streams of water and bought teams of oxen, and [...] already transformed the Mountain into a

The best overview of the complex source material on this Athonite saint remains that of Denise Papachryssanthou, “La Vie ancienne de saint Pierre l’Athonite. Date, composition et valeur historique,” *AB* 92 (1974), 19–61. Since the publication of the *PmbZ*, a number of smaller studies on Peter have appeared, including: Stephanos Euthymiades, “Πέτρος ὁ Ἀθωνίτης (9^{ος} αἰ.),” in *Τὸν ἐν Ἀθῶν Ἀγίων ὁ Χορός. Ἀγιορειτικὸν Πανάγιον*, [The choir of the Athonite saints. Hagiorite Panagion], eds. Symeon Paschalides and Demosthenes Kaklamanos (Thessaloniki, 2013), pp. 118–124; Anastasios Nikopoulos “Πέτρος ὁ Ἀθωνίτης-Ἡ τεκμηρίωση του πρώτου μοναχισμού και των νομικῶν θεσμῶν στον αρχαῖό Ἀθῶνα [Peter the Athonite- the documentation of early monasticism and of legal customs on early Athos],” *ΚΟΣΜΟΣ* 6 (2019): 295–338; idem, *Ἡ Διάπλαση του Αρχαίου Καθεστώτος του Αγίου Όρους: Ἡ Βυζαντινὴ Περίοδος (8ος—αρχές 15ου αἰ.)* [The Formation of the ancient regime of Mount Athos: The Byzantine Period (8th–early 15th c.)], (*Hagioreitika analecta*) 1 (Thessaloniki, 2021), pp. 67–75. Also noteworthy is the annotated translation by Antonio Rigo of the life into Italian: Antonio Rigo, *Alle origini dell’Athos: la vita di Pietro l’Athonita. Nicola della Santa Montagna* (Mangano, 1999).

- 2 *Kanon for Peter the Athonite*, ed. Denise Papachryssanthou, “L’office ancien de Pierre l’Athonite,” *AB* 88 (1970), 39–40: Μακαρισμοῦ τοῦ θεϊκοῦ / ἡξιώθης ἀληθῶς, Πέτρε θεόφρον, / ἔκουσίως πτωχεύσας, / καὶ ἐπιμόνως, σοφέ, / πενήθης, / καὶ πρᾶος γενόμενος, / καὶ κληρονομήσας / τὴν γῆν τὴν τῶν πραέων.
- 3 The Hesychast saint Gregory Palamas wrote a new version of his life in the 14th century: Antonio Rigo, “La Vita di Pietro l’Athonita (BHG 1506) scritta da Gregorio Palama,” *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici* 32 (1995), 179–190; Mihail Mitrea, “‘Old Wine in New Bottles’? Gregory Palamas’ Logos on Saint Peter of Athos (BHG 1506),” *BMGS* 40 (2016), 243–263.
- 4 On the biography of Athanasios the Athonite, see *PmbZ*, no. 20670.

worldly place.”⁵ He had, quite literally, turned the Holy Mountain into the world (*kosmos*): he had, in effect, secularized it.

Though Athanasios preserved parts of the eremitical regime within his Great Lavra, and hermits and semi-cenobitic forms of monastic life would play an important role upon Athos during the Middle Ages and thereafter, from the end of the 10th century onward it is the image of the great cenobitic monasteries, such as Lavra, Iviron, and Vatopedi, which loom largest in the Athonite documentation and scholarship. These institutions became important economic players in their own right. Yet though the debate about the Holy Mountain's relationship to land and wealth grew quieter, it did not die.

In the 11th and 12th centuries discussions about monastic wealth in Byzantium do not seem to have touched upon the Athonite context, at least not directly. In the late 12th century Eustathios of Thessalonike in his tract on the reform of monasticism criticized the unsavory methods by which monks of his diocese convinced locals, both rich and poor, to donate property to them.⁶ For Eustathios, the truly exemplary monasteries were those of the capital, but his critique was focused on the intellectual and moral level of the monastic communities of his see. By contrast, he seems to have seen no problem with monastic wealth *per se*.

During the Hesychast controversy of the mid-14th century, in which Athos played a leading role, monastic wealth does not seem to have been a major issue. One might certainly read between the lines of the claim supposedly made by Nikephoros Gregoras in one of his lost *Antirrhetika*, quoted by Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos in his *History*, that the monks of Athos “ate more than pigs and drank more than elephants.”⁷ While Gregoras' critique of the Athonite monks was directed at what he perceived to be their faulty Palamite theology and moral laxity, his criticism touched a nerve which seems to have forced Hagiorite apologists to defend their way of life more broadly, by offering a rationale for their great wealth.

5 *Life of Athanasios of Athos, Version B*, ed. and trans. Richard H. Greenfield and Alice-Mary Talbot, *Holy Men of Mount Athos*, (Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library) 40 (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England, 2016), pp. 240 (Greek text), 241 (English translation).

6 Eustathios of Thessalonike, *De emendanda vita monachica* §120–123, ed. Karin Metzler, (CFHB) 45 (Berlin, 2006), pp. 132–138. The unscrupulous methods of acquiring monastic property described by Eustathios are analyzed, including a long English translation of some of the text, in Peter Charanis, “The Monastic Properties and the State in the Byzantine Empire”, *DOP* 4 (1948), 85–87.

7 John VI Kantakouzenos, *History* IV.24, ed. Ludwig Schopen, *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris Historiarum*, (Corpus scriptorum historiae byzantinae) 2, 12–13, 3 vols (Bonn, 1828–1832), 3:173, line 12 to 3:174, line 3: “ἐσθίουσι γὰρ” φησιν “ὑπὲρ χοίρους, καὶ πίνουσιν ὑπὲρ ἐλέφαντας (...).”

These concerns were voiced by the former Lavriote monk Patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos (r. 1353–1354/6; 1364–1376) in defense of Athonite practices in one of his twelve *Antirrhetika* written as a response to Gregoras' polemics:

Let anyone investigating the [affairs] of the wondrous men there [on Athos] and distinguishing precisely their charitable community in all respects observe with me its hospitality, brotherly love, care for the sick, zeal, and manifold consideration for the poor and destitute, the reception of strangers with the greatest honor and kindness, those both by land and by sea brought to them at any time and weather, so that they take pains not only for shared things, but they also marvelously give away that of which they very much require to the one calling out in need, not to Greeks and related peoples alone, but indeed to barbarians and those severed from us long ago in thought and deed. And not only to them alone, but also to the unbelievers themselves, I mean those who do not know Christ, and not because of fear, as one might say, of the overhanging sword, and their madness directed against us.

How is this so? They often receive those who are shipwrecked by the waves, by unseen rocks, or at the same time those fleeing the ship and the sword of pursuers, and not only do they never refuse to host some enemy or hostile person, but during a storm they offer provisions, clothes, and shelter in abundance, then also repairs of their boats, both offering their own contributions as well as their own hands and labor. And if it happens that they do not have something because they recently gave away their own possessions, then in all cases they give abundantly from the provisions of what is there, just as if they were fathers and guardians, and thus singing and clapping they send them homeward. That those blessed ones are alone the foremost laborers of the Lordly commandment of all men today, "Give to everyone who asks you,"⁸ explicitly commanding to everyone, and only those God-loving fathers, by the imitation of divine mercy, have become mercy according to the passage "He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."^{9,10}

8 Luke 6:30.

9 Matthew 5:45.

10 Philotheos Kokkinos, *Antirrhetika*, no. 12, lines 156–184, ed. Demetrios B. Kaïmakes, Φιλοθέου Κοκκίνου δογματικά ἔργα. Μέρος α', (Thessalonikeis Vyzantinoi Sungrapheis) 3

This sort of faith-blind hospitality, Kokkinos goes on, was restricted to the communal monasteries on Athos. What, then, of hermits? They were, according to the patriarch, “nourished by the mountains” (*oresitrophoi*), akin to birds and animals in their way of life.¹¹ Their loneliness (*monosis*), solitude (*eremia*), poverty (*aktesia*), and lack of nourishment (*atrophia*) were worthy of amazement and rendered them practically “bodyless” (*asomatoi*).¹² What Kokkinos did not explicitly state but can be deduced from his description of the hermits is that not only were these ascetics untouched by Gregoras’ accusations of Athonite moral laxity, but that they lived in such poverty that the sort of generous charity practiced by the communal monasteries to visitors would hardly have been possible.

This mid-14th century discussion about the character of Athonite monasticism and its relation to wealth and poverty would play an important role some two centuries later in a completely different context, namely that of early modern Muscovy. The rapidly increasing wealth and influence of the great Russian monasteries led to acrimonious debates on monastic landholding in the first half of the 16th century, ultimately culminating in the “One Hundred Chapters” or Stoglav Synod held at Moscow in 1551. Traditional scholarship identified two

(Thessalonike, 1983), pp. 483–484: Καὶ ὅρα μοι πᾶς τις ὁ τὰ τῶν θαυμασίων ἐκείνων ἀνδρῶν περιεργαζόμενος καὶ φιλοκρινῶν τὸ κοινωνικὸν αὐτῶν ἐν ἅπασι καὶ φιλόλληλον, τὴν φιλοξενίαν, τὴν φιλαδελφίαν, τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν τῶν νοσούντων, τὴν περὶ τοὺς πτωχοὺς τε καὶ ἀπόρους σπουδὴν καὶ παντοδαπὴν προμήθειαν, τὴν τῶν ξένων μετὰ τῆς ἄκρας φιλοτιμίας ὑποδοχὴν καὶ φιλοφροσύνην, ὅσοι τε διὰ ξηρᾶς καὶ ὅσοι διὰ θαλάττης παρ’ ἐκείνοις κατὰγονται παρὰ πάντα καιρὸν τε καὶ χρόνον, ὅπως οὐ κοινὰ μόνον ποιοῦνται τὰ ὄντα, ἀλλ’ ἔστιν οὐ καὶ τῶν ἀναγκαίων ἐκείνοις ἐξίστανται θαυμαστώως ἐν τῇ τῆς χρείας καλοῦντι, οὐχ Ἑλλήσι μόνον ἀνδράσι καὶ ὁμοφύλοις, ἀλλὰ καὶ Βαρβάρους ἀκριβῶς καὶ τῶν καθ’ ἡμᾶς ἱερῶν ἀπερρωγόσι πάλαι καὶ ἔργοις καὶ λόγοις· καὶ οὐ τοῦτο γε μόνους, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἀπίστοις αὐτοῖς φημι καὶ Χριστὸν ἀγνοοῦσιν, οὐ διὰ φόβον ὡς ἂν εἴποι τις καὶ τὸ ἐπικείμενον ξίφος, καὶ τὴν μανίαν τὴν καθ’ ἡμῶν.

Πῶς γάρ; Οἱ καὶ καταγνύντας ἐκείνους τὰ σκάφη πολλάκις δεχόμενοι τοῖς κύμασι, καὶ τῶν πετρῶν ταῖς ὑφάλοις, ἣ καὶ τὰς ναῦς ὁμοῦ φεύγοντας καὶ τὸ ξίφος τῶν ἐπιόντων, οὐ μόνον οὐκ ἐχθρόν τι καὶ πολέμιον ἐνεδείξαντο πώποτε, ἀλλὰ καὶ τροφὰς καὶ ὑποδήματα καὶ οἰκήσεις ὥρα χειμῶνος παρέσχον ἐπὶ μακρὸν, εἴτα καὶ τὰ πεπονηκότα τῶν πλοίων ἐκείνοις καὶ ἀναλώμασιν ἀσκοῦμενοι καὶ χερσὶ καὶ πόνοις ἰδίοις· ἔστι δ’ ὅτε καὶ μὴ ἔχουσι τῶν νεῶν τῶν οἰκείων διδόντες, εἴτ’ ἐπὶ πᾶσι καὶ τῶν ἐφοδίων ὥσανεῖ τινες πατέρες καὶ φροντιστὰ δαψιλῶς ἐκ τῶν ἐνόντων μεταδιδόντες, οὕτω παιανίζοντάς τε καὶ κροτοῦντας ἐκπέμπουσιν οἴκαδε. Ὡς ἐκείνους εἶναι τοὺς μακαρίους καὶ μόνους τῆς δεσποτικῆς ἐντολῆς ἄκρους ἐργάτας ἐξ ἅρα τῶν νῦν ὄντων πάντων ἀνθρώπων, “παντὶ τῷ αἰτοῦντί σε δίδου”, διαρρήδην οὕτως παντὶ κελευούσης, καὶ μόνους τοὺς θεοφιλεῖς τούτους, κατὰ μίμησιν ἐλεῖν θείαν, καὶ οἰκτίρμονας μόνους πεφυκέναι κατ’ ἐκείνους καθόσον οἶόν τε, “ὅς ἀνατέλλει τὸν ἥλιον αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ πονηροὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς, καὶ βρέχει ἐπὶ δικαίους καὶ ἀδίκους”.

11 Philotheos Kokkinos, *Antirrhetika*, no. 12, lines 189–190, p. 484.

12 Philotheos Kokkinos, *Antirrhetika*, no. 12, lines 191–192, p. 484.

diametrically-opposed ideological camps in this debate, that of the 'Possessors' (who championed the right of monastic landholding of the great monasteries) and of the 'Non-Possessors' (who favored less economically-intensive forms of monastic life, such as that of hermitages and *sketai*).¹³ However, in the light of newer research it is no longer possible to draw a clear line between the two parties, who collaborated with each other in certain areas, such as in the persecution of heretics.¹⁴

Mount Athos and the economy of its monasteries functioned as a sort of touchstone in this debate, not only because of its prominence as the preeminent monastic center in the Orthodox world, but also because many of the key figures in this discussion had themselves been to Athos, either as visitors like Nil Sorskii or even as longtime residents like the famed Makim (Maximos) Grek. Since the Holy Mountain itself offered no unitary economic model for the financing of monasteries, it is not surprising that Athonite precedents were invoked both for and against monasteries owning villages, for instance.¹⁵ Given the changing evaluation of the debate between the 'Possessors' and 'Non-Possessors,' it would be worth reexamining the influence of Athonite ideas about wealth and poverty with the insights of newer research, such as the articles presented in the present volume.

2 Poverty in the Athonite Tradition

It might strike the reader as surprising that the topic of poverty, for a concept that is included in the title of this book, is so rarely discussed in this volume's contributions. This fact can be partially explained by the nature of the surviving documentation for medieval Mount Athos: the Athonite archives, after all, have been primarily examined, including in this edited volume, as attestations of monastic wealth, especially through the acquisition of new properties by donation, endowment, and purchase. Yet every increase in a monastery's

13 Sergei Hackel, "Late Medieval Russia: The Possessors and the Nonpossessors," in *Christian Spirituality 2. High Middle Ages and Reformation*, ed. Jill Raitt, (World Spirituality) 17 (New York, 1988), pp. 223–235; Donald Ostrowski, "Church Polemics and Monastic Land Acquisition in Sixteenth-Century Muscovy," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 64 (1986), 355–379.

14 David Goldfrank, "The Role and Image of Athos in Muscovite Monastic Life of the Late 15th and Early 16th Centuries," in *Monastic Traditions: Selected Proceedings of the Fourth International Hilandar Conference (The Ohio State University, 14–15 August 1998)*, eds. Charles Gribble and Predrag Matejic (Bloomington, Indiana, 2003), esp. pp. 114–116.

15 Goldfrank, "Role and Image of Athos," p. 125.

endowment represented a loss in someone else's fortune, and the Athonite archives tell us quite a bit not only about economic expansion, but also financial failure.

Fairly standard, almost to the point of constituting a *topos*, are expressions of monastic poverty when monks sought new patrons for their communities: thus, the *vita* of Dionysios, the eponymous 14th-century founder of Dionysiou, relates that "as has been stated, with the other brothers he lived in extreme poverty."¹⁶ Though monks were supposed to be poor at an individual level, extreme destitution might distract them from contemplation, the liturgy, and prayer. Poverty, moreover, could lead to real temporal harm. Among the first things that incipient or renewed monastic communities sought on Mount Athos, especially from the 14th century onwards, were walls and especially a tower, in order to protect their monasteries from the incursions of corsairs. Monks too poor to afford such basic defenses were at risk of being captured and sold into slavery and, without a wealthy monastery or benefactor to ransom them, had little chance of escaping this fate once brought into it.

Athos itself was filled with the ruins of abandoned hermitages and monasteries, testaments to the vicissitudes of fortune. Hermitages in particular were less able than the large monasteries to survive a substantial financial blow or succession crisis. The Athonite documentation contains numerous examples of individual monks who, worried about the future of their hermitages, specifically subordinated them to larger foundations. This process is pithily expressed in a document of March 1347 whereby the *protos* Niphon ceded the hermitage of Kaletze to Vatopedi: "And if a man already coming into old age is in need of support, and both an ancient dwelling and city look to stretch out to the powerful hand, and every pressing need inclines towards great help, is it any wonder if some of the hermitages subject to the Mese, which both have been wasted away by much time and almost ruined by the constant incursions of the barbarians, are subordinated to one of the large monasteries, thereby exchanging obedience for salvation?"¹⁷ The Athonite central administration, in the person of the *protos* and council of abbots, was evidently keen on restoring these abandoned foundations.

16 *Life of Dionysios of Athos* § 37, lines 470–471, ed. Basileios Laourdas, "Μητροφάνους, βίος τοῦ ὁσίου Διονυσίου τοῦ Ἀθωνίτου [The vita of Saint Dionysios the Athonite by Metrophanes]," *Ἀρχαῖον Πόντου* 21 (1956), 58.

17 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 2, no. 94, lines 1–5, ed. Jacques Lefort et al., (*ArchAth*) 22 (Paris, 2006), p. 204: Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἄν(θρωπ)ος πρὸς γῆρας ἤδη κλίνων τοῦ ὑπερείδοντος δεῖται, καὶ οἰκία καὶ πόλις γεγηρακυῖα πρὸς τὸν δυνάμενον χεῖρα ὀρέγειν ὀρᾷ, καὶ πᾶν τὸ ἐνδεῶς ἔχον πρὸς τὸ δυνάμενον βοηθεῖν ἐπείγεται, τί θαυμαστόν εἰ καὶ τινα τῶν [...] ὑποκειμένων τῇ Μέσῃ κελλίων, ἅμα μ(έν)

Poverty drove not only fellow monks to surrender their hermitages and monasteries to better endowed confreres, but laypeople as well.¹⁸ As one example, we learn from a document dated to September 1420, in which a Church of the 40 Martyrs in Thessalonike was donated to Dionysiou, about the lamentable history of the church's owner, Maria Hagioreitissa.¹⁹ The difficult events of her time had reduced her from wealth (*ploutos*) to penury (*endeia*), so that she was unable to attend to the maintenance of the church. Over the course of time it had deteriorated to such a state as to be on the brink of collapse, and it was used as a rubbish heap (*aphodeuterion*) by the city's inhabitants. In exchange for the abbot Daniel's promise to restore the church, to, if possible, create a monastery, and to both inscribe the names of herself and her parents in the commemorative list of Dionysiou as well to mention them during the liturgy, she agreed to grant the ruined church and its attendant buildings and properties to Dionysiou.

The 'poor' as a category are occasionally mentioned as the object of distributions in testaments transmitted by Athonite archives,²⁰ but a more interesting aspect of the understanding of the poor as a social group is to be found in the post-Byzantine period, when the legality of the monasteries' extensive land-holdings under the conception of a foundation (Arabic *waqf*; Turkish *vakıf*) was called into question during the so-called Confiscation Affair of 1568–1569. One of the main sticking points from the standpoint of Muslim jurists was the fact that churches could not be the beneficiaries of a foundation under the Hanafi interpretation of Islamic law. As a result, Orthodox monasteries in the European half of the Ottoman Empire were forced to redefine the purpose of the pious endowments that had been granted to them in centuries past, so that they were to benefit the monks, travelers, the indigent, or fountains and bridges (infrastructure of use for the general public).

Even though this redefinition of the purpose of endowments to Orthodox monasteries in the Ottoman Empire was in essence a legal trick in order to allow the monks to continue to hold landed property, it emphasized an

τῷ πολλῷ χρόνῳ διαρρυνέντα ἅμα (δὲ) τῇ συνεχεῖ τῶν βαρβάρων ἐφόδῳ ἀνάστατα μικροῦ γεγονότα, ὑπὸ τινὰ τῶν μεγάλων τελέσειε μονῶν, ὑποταγὴν σ(ωτη)ρί(ας) ἀνταλλαξάμενα;

18 For examples of this phenomenon in the Palaiologan period, see Charanis, "Monastic Properties," 102–103.

19 *Actes d'Dionysiou*, no. 19, ed. Nicholas Oikonomidès, (ArchAth) 4 (Paris, 1968), pp. 112–114.

20 For instance, in the testament of the nun Maria from the year 1098, see "The Testament of the Nun Maria (Kale): Commemorative Dining, *memoria* and Servitude in Byzantium at the Time of the First Crusade," *Endowment Studies* 7/2 (2023), 109–110; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1163/24685968-20230001>.

aspect of their activities that had very much been downplayed in the Byzantine period: as institutions to alleviate poverty and aid travelers. In addition to this broader redefinition, the legal discussion about the validity of Christian endowments also forced the monks to internal distinctions between ‘rich’ and ‘poor’ monks. Thus, as Eugenia Kermeli has noted on the basis of an undated legal decision of the 16th-century Hanafi jurist Ebû’s-Su’ûd discussing how monks might dispose of their property after their death: “But, then, Ebû’s-Su’ûd specifies that in a case where there are no heirs alive, all the estate can be bequeathed to monks living in the monastery, regardless of whether they are rich or poor, but on the condition that they are a **limited and well defined group**. If they are a large group he continues the bequest should be made to the **poor among them**.”²¹ In short, Hanafi jurisprudence led to major changes in the understanding of the relationship between monasticism and poverty in the mid-16th century: not only were the Athonite monasteries forced to emphasize their function as providers of charity in order to keep their endowments, but internal distinctions within monasteries between ‘rich’ and ‘poor’ monks had to be drawn.

3 Athonite Wealth and Poverty in Scholarship

In its most senior modern form, the analysis of the economic role of monasteries in the Byzantine Empire extends back to Peter Charanis’ influential article “The Monastic Properties and the State in the Byzantine Empire.”²² Very much in the spirit of the supposed ‘Byzantine Feudalism’ popular with the leading scholars of his day, Charanis saw in the accumulation of great wealth by Byzantine monasteries a principal cause of the decline of the free rural peasantry and also the Byzantine state which depended on it, with the Athonite monasteries playing a leading role in this dynamic. Though the ‘Charanis Thesis’ lost much of its resonance when the idea of Byzantine Feudalism which inspired it fell out of favor, its essence—that the accumulation of excessive wealth by religious institutions can threaten the well-being of the state—has never been directly and finally refuted by Byzantinists.²³ Moreover, the societal impact of the acquisition of land by religious institutions continues

21 Eugenia Kermeli, “The Confiscation and Repossession of Monastic Properties in Mount Athos and Patmos Monasteries, 1568–1570,” *Bulgarian Historical Review* 28/3–4 (2000), 45.

22 Charanis, “Monastic Properties.”

23 On the afterlife of the Charanis Thesis, see John Thomas, “Exkurs: The Charanis Thesis

to attract the attention of historians in related fields, as evidenced by Ian Wood's new monograph on the Church's economic rise in the Early Middle Ages.²⁴

In any case, the evidence of the Athonite archives—by far the richest source of documentation for economic activity from the territories of the Byzantine Empire—has played a key role in the economic turn in Byzantine Studies.²⁵ Unlike Charanis, more recent evaluations of the activity of large monasteries have given the economic contributions of these actors a favorable verdict, as motors of trade and production.²⁶ This 'monastic economy,' in the sense of monasteries as large-scale economic actors, has thus already been explored, at least to a degree.

For Athos in particular, beyond the considerable wealth of its great monasteries, its role as a site of investment, particular in the form of life annuities or pensions (so-called *adelphata*), has been a topic of research for several decades.²⁷ Such investments were probably already pioneered in the 11th century, but they are best attested on Athos in the 14th and 15th centuries.²⁸ By the last centuries of the Byzantine Empire's existence, it is clear that Athos'

Revisited," in *Stiftung und Staat im Mittelalter. Eine byzantinisch-lateinische Quellenanthologie in komparatistischer Perspektive*, eds. Tim Geelhaar and John Thomas, (Stiftungsgeschichten) 6 (Berlin, 2011), pp. 57–68.

24 Ian Wood, *The Christian Economy of the Early Medieval West: Towards a Temple Society* (Brooklyn, NY, 2022).

25 See now in particular Olivier Delouis and Kostis Smyrlis (eds.), *Lire les Archives de l'Athos*, (TM) 23/2 (Paris, 2019); other works include: Alan Harvey, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine empire, 900–1200* (Cambridge, 1989); Michel Kaplan, *Les hommes et la terre à Byzance du 6e au 12e siècle: propriété et exploitation du sol*, (Publications de la Sorbonne; Série Byzantina Sorbonensia) 10 (Paris, 1992); Raúl Estangüi Gómez, *Byzance face aux Ottomans: exercice du pouvoir et contrôle du territoire sous les derniers Paléologues (milieu 14e – milieu 15e siècle)*, (Publications de la Sorbonne; Série Byzantina Sorbonensia) 28 (Paris, 2014).

26 For Byzantium, see in particular Kostis Smyrlis, *La fortune des grands monastères byzantins (fin du 10e – milieu du 15e siècle)*, (Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance) 21 (Paris 2006); for a recent interdisciplinary view, with many case-studies of Orthodox monasteries, see Roumen Avramovet et al. (eds.), *Monastic Economy Across Time: Wealth Management, Patterns and Trends* (Sofia, 2021).

27 The most recent study of which is Raúl Estangüi Gómez, "Un retiro para privilegiados: el Monte Athos a finales del siglo XIV. La compra de pensiones vitalicias," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 35/1 (2005), 359–384.

28 Zachary Chitwood, "A New Interpretation of the *Meditatio de nudis pactis*," in *Droit et société à byzance et dans sa sphère d'influence. Actes du colloque international Droit et société au Moyen Âge Maison de la recherche de la Sorbonne Université 12 et 13 septembre 2019*, eds. Béatrice Caseau and Charis Messis, (Dossiers Byzantins) 21 (Paris, 2022), pp. 253–265.

monasteries served as investments of last resort for the Orthodox Christian aristocracy in the Balkans: a phenomenon famously termed ‘Switzerland Syndrome’ by Nicolas Oikonomides.²⁹

To be sure, there exists an enormous amount of scholarship on Mount Athos, with much having appeared in the 60 years since Irénée Doens’ attempt at a comprehensive bibliography on the Holy Mountain, written in 1963 on the occasion of a conference celebrating the millenary of the founding of the Great Lavra.³⁰ This scholarship has touched upon various aspects of economic life, including trade,³¹ donative practices,³² water/sea rights,³³ monasteries and hermitages as property,³⁴ among other topics. However, while studies on economy and society in Late Byzantium in particular almost inevitably touch upon Athonite material, there is no monograph or edited volume specifically dedicated to the relationship between wealth and the Holy Mountain.

4 The Contribution of the Present Volume

In order to expand upon these aspects of the Athonite monastic economy, as well as to explore new, hitherto-overlooked aspects of this phenomenon,

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- 29 Nicolas A. Oikonomides, “Patronage in Palaiologan Mt Athos,” in *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism. Papers from the Twenty-Eighth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, March, 1994*, eds. Anthony Bryer and Mary Cunningham, (Publications; Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies) 4 (Aldershot, 1994), pp. 99–111.
- 30 Irénée Doens, “Bibliographie de la sainte montagne de l’Athos,” in *Le Millénaire du Mont Athos (963–1963): Etudes et Mélanges, Actes du “Convegno internazionale di studio” à la “Fondazione Giorgio Cini” (3–6 septembre 1963) à Venise*, 2 vols (Venice, 1963–1964), 2:337–495.
- 31 Mirjana Živojinovic, “The Trade of Mount Athos Monasteries,” *ZRV* 29/30 (1991), 101–116.
- 32 Rosemary Morris, “Reciprocal Gifts on Mount Athos in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries,” in *The Languages of the Gift in the Early Middle Ages*, eds. Wendy Davies and Paul Fouracre (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 171–192; Olivier Delouis, “Distraire l’héritage: note sur monastères et héritiers dans les archives de l’Athos,” in *Lire les Archives de l’Athos*, eds. Olivier Delouis and Kostis Smyrliis, (TM) 23/2 (Paris, 2019), pp. 341–356.
- 33 Rosemary Morris, “The ‘Life Aquatic’ on Athos in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries,” in *Italy and Early Medieval Europe: Papers for Chris Wickham*, eds. Ross Balzaretti, Julia Barrow and Patricia Skinner (Oxford, 2018), pp. 372–383.
- 34 Efi Ragia, “Μονές ως περιουσιακά στοιχεία: η περίπτωση του Αγίου Όρους (10ος–11ος αι.) [Monasteries as assets: The case of the Holy Mountain, 10th–11th centuries],” in *Αντιχρήστωρ, Τιμητικός Τόμος Σπύρου Ν. Τρωιάνου*, 2 vols (Athens, 2013), 2: 1511–1541. On the phenomenon of proprietary churches and monasteries in Byzantium, see Zachary Chitwood, “The Proprietary Church and Monastery in Byzantium and the Eastern Christian World,” *Viator* 47/3 (2016), 27–46.

Medieval Mount Athos between Wealth and Poverty has brought together 16 scholars from three fields (Byzantine Studies, Ottoman Studies and Digital Humanities) at different stages of their careers for an extended discussion of the relationship between the economy and Mount Athos. In doing so, they are continuing a strand of scholarship with deep roots, whose full implications, however, have not yet been exhaustively analyzed.

The contributors to *Medieval Mount Athos between Wealth and Poverty*, though building upon and nuancing this aforementioned tradition of research into the economic role of monasteries in Byzantium, will depart in three important respects from this body of work. This entails a shift of geographic perspective, of chronological coverage, and of understanding the economic function of monasteries. As such, this volume will present Mount Athos as a unique case-study which allows interesting insights into how a specific monastic milieu—albeit uniquely large and well-documented—developed within and interacted with the Eastern Mediterranean world writ large from the 9th to the 16th century, and in ways that have hitherto not been sufficiently appreciated by scholarship.

First of all, the traditional focus on the relationship between the (Byzantine) state and monasteries, while of course relevant for Mount Athos, does not pay due to the shifting political context over the course of the Holy Mountain's history. Though Mount Athos was founded during the medieval apogee of Byzantine political power, it was the focus of patronage from benefactors throughout the Orthodox world and enjoyed phases, even during the Middle Ages, of Bulgarian, Serbian, Latin Christian, and Ottoman preponderance. Moreover, shifting the perspective on Mount Athos' economic ties from Byzantium to the wider Orthodox world requires recognizing longstanding economic relationships that seem to defy the logic of geographic proximity.

Several articles in this volume demonstrate the at-times curious geographic patterns that emerged in the course of long-distance Athonite patronage. This conclusion is especially evident in the contribution of Apolon Tabuashvili and Vladimer Kekelia, which demonstrates the degree to which not merely the economic prosperity, but indeed the very survival of Iviron was due to benefactions of the Orthodox nobility of both Byzantium and the distant Caucasus. Another contribution, that of Mihai-D. Grigore, shows a connection between the intensive Athonite patronage activity of the voivodes of Moldavia and Wallachia and the strength of these rulers' claim to the throne: weaker claims were thereby compensated for with more grants to the Holy Mountain's monasteries. Finally, the article of Zachary Chitwood examines how Orthodox rulers chose a different mechanism for financing monasteries, that of annuity endowments, rather than granting them land. As the contents of the volume demonstrate, while the

Athonite monasteries understandably had an outsized economic role in neighboring Macedonia and in Constantinople, they also often enjoyed stronger economic ties to the distant Danubian principalities, Serbia, Trebizond or Georgia than to neighboring western Asia Minor.

Precisely measuring and tracking these distances as well as historical data more generally can be facilitated with software specifically designed for historians and archaeologists. OpenAtlas is one such software, and in their contribution the software engineers and digital humanists Stefan Eichert, Nina Richards, and Alexander Watzinger demonstrate the possibilities of using geographically-grounded databases for historical research.

Monasteries that survived over the long term rarely could rely on a steady stream of revenue, say from a stable landed endowment. Instead, the contributions presented here show the importance of short-term, massive inflows of money: this is true both for the annuity endowments of the 10th and 11th centuries, by which the Byzantine state financed monasticism more generally and Athos in particular with yearly subsidies, or the donations and endowments of the *Book of Commemorations* of Iviron Monastery, which documents the huge transfer of wealth to the monastery in the 11th and 12th centuries, that enabled the community to survive leaner times in the centuries that followed. Opportunism played a major role in the expansion of Athonite fortunes. Indeed, the contributions in this volume suggest that the accumulation of monastic wealth was characterized as much by punctuated equilibrium as by slow and steady evolution.

The diachronic coverage offered by the present volume offers a second major change of perspective for Mount Athos and the scholarship on the economic role of monasteries in the Eastern Mediterranean more generally. One aspect of this wider chronological view is to include at least the first century of Ottoman rule on Athos: this reflects a growing interest in the post-medieval fate of the Athonite monastic communities, in particular on the part of Ottomanists.³⁵ In

35 In this regard see especially the recent contribution of Elias Kolovos and Phokion Kotzageorgis, "Turco-Athonica: The Ottoman Archives of the Athonite Monasteries," in *Lire les Archives de l'Athos*, eds. Olivier Delouis and Kostis Smyrlis, (TM) 23/2 (Paris, 2019), pp. 641–658. The rapidly-shifting fortunes of the Athonite monasteries during the first phase of Ottoman rule are explored by Kostis Smyrlis, "Mount Athos in the Fifteenth Century: Crisis and the Beginning of Recovery," in *To Άγιον Όρος στο 15ο και 16ο αιώνα* [The Holy Mountain in the 15th and 16th centuries] (Thessaloniki, 2012), pp. 33–56; Elizabeth Zachariadou, "A Safe and Holy Mountain': Early Ottoman Athos," in *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism. Papers from the Twenty-Eighth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, March, 1994*, eds. Anthony Briar and Mary Cunningham, (Publications of the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies) 4 (Aldershot, 1996), pp. 127–132; eadem, "Mount

this sense the article of Vanessa R. de Obaldía on the early Ottoman documents from Athonite archives is a welcome edition to the volume. Another aspect is the balance between contributions that focus on short-term developments and those that sketch developments over the *longue durée*. To the former category belong the contributions of Kostis Smyrlis, who, unusually for Byzantine Studies, is able to examine in some detail the activity of the late 12th-century abbacy of Paul of Iviron, presenting, as it were, a case-study. Chronologically limited in scope are also the two contributions of Athonite *metochia* in Constantinople of Daniel Otlean and Nicholas Melvani, both of whom examine short periods of intensive Athonite presence in Constantinople.

Last but not least, the contributions in *Medieval Mount Athos between Wealth and Poverty* also suggest that the economic role of monasteries requires reconsideration. Scholarship is still strongly influenced by the paradigm of the wealthy monastery acquiring neighboring agricultural land and resources, a model which goes back to Enlightenment Era critiques of church and monastic wealth. Though the Athonite case does at times correspond with this model, the studies presented here suggest a much more nuanced picture of the economic role of monasteries.

Two contributions explore fundamental questions regarding the economic role of Athonite monasteries. In the first, that of Michel Kaplan, the question of why these monasteries were founded in the first place is asked, and, despite cases that were each different in their own way, a connection is established with the increasing aristocratization of Byzantine society in the 10th and 11th centuries. In the second, the contribution of Kirill A. Maksimovič, the regulations regarding monastic property in Byzantine church and canon law are examined, and in particular how they were implemented on the basis of the surviving documentation from Hilandar.

Three further contributions move beyond the traditional focus on land in monastic conceptions of wealth. Martina Filosa in her contribution demonstrates how lead seals can be used to learn more about monasteries by examining the sigillographic evidence for the Monastery of Lakape, an institution which is known almost exclusively from lead seals and a few sparse mentions in texts. The article of Zisis Melissakis focuses on Athonite manuscripts, examining not only their material value, but also their worth as symbolic capital. Apropos symbolic capital, on the basis of the *Book of Commemorations* Tinatin Chronz demonstrates how the monks of Iviron transmuted their monastery's

Athos and the Ottomans c. 1350–1550,” in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*. Vol. 5: *Eastern Christianity*, ed. Michael Angold (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 154–168.

spiritual renown, in the form of prayers and services for the dead, into money and land, in the form of gifts to the monastic community.

The innovative approach and eclectic specializations of the contributors to this volume do not allow for a purely chronological or thematic categorization of the articles. Even so, an attempt has been made to link contributions in a coherent and interesting way. In the first part, the role of Athonite *metochia*—dependencies of a large monastery—in the capital is examined. Scholars have only begun to recognize the importance of *metochia* relatively recently, and not only from an economic perspective.³⁶ The second part, by contrast, features three essays that explore fundamental questions about the founding and financing of monasteries on Athos, including the development of sovereign patronage in the form of annuities, the status of monastic landholding in Byzantine law and the rationale for founding monasteries.

The three contributions of the third part explore various aspects of economic activity of the Athonite monastery of Iviron on the basis of a unique source: the *Book of Commemorations* (*Agapes*) of Iviron, a commemorative list first written in the 11th century consisting of entries for donors, their gifts, and the memorial services to be undertaken on their behalf. The fourth part consists of two articles dedicated to the period of Ottoman rule on Athos, a hitherto neglected subject that is becoming the object of increasing scholarly attention. The fifth part contains three articles on the economic dimension of the material remains of Athonite monasteries, namely manuscripts and lead seals, as well as how the open-source software OpenAtlas, and explores how they might be of interest for historical research, including that of Mount Athos.

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36 Η εξακτίνωση του Αγίου Όρους στον Ορθόδοξο κόσμο: τα μετόχια. Πρακτικά του 9ου Επισημονικού Συνεδρίου [The Radiance of the Holy Mountain in the Orthodox World: The *methochia*. Proceedings of the 9th Scientific Conference] (Thessaloniki, 2015).

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PART 1

*Capital Connections: Athonite
metochia in Constantinople*



Athonite *metochia* in Constantinople (10th–12th Centuries)

Daniel Oltean

In Byzantine times, a *metochion* was a monastic dependency usually created with an economic purpose. In the case of urban *metochia*, they also had the role of supporting monks traveling to different destinations or coming to the cities to strengthen social and political relationships. The importance of these dependencies—including their economic value—cannot be underestimated.

At first glance, however, it seems that the Athonite monks had no great interest in organizing *metochia* in Constantinople before the Latin conquest of 1204. The evidence is scarce. The only specific information comes from the Georgian *Life* of George of Iviron, who died in 1065 at the *metochion* of his monastery in Constantinople. As for other Athonite foundations, their possible dependencies in the capital are not clearly mentioned in the sources.

Nevertheless, this silence has not prevented scholars from suggesting that Lavra and Amalfion also possessed such dependencies in the 10th and 11th centuries. As their arguments have not been unanimously accepted, I will discuss them here and show that, with time, a *metochion* could become an independent monastery. I will also argue that Xenophon, with a *pied-à-terre* in the capital in the late 11th century, must be included in this list, beside Iviron, Lavra, and Amalfion. The four sections dedicated to these Athonite monasteries are preceded by an attempt to better understand the life and organization of urban *metochia* in the period in question.

1 Monastic Dependencies in an Urban Context

Probably the best description of an urban monastic dependency before 1204 is that of Iviron's *metochion* in Thessalonike. According to a *praktikion* issued in 1104,¹ this *metochion*—in fact, an ancient monastery called ta Leontia and reorganized by Iviron—was situated inside the city; it owned a church, sev-

¹ *Actes d'Iviron*, 2, no. 52, ed. Jacques Lefort et al., (ArchAth) 16 (Paris, 1990), pp. 237–239, lines 327–384.

eral houses, courtyards, as well as an orchard. Four other monastic houses depended on it; one of them, dedicated to St Barbara, provided accommodation for 14 nuns.²

This wealthy dependency was, however, an unusual case. Three monastic *typika* from the 11th and 12th centuries suggest a different picture of the size and internal life of some Constantinopolitan *metochia*. One of these documents was written by Michael Attaleiates (d. around 1080) for the monastery of Christ Panoiktirmon.³ This religious foundation was initially considered a dependency of an almshouse (*ptochotropheion*) situated at Rhaidestos, present-day Tekirdağ, on the northern coast of the Sea of Marmara, 135 km west of Constantinople. Together, they formed an unusual institution; they had “one name” and were considered “a single poorhouse.”⁴ The Constantinopolitan dependency included two buildings and a small church dedicated to the Forerunner.⁵ Ruled first by a steward and an ecclesiarch, then by a superior, the five to seven monks who lived there had to ensure the daily psalmody and celebrations of mass in the church.⁶

The number of monks was limited to only three in the case of the *metochion* of St Stephen, a dependency of the Theotokos Kosmosoteira.⁷ This powerful

2 On this *metochion* see also Raymond Janin, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins* (Paris, 1975), pp. 394–395; Jacques Lefort, “Introduction,” in *Actes d'Iviron*, 1, ed. Jacques Lefort et al., (ArchAth) 14 (Paris, 1985), pp. 27–28; Jean-Pierre Grégois, “À propos du monastère du Prodrome à Thessalonique,” *Byz* 59 (1989), 78–87; Michel Kaplan, “L’implantation des monastères du mont Athos à Thessalonique, x^e – milieu du xiii^e siècle,” in *Villes méditerranéennes au Moyen Âge*, eds. Élisabeth Malamut and Mohamed Ouerfelli (Aix-en-Provence, 2004), pp. 135–146; Peter Soustal, *Makedonien, südlicher Teil*, (TIB) 11/1 (Vienna, 2022), pp. 168–169.

3 Raymond Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'Empire byzantin*, 1/3 = *Le siège de Constantinople et le Patriarcat œcuménique. Les églises et les monastères*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1969), p. 54; *Rule of Attaleiates*, ed. and trans. Paul Gautier, “La Diataxis de Michel Attaliatē,” *REB* 39 (1981), 5–143, trans. Alice-Mary Talbot, “Rule of Michael Attaleiates for his Almshouse in Rhaidestos and for the Monastery of Christ Panoiktirmon in Constantinople,” in *BMFD*, no. 19, 1:326–376.

4 *Rule of Attaleiates* 6, p. 29, trans. Talbot, pp. 336–337; *ibid.* 12, p. 39, trans. p. 340.

5 For a schematic reconstruction of the monastery’s buildings, see Simon Ellis, “The Middle Byzantine House and Family: A Reappraisal,” in *Approaches to the Byzantine Family*, eds. Leslie Brubaker and Shaun Tougher, (Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Studies) 14 (Farnham, 2013), pp. 260–262.

6 *Rule of Attaleiates* 6, 11–13, and 26–27, pp. 29, 37–39, and 57–59, trans. Talbot, pp. 336, 339–340, and 345–346.

7 Janin, *Constantinople*, pp. 472–473; *Typikon of the Theotokos Kosmosoteira*, ed. Georgios K. Papazoglou, *Τυπικόν Ισαακίου Αλεξίου Κομνηνού της Μονής Θεοτόκου της Κοσμοσωτείρας* (1151/52) (Komotini, 1994), trans. Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, “*Typikon of the Sebastokrator Isaac Komnenos for the Monastery of the Mother of God Kosmosoteira near Bera*,” in *BMFD*, no. 29, 2:782–858.

monastery, founded in 1151 in Thrace by Isaac Komnenos, son of Emperor Alexios I, needed a *metochion* in Constantinople to provide a place to stay for the monks traveling there. The dependency was organized in the Aurelianae quarter, near the monastery of the Theotokos Peribleptos. The monks permanently dispatched to the city had a recently-restored church at their disposal and were committed to its preservation. The founder recommended “a liturgical procedure suitable” for this reduced community.⁸ In the Genoese quarter, at the Church of St Basianos, a *metochion* of the monastery ton Heliou Bomon (ton Elegmon) in Bithynia,⁹ the number of monks was likewise small, as they lived as *kelliotai*. The *typikon* written in 1162 mentions, however, that these monks had to adopt a coenobitic lifestyle.¹⁰

Some Constantinopolitan *metochia* must, therefore, be viewed as small dependencies occupied by a few monks who may or may not have been involved in daily, public liturgical service. The *metochion* of Iviron in Constantinople¹¹ probably did not even have a church where monks could have celebrated the holy offices on Sundays and feasts. According to the *Life* of George of Iviron, who spent his last days in this *metochion*, the eucharistic prayer was not performed there on 24 and 29 June 1065, the dates of two important feasts: the Nativity of St John the Baptist and the Holy Apostles. Concerning the second celebration, while some companions of the saint attended the church of the Holy Apostles in the city, other monks and priests stayed with George, reading only the Matins and the four Gospels. They probably prayed in a private chapel inside the *metochion*.¹²

8 *Typikon of the Theotokos Kosmosoteira* 108, pp. 143–145, trans. Patterson Ševčenko, p. 845.

9 Janin, *Constantinople*, pp. 60–61; idem, *Grands centres*, pp. 144–148; *Typikon of the Theotokos ton Heliou Bomon*, ed. Aleksei Dmitrievsky, *Opisanie liturgicheskikh rykopisei khranashchikhsia v bibliotekakh pravoslavnago Vostoka* [A description of liturgical manuscripts deposited at the libraries of the Orthodox East], 1 (Kiev, 1895), pp. 715–769, trans. Anastasius Bandy, “*Typikon of Nikephoros Mystikos for the Monastery of the Mother of God ton Heliou Bomon or Elegmon*,” in *BMFD*, no. 33, 3:1042–1091.

10 *Typikon of the Theotokos ton Heliou Bomon* 4, 26, and 48, pp. 724, 742, and 767, trans. Bandy, pp. 1056, 1069, and 1086.

11 Janin, *Constantinople*, p. 256.

12 *Life of George of Iviron* 26, trans. Tamara Grdzeldze, *Georgian Monks on Mount Athos: Two Eleventh-Century Lives of the Hegoumenoi of Iviron* (London, 2009), pp. 146–147 (Nativity of St John the Baptist); p. 148 (Holy Apostles): “When the day had grown and the time of the Third Hour approached, [George] ordered us to light the candles, burn incense, and begin reading the Gospel. (...) When the four of us had finished simultaneously the reading of the Gospel, he made the sign of the cross over us and said: ‘Glory to you, O Lord!’ He [then] lay down.” On George of Iviron, see Lefort, “Introduction,” pp. 50–55; *PmbZ*, no. 22259.

This hypothesis seems to be confirmed by a late 10th-century text, the *Life* of Paul the Younger of Latros.¹³ In 955, a monk called Photeinos living in Constantinople, after hearing angels singing in honor of the great *hegoumenos'* death, quickly came to the bishop Paul of Monembasia and asked him to burn incense. John Wortley has already suggested that Photeinos and Paul of Monembasia had belonged to Paul the Younger's community on Mount Latros. When Paul of Latros died, they were living in Constantinople, in a dependency of the monastery. If Wortley's assumption is accepted, this dependency has to be viewed as a very small religious house, because the place where the incense could be burned and the dwelling places of Photeinos and Paul were situated very close to each other. One can, again, imagine a private chapel inside or next to the *metochion's* buildings.¹⁴

Finally, the *metochion* of Lavra in Hierissos deserves further attention. An *oikonomos* of this dependency is attested for the very first time in 1018.¹⁵ Ten years before, Dionysios, *oikonomos* of Lavra, was present in Hierissos for a monastic affair,¹⁶ and thus it can be concluded that the *metochion* was founded between 1008 and 1018. For this interval, however, the only document we have related to the property of Lavra in Hierissos concerns the donation of a residence, along with its dependencies, which was initiated in 1014 by Maria Lagoudes, the wife of Constantine, who was probably dying.¹⁷ Even though the

13 On Paul of Latros and his monastery, see Janin, *Grands centres*, pp. 233–239; *PmbZ*, no. 26337.

14 *Life of Paul the Younger* 44, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye, “Vita S. Pauli Iunioris in Monte Latro,” *AB* 11 (1892), 163; “At this time [of Paul the Younger's death], a monk called Photeinos, distinguished by great virtue, who lived in the imperial city, heard the angels unusually singing in the air. Immediately he came, short of breath, to bishop Paul of Monembasia, who happened to be there, and, with difficulty speaking because he had just been running, eagerly addressed [Paul of Monembasia] in a loud voice. Take the censer—he said—to quickly burn incense.” See John Wortley, “Introduction,” in *The Spiritually Beneficial Tales of Paul, Bishop of Monembasia*, (Cistercian Studies Series) 159 (Kalamazoo, MI, 1996), pp. 19–25; *PmbZ*, no. 26665 (Photeinos) and no. 26350 (Paul of Monembasia).

15 *Actes de Lavra*, 1, no. 24, ed. Paul Lemerle et al., (*ArchAth*) 5 (Paris, 1970), p. 172, line 8. The *Lives* of Athanasios of Lavra—one of them written before 1025—also attest an *oikonomos* at Hierissos; see *Life of Athanasios of Lavra*, A 249, ed. Jacques Noret, *Vitae duae antiquae Sancti Athanasii Athonitae*, (CCSG) 9 (Turnhout, 1982), p. 120, Italian trans. Luigi D'Ayala Valva, *La Vita di Atanasio l'Athonita di Atanasio di Panaghiou*, (Fundamentis novis. Studi di letteratura cristiana antica, mediolatina e bizantina) 6 (Rome, 2017), p. 367; *ibid.*, B 77, p. 210, trans. Alice-Mary Talbot, “Life of Athanasios of Athos,” in *Holy Men of Mount Athos*, ed. Richard P.H. Greenfield and Alice-Mary Talbot, (Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library) 40 (Cambridge, MA, 2016), p. 357.

16 *Actes de Lavra*, 1, no. 13, p. 134, line 4.

17 *Actes de Lavra*, 1, no. 18, p. 150, lines 8–10.

agreement stipulated the right of the donors to live in the house until their death, I suggest that this residence became the *metochion* of Lavra attested in 1018; that is, it was first a simple dwelling before Lavra converted it into a monastic house.

There was, therefore, a large variety of urban *metochia*, from wealthy and well-administrated dependencies to small residences without churches for public services. The financial resources of the mother monasteries played a crucial role in this respect. The possession of Iviron in Constantinople and probably that of Lavra in Hierissos suggest that even a small property, generally used during travel, was considered a *metochion*.

2 Iviron

The dependency of Iviron in Constantinople, situated in the Xerolophos quarter, is attested only by the already-cited *Life* of George of Iviron. As nothing is known about its subsequent history, the remaining question is when this *metochion* was founded. It is worth noting that not only the *hegoumenos* George but also Euthymios of Iviron also died in Constantinople, in 1028.¹⁸ According to his *Life*, he was invited by the emperor and spent some time in the city. Injured by a mule, Euthymios died “in the monastery where he was laid down.”¹⁹ Given that Iviron went through a difficult period after 1029, when part of its property was confiscated,²⁰ new acquisitions in Constantinople were not a priority in the mid-11th century. It is not impossible, therefore, that this monastery mentioned in 1028 is, in fact, the *metochion* where George of Iviron died in 1065.

I would also suggest that this dependency was a small property belonging to John Tornikios, the founder of Iviron,²¹ or someone of his circle. It is known that in 979/980, with the approval of Emperor Basil II, Tornikios exchanged two monasteries under his control, one in Constantinople and another in Trebizond, for three others: the monastery of Clement (tou Klementos) on Mount Athos, which would become Iviron; Kolobou in Hierissos; and the monastery ta Leontia, already mentioned, a future *metochion* of Iviron in Thessalonike.²²

18 On Euthymios of Iviron, see Lefort, “Introduction,” pp. 39–42; *PmbZ*, no. 21960.

19 *Life of John and Euthymios of Iviron* 23, trans. Grdzeldze, *Georgian Monks*, p. 88.

20 Lefort, “Introduction,” pp. 45–49.

21 On John Tornikios, see Lefort, “Introduction,” pp. 21–25; *PmbZ*, no. 22926.

22 *Actes d'Iviron*, 2, no. 32, pp. 85–86, lines 13–17. See also Lefort, “Introduction,” pp. 11–13 and 24–25. On the monastery of Kolobou, see Denise Papachryssanthou, “Le monachisme

However, in this context, it is unlikely that the rich Tornikios and the Georgians of Mount Athos abandoned all their properties in Constantinople. Their relationships with the imperial court and their economic affairs needed an appropriate place there. The *metochion* attested in 1065 was probably Iviron's *pied-à-terre* in the city from the late 10th century.

3 Lavra

No *metochion* of Lavra is clearly attested in the capital before the Latin conquest. The founder of Lavra, Athanasios,²³ however, even though he stipulated in his *typikon* not to multiply the possessions of Lavra, suggested that a dependency in Constantinople would have been necessary for the brothers travelling there.²⁴ The document, written between 973 and 975, leaves, therefore, room for speculation concerning the existence of such a residence in the capital. The discussions have inevitably referred to the monastery of Panagiu in Constantinople and its *hegoumenos* Anthony,²⁵ the favorite disciple of Athanasios.

Focusing on the correct relations between the two complete *Lives* of Athanasios, their places of composition, and their chronology, Julien Leroy, Paul Lemerle, Justin Mossay, and Jacques Noret have generally hesitated to connect the monastery of Panagiu to the *metochion* desired by Athanasios for Lavra.²⁶ However, I think the documents at our disposal are sufficiently clear to lead to this conclusion. Three elements deserve to be reexamined in this light.

First, during the life of Athanasios, Anthony lived, even though not permanently, outside the monastery of Lavra with some brothers. Some distance

athonite : ses origines, son organisation," in *Actes du Prôtaton*, (ArchAth) 7 (Paris, 1975), pp. 36–40; Soustal, *Makedonien, südlicher Teil*, p. 588.

23 On Athanasios of Lavra, see Paul Lemerle, "Introduction," in *Actes de Lavra*, 1, pp. 13–48; Papachryssanthou, "Le monachisme athonite", pp. 69–83 and 95–102; *PmbZ*, no. 20670. The date of Athanasios' death is still a matter of discussion; see Jacques Noret, "Sur la date de la mort de S. Athanase l'Athonite et sur ses premiers successeurs," *AB* 136 (2018), 56–60.

24 *Typikon of Lavra* 34, ed. Philipp Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte der Athosklöster* (Leipzig, 1894), p. 114, trans. George Dennis, "Typikon of Athanasios the Athonite for the Lavra Monastery," in *BMFD*, no. 13, 1:259.

25 *PmbZ*, no. 20498.

26 Julien Leroy, "Les deux Vies de S. Athanase l'Athonite," *AB* 82 (1964), 419–420; Lemerle, "Introduction," pp. 28–30; Justin Mossay, "À propos des "Actes de Lavra". Note sur les deux Vies de saint Athanase l'Athonite," *AB* 91 (1973), 129–132; Jacques Noret, "Introduction," in *Vitae duae*, pp. CXXIII–CXXIV and n. 61. See also Nicolas Svoronos, "Le domaine de Lavra jusqu'en 1204," in *Actes de Lavra*, 1, pp. 56–77.

or even divergence between Anthony's small community and Lavra can be presumed, given that in his *Testament*, Athanasios made necessary provisions in favor of Anthony and his fellow monks.²⁷ Second, when Athanasios died, Anthony was in Constantinople. According to the *Lives* of Athanasios, some monks came and invited Anthony to take the leadership of Lavra, following the last dispositions of their *hegoumenos*.²⁸ The presence of Anthony in Constantinople was not an exception. Athanasios viewed him as the monastery's delegate to the imperial court.²⁹ Finally, after the death of the saint, Anthony permanently moved to Constantinople. He became the *hegoumenos* of Panagiou, the monastery where the ecclesiarch Cosmas of Lavra used to stay, as in a *metochion*, when he came to the city.³⁰

Given this evidence, one can speculate that the first community of Anthony was not located in Constantinople; or that it did not contain monks from Lavra; or that it did have a very different composition from that of Panagiou. However, if we follow Ockham's Razor, the simplest hypotheses are the following: Lavra's *metochion*, as conceived of by Athanasios, was Anthony's residence in Constantinople; Anthony kept close contact with Athanasios during the life of the latter; after Athanasios' death, Anthony preferred to remain in Constantinople, organizing his already-existing community as a monastery and becoming its superior.

From this perspective, Lavra's *metochion* in Constantinople did have a very short existence. Founded at the initiative of Athanasios in the late 10th century and ruled by Anthony, this dependency became an independent monastery in the early 11th century after Athanasios' death. Customary relationships

27 *Testament of Athanasios* 17, p. 129, trans. George Dennis, "Testament of Athanasios the Athonite for the Lavra Monastery," in *BMFD*, no. 14, 1:278: "I also desire and I order the superior and the administrator and all my spiritual brothers that they provide a resting place for my lord Antony until the end of his life and honour him appropriately and look upon him as a spiritual father. In like manner, they shall treat those brothers with him as their own members." See also Leroy, "Les deux Vies," p. 413 and n. 2; Noret, "Introduction," p. CXXIII.

28 *Life of Athanasios of Lavra*, A 247, pp. 118–119, trans. D'Ayala Valva, p. 363; *ibid.*, B 69, p. 203, trans. Talbot, p. 339: "Since the flock was thus orphaned of its great father, and the monk Antony was away in the imperial city on account of that urgent business for the monastery, the brethren went up to the great city to bring him back and install him as superior of the Lavra in accordance with the great one's instructions."

29 *Life of Athanasios of Lavra*, B 66, p. 202, trans. Talbot, p. 333. See Leroy, "Les deux Vies," p. 413.

30 *Life of Athanasios of Lavra*, A 254, p. 122, trans. D'Ayala Valva, pp. 371–373; *ibid.*, B 78, p. 211, trans. Talbot, p. 361. See also Leroy, "Les deux Vies," pp. 427–428; Noret, "Introduction," pp. CXX–CXXIV.

between the two communities continued, Panagiou recognizing the authority of its motherhouse. Therefore, there is no reason to look for another *metochion* of Lavra in Constantinople in this period; the future monastery of Panagiou entirely played this role.

4 Amalfion

Founded in the late 10th century, Amalfion—also known as St Mary of the Amalfitans—was the only Latin monastery on Mount Athos.³¹ In the 11th century, it became one of the most important Athonite foundations, primarily thanks to the powerful Amalfitan colony in Constantinople. As another monastery with almost the same name, Sancta Maria Latinorum, well connected with Amalfi, is attested in the capital in the second half of the 11th century, scholars have questioned the relationship between these two religious houses.³² Was the Constantinopolitan monastery initially a *metochion* of the Athonite one?

The question seems not to have an absolute answer, given that there is little and not very clear evidence of Latin foundations in Constantinople in the 11th century. However, the hypothesis is attractive since the Amalfitan monastery in the city is attested only from 1062.³³ Situated in the quarter of Petron,³⁴ Sancta Maria Latinorum was not far from the monastery of Panagiou.³⁵ In the words

31 Agostino Pertusi, "Monasteri e monaci italiani all'Athos nell'Alto Medioevo," in *Le millénaire du Mont Athos, 963–1963. Études et mélanges 1* (Chevetogne, 1963), pp. 217–251; Vera von Falkenhausen, "Gli Amalfitani nell'Impero bizantino," in *Amalfi and Byzantium*, ed. Edward G. Farrugia, (OCA) 287 (Rome, 2010), pp. 25–29; Marco Merlini, *Un monastero benedettino sul Monte Athos: X–XIII secolo* (Subiaco [Rome], 2017).

32 Janin, *Constantinople*, pp. 570–571; Michel Balard, "Amalfi et Byzance (X^e–XI^e siècles)," *TM* 6 (1976), 91.

33 Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans* 4.39, ed. Vincenzo de Bartholomaeis, *Storia de' Normanni di Amato di Montecassino*, (Fonti per la storia d'Italia) 76 (Rome, 1935), pp. 210–211, trans. Prescott N. Dunbar and Graham A. Loud (Woodbridge, 2004), p. 124 and n. 51 (burial of the bishop Bernard of Palestrina in an Amalfitan monastery in Constantinople). See also Peter Damian, *Letter 131*, ed. Kurt Reindel, *Die Briefe des Petrus Damiani*, 3, ([MGH] Epistolae, Die Briefe der deutschen Kaiserzeit) 4 (Munich, 1989), p. 437, trans. Owen J. Blum, *Peter Damian, Letters*, 5, (The Fathers of the Church: Medieval Continuation) 6 (Washington, D.C., 2004), pp. 55–56 (letter to the abbot of Sancta Maria Latinorum, in the 1060s); Laycus of Amalfi, *On the Azymes*, ed. Anton Michel, *Amalfi und Jerusalem im griechischen Kirchenstreit (1054–1090)*, (OCA) 121 (Rome, 1939), pp. 35–47 (treatise addressed around 1070 to Sergius, abbot in Constantinople).

34 Krijnie N. Ciggaar, "Une description de Constantinople traduite par un pèlerin anglais," *REB* 36 (1976), 259–261 (nos 44, 45, 47, 60, and 61).

35 The hypothesis of Paul Magdalino, "Medieval Constantinople," pp. 109–111, in idem, *Stud-*

of Vera von Falkenhausen, this Latin monastery became “a stronghold of the Roman Church’s theological positions in the capital of the Byzantine Empire.”³⁶ It must be distinguished from the church of St Savior in Perama, probably the first Latin/Amalfitan church in Constantinople.³⁷

Spiritual,³⁸ cultural,³⁹ and economic⁴⁰ exchanges between the Athonite Amalfion and Latin Constantinople in the 10th and 11th centuries have already been examined by scholars, but they have found no documented link between the two Latin monasteries in question. Two pieces of information from this period can contribute to further discussion on this topic.

The first concerns the well-known Athonite act from 1089 of the *protos* Paul in favor of Symeon of Xenophon.⁴¹ It describes the context of Symeon’s reinstallation as *hegoumenos* and implements several measures required by Emperor Alexios I Komnenos. The document also reveals the place of Amal-

ies on the History and Topography of Byzantine Constantinople, no. 1, (Variorum Collected Studies Series) 855 (Aldershot, 2007), who identified the monastery of Panagiotou with Sancta Maria Latinorum, has been refuted with solid arguments by Vera Von Falkenhausen, “Gli Amalfitani,” pp. 31–33.

36 Von Falkenhausen, “Gli Amalfitani,” p. 33. See also Patricia Skinner, *Medieval Amalfi and its Diaspora, 800–1250* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 216–219.

37 Ulrich Schwarz, *Amalfi im frühen Mittelalter (9.–11. Jh.): Untersuchungen zur Amalfitaner Überlieferung*, (Bibliothek des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Rom) 49 (Tübingen, 1978), p. 107 and n. 123; Von Falkenhausen, “Gli Amalfitani,” pp. 29–31.

38 *Life of John and Euthymios of Iviron* 14, trans. Grdzelidze, p. 70: “When the Romans [Latins] in the imperial city or in other cities learned [of Leo’s presence on Mount Athos], many gathered to become monks through him.”

39 Walter Berschin, “I traduttori di Amalfi nell’XI secolo,” in *Cristianità ed Europa. Miscellanea di studi in onore di Luigi Prosdocimi*, ed. Cesare Alzati, 1 (Rome, 1994), pp. 237–243; Paolo Chiesa, “Dal culto alla novella. L’evoluzione delle traduzioni agiografiche nel Medioevo latino,” in *La traduzione dei testi religiosi*, eds. Claudio Moreschini and Giovanni Menestrina (Brescia, 1994), pp. 160–168.

40 *Typikon of Constantine IX Monomachos* 5, no. 8, p. 228, lines 99–101, trans. Timothy Miller, “Typikon of Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos,” in *BMFD*, no. 15, 1:287: “All agreed to another compromise which allowed the monastery of the Amalfitans to own a large boat since they were unable to survive by any other means. They were not to make use of this boat for commercial purposes, but they were to travel with it to the Queen of Cities if they wanted to import anything they needed for their monastery or to be supplied from those who love Christ.”

41 *Actes de Xénophon*, no. 1, ed. Denise Papachryssanthou, (ArchAth) 15 (Paris, 1986), pp. 59–75. See also Michael Angold, *Church and Society under the Comneni, 1081–1261* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 280; Rosemary Morris, *Monks and Laymen in Byzantium, 843–1118* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 86 and 279–280; eadem, “Symeon the Sanctified and the Re-foundation of Xenophon,” *BMGs* 33/2 (2009), 133–147.

fion in the Athonite hierarchy at this time: between Vatopedi and Xenophon.⁴² Unexpectedly, it points out that in the case of the absence of the abbot of Amalfion, the *hegoumenos* of Xenophon could take his place:

In the church [during assemblies], he [the *hegoumenos* of Xenophon] and his monks are placed after the Amalfitan; in case of absence [of the Amalfitan], after the *hegoumenos* of Vatopedi.⁴³

This possible absence, mentioned in a very important document issued under the authority of an imperial delegate, comes as a surprise. It is probably the only one of this type in the Athonite documents. This kind of mention suggests a customary practice, which cannot be motivated by only linguistic differences. It seems that the absence of the abbot was customary and the emperor was informed. Did the abbot of Amalfion not live permanently on Mount Athos? Was Alexios Komnenos implicated in this affair? The document of 1089 says nothing more; however, a chrysobull issued in 1081 in favor of Amalfion certifies the good relationships established by the new emperor with the Latins from Athos only three months after the beginning of his reign.⁴⁴

The second point of interest is Alexios Komnenos' preoccupation with establishing close relationships not only with the Latins from Mount Athos but also with Westerners in general before the First Crusade. One example is the career of Mauro, appointed bishop of Minori near Amalfi before 1091 and then archbishop of Amalfi before 1103. Involved in many diplomatic activities and keeping a balanced position between the Byzantines and Normans, Mauro enjoyed the full support of Emperor Alexios. In fact, their relations began in Constantinople in the 1080s when Mauro was the superior of the church St Saviour (*abbas ecclesiae S. Salvatoris*) for a long period.⁴⁵

Another example is the monk Guillaume of Cormery near Tours, identified by Jonathan Shepard as one of the Western churchmen who visited Constantinople at that time. The monk spent many years in the capital close to Alexios' circle and obtained the head of St James the Persian and other relics

42 On this topic, see Papachryssanthou, "Le monachisme athonite," pp. 118–119; eadem, "Introduction," in *Actes de Xénophon*, pp. 24–25.

43 *Actes de Xénophon*, no. 1, p. 74, lines 177–178: ἐν τῇ καθέδρᾳ καθέζεσθαι σὲ (καὶ) τοὺς μετὰ σὲ ἡγουμενεύοντας πλησίον τοῦ Μαλφιτάνου, ἀπόντος δὲ τοῦτου πλησίον τοῦ Βατοπεδίου.

44 *Actes de Lavra*, 1, no. 43, pp. 236–240.

45 Pietro Pirri, *Il Duomo di Amalfi e il chiostro del Paradiso* (Rome, 1941), p. 178; Schwarz, *Amalfi*, pp. 105–107 and n. 109; Von Falkenhausen, "Gli Amalfitani," pp. 43–44; Skinner, *Medieval Amalfi*, pp. 96, 100, and 134–135.

for his monastery.⁴⁶ It seems that the Latins who lived in Byzantium enjoyed imperial favors because they could mediate between Alexios and the Western powers.

In this context, the abbots of the two Amalfitan monasteries in Constantinople and on Mount Athos may also have been involved in or at least aware of Alexios' projects concerning the West. After the death of Robert Guiscard and Pope Gregory VII in 1085, the emperor was preoccupied with reestablishing his influence in Italy. Some epistolary exchanges between Constantinople and Popes Victor III (1087)⁴⁷ and Urban II (1088)⁴⁸ attest to his attentiveness in religious matters. Alexios was also interested in winning back Amalfi, conquered by the Normans in 1073; he discretely assisted the Amalfitan rebellion of 1088–1089 and actively supported the Amalfitan independence movement between 1096 and 1100.⁴⁹ From this perspective, I suggest that the absence of the abbot of Amalfion from the Athonite assemblies was fully motivated by his regular presence in Constantinople, contacts with the emperor, and possible missions as ambassador to the West. Moreover, given that part of the economic resources and probably monastic recruitment came from or were facilitated by the capital, the stay of Amalfion's superior in Constantinople may only have been in the interest of his monastery.

As the usual place to stay in the capital for Amalfion's abbot had to have been the Amalfitan monastery, the link between the two foundations could thereby be established. Could a joint leadership of these Latin monasteries be envisaged? The lists of the known abbots of the two monasteries neither contain two different names attested in the same period, nor two identical ones. The hypothesis of the unique abbot remains, therefore, to be proved.

To summarize, it is possible that the Amalfitan monastic foundation in Constantinople started as a *metochion* of Amalfion in the first half of the 11th century. Both were known by the same name and supported by the same

46 Jonathan Shepard, "How St. James the Persian's Head Was Brought to Cormery': A Relic Collector Around the Time of the First Crusade," in *Zwischen Polis, Provinz und Peripherie. Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte und Kultur*, eds. Lars M. Hoffmann and Anuscha Monchizadeh, (Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik) 7 (Wiesbaden, 2005), pp. 287–335; idem, "The Emperor's 'Significant Others': Alexios I Komnenos and His 'Pivot to the West,'" in *The Emperor in the Byzantine World: Papers from the Forty-Seventh Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Shaun Tougher (London, 2019), pp. 145–148.

47 Pope Victor III, *Letter 1*, PL 149:961–962. See Herbert E.J. Cowdrey, "Pope Victor and the Empress A.," *BZ* 84–85 (1991–1992), 43–48.

48 Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger of Calabria and Sicily and of His Brother Duke Robert Guiscard* 4.13, trans. Kenneth B. Wolf (Ann Arbor, MI, 2005), pp. 188–189.

49 Schwarz, *Amalfi*, pp. 63–68; Lucia Travaini, "Un follaro di Marino Sébastos, duca di Amalfi

Latins/Amalfitans living in the capital. From the second half of the 11th century, the Constantinopolitan foundation gained greater notoriety, and this fact could be explained, among other reasons, by the Athonite abbot's stay there. From this perspective, Amalfion on Mount Athos and Sancta Maria Latinorum in Constantinople became either two sister monasteries governed by two different abbots, like Lavra and the monastery of Panagiotou, or two foundations under united leadership.

5 Xenophon

The last monastery to be considered is that of Xenophon. Founded in the late 10th century, it was restored in 1078 by the former *megas droungarios* Stephen, who became the monk and *hegoumenos* Symeon with the agreement of Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates.⁵⁰ Symeon's case is special in Mount Athos' history; he and at least three of his disciples were eunuchs. Thanks to his political influence, Symeon managed to transgress the customary and long-established Athonite rule forbidding the presence of eunuchs on the Holy Mountain.⁵¹ It can be imagined that his arrival provoked heated reactions. Most of the Athonites did not accept the new *hegoumenos* of Xenophon; they expelled Symeon and his eunuchs from Athos after a short time, before 1081.

In 1089, however, Symeon obtained from Alexios Komnenos a decree ordering the *protos* Paul to return the monastery of Xenophon to him. The former *hegoumenos* had come to Constantinople to request this favor from the emperor.⁵² What interests me in this story is Symeon's place of residence between 1081 and 1089. He probably spent time in Thessalonike, as Alice-Mary Talbot has suggested based on a remark by Theophylakt, the archbishop of Ohrid.⁵³ Other hints indicate that the presence of Symeon in the capital before

(1096–1100)?" *Rassegna Storica Salernitana* 11 (1994), 261–265; Skinner, *Medieval Amalfi*, pp. 134–137.

50 On the monastery of Xenophon and the first years of its existence, see Papachryssanthou, "Introduction," pp. 3–15.

51 *Typikon of Lavra* 48, pp. 118–119, trans. Dennis, p. 263; *Typikon of John Tzimiskes* 16, ed. Denise Papachryssanthou, in *Actes du Prôtaton*, p. 212, lines 101–106, trans. George Dennis, "Typikon of Emperor John Tzimiskes," in *BMFD*, no. 12, 1:238; *Typikon of Constantine IX Monomachos* 1, p. 226, lines 45–53, trans. Miller, p. 285.

52 *Actes de Xénophon*, no. 1, p. 71, lines 48–49.

53 Alice-Mary Talbot, *Varieties of Monastic Experience in Byzantium, 800–1453*, (Conway Lec-

1089—and probably also after that—was customary. I will suggest below that this second location was Symeon's favored one during his "exile" and that this fact may be connected with the existence of at least a *pied-à-terre*, if not a *metochion*, in Constantinople.

The first element that deserves attention is the relatively long period before Alexios gave a positive response to Symeon's demand. The emperor and the monk had already met each other at least once, in 1078, in the region of Thessalonike, when Symeon mediated between the then *megas domestikos* Alexios Komnenos and the rebel Nikephoros Basilakes.⁵⁴ Symeon probably came to Constantinople shortly after 1081 to present his request. The emperor's silence between 1081 and 1089 could be explained by his involvement in the wars against the Normans and Pechenegs. Moreover, Alexios was aware of the tensions already existing on Mount Athos and that Symeon's demand would have broken an internal Athonite regulation for a second time. He probably decided only after long negotiations with the monk and, even more significantly, after discussions with the Athonites. Some documents issued in 1089 mention important fiscal privileges and land exchanges in favor of the monasteries Lavra, Docheiariou, and Esphigmenou after introducing the *epibole* system in 1088/1089.⁵⁵ The *hegoumenos* of Docheiariou, Paul, attested as *protos* between 1070 and 1081—therefore in the time of Symeon's banishment—was appointed in this position for a second time between 1087—when the *protos* Sabas is attested—and 1089.⁵⁶ Mere coincidence? Instead, it seems

tures in Medieval Studies) (Notre Dame, Ind., 2019), pp. 44–45. See Theophylakt of Ohrid, *In Defense of Eunuchs*, ed. and trans. Paul Gautier, *Théophylacte d'Achrida, Discours, Traités, Poésies*, (CFHB) 16/1 (Thessalonike, 1980), pp. 328–329. Nothing sure is known about the date of the composition of this work; see Charis Messis, "Public hautement affiché et public réellement visé: le cas de l'*Apologie de l'eunuchisme* de Théophylacte d'Achrida," in *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine. Le texte en tant que message immédiat*, ed. Paolo Odorico, (Dossiers byzantins) 11 (Paris, 2012), pp. 41–85. In 1089, Xenophon owned three residences in Thessalonike, one that had long belonged to the monastery and two others donated by Symeon, see *Actes de Xenophon*, no. 1, p. 73, lines 152–153. Probably one of them was mentioned by Theophylakt.

54 Nikephoros Bryennios, *History* 4.27, ed. and trans. Paul Gautier, *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire*, CFHB 9 (Brussels, 1975), pp. 294–295 and n. 6.

55 *Actes de Lavra*, 1, no. 50, pp. 263–269; *Actes de Docheiariou*, no. 2, ed. Nicolas Oikonomidès, (ArchAth) 13 (Paris, 1984), pp. 54–59; *Actes d'Esphigmenou*, no. 5, ed. Jacques Lefort, (ArchAth) 6 (Paris, 1973), pp. 54–58. See also Kostis Smyrlis, "The Fiscal Revolution of Alexios I Komnenos: Timing, Scope, and Motives," *TM* 21/2 = *Autour du Premier humanisme byzantin & des Cinq études sur le XI^e siècle, quarante ans après Paul Lemerle*, eds. Bernard Flusin and Jean-Claude Cheynet (Paris, 2017), pp. 593–610.

56 Papachryssanthou, "Le monachisme athonite," p. 131; Nicolas Oikonomidès, "Introduc-

that all these imperial measures successfully prepared the way for the return of Symeon on Mount Athos.⁵⁷

To arrange this event, the monk and his companions probably stayed in Constantinople during this period. A second argument, extracted from the document confirming the reinstallation of Symeon in 1089, supports this assumption. One of the conditions imposed by the Athonites was the *hegoumenos* of Xenophon's obedience to the *protos* and the internal rules of the mountain. Symeon did not have the right to go to Constantinople without the agreement of the *protos*:

Don't go outside Mount Athos without the knowledge and agreement of the *protos*, nor move to Constantinople without his knowledge and written approval, according to ancient tradition; nor does the *hegoumenos* have the right to do otherwise without the knowledge of the *protos*.⁵⁸

This disposition, unusual for a *hegoumenos*, proves that the Athonites knew about Symeon's stay in the capital. They were not only aware but also vexed at the ties between the emperor and the monk. Moreover, imperial interference in an essential matter seems to be accepted for the last time by the document's signatories. For this reason, Alexios had to state that he viewed the case as an exception.⁵⁹ However, there are good reasons to consider this accord not as the end but as only a step in a long series of conflicts that affected Mount Athos in the late 11th and early 12th centuries. The subsequent events are to some degree reflected in the *Diegesis merike* (*A Partial Account*), a dossier of the exchanges and tensions between Emperor Alexios, Patriarch Nicholas III Grammatikos (1084–1111), and the Athonites.⁶⁰ It provides the third argument in favor of Symeon's stay in Constantinople.

tion," in *Actes de Docheiariou*, ed. idem, (ArchAth) 13 (Paris, 1984), p. 7. These notices do not consider the new dating of act no. 1 of Xenophon (1089).

57 On Emperor Alexios' policy concerning monasteries, see Angold, *Church and Society*, pp. 274–279 and 283–285; Morris, *Monks and Laymen*, pp. 270–275 and 280–295; Pamela Armstrong, "Alexios I Komnenos, Holy Men, and Monasteries," in *Alexios I Komnenos*, 1, eds. Margaret Mullett and Dion Smythe, (Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations) 4/1 (Belfast, 1996), pp. 219–231.

58 *Actes de Xénophon*, no. 1, p. 74, lines 163–164: μὴ ἐξέρχεσθαι σε τοῦ Ὁρους τοῦ Ἁγίου ἐκτός, γνώμης ἄνευ καὶ συγχωρήσεως τοῦ πρώτου, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ εἰς Κωνσταντινούπολιν ἀνελθεῖν, γνώμης ἄνευ καὶ γραφῆς τοῦτου, κατὰ τὴν ἀρχαίαν παράδοσιν· ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἡγούμενον ἔχειν σε ἐπ' ἀδείας ἕτερον ποιῆσαι ἄνευ γνώμης τοῦ πρώτου.

59 *Actes de Xénophon*, no. 1, p. 71, lines 69–71.

60 *Διήγησις μερική τῶν ἐπιστολῶν Ἀλεξίου βασιλέως καὶ Νικολάου πατριάρχου*, in Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden*, pp. 163–184.

The *Diegesis merike*, a document unique to Mount Athos' history of this period,⁶¹ focuses on two main subjects: on the one hand, the Vlach shepherds' affair—who had entered Athos with their families—and the related patriarchal decree (*entole*), who would have condemned this violation of the Athonite rules and prohibited the monks from interacting with those involved in this matter; on the other hand, the presence of children, the beardless, and eunuchs on the Holy Mountain.

The second topic⁶² reached its peak in the time of the *protos* Hilarion—otherwise unknown—when the discontent of the monks was so great that they came to Constantinople in large numbers to protest before the emperor. Alexios sent them to Patriarch Nicholas. The events could be dated around the 3rd year of the indiction;⁶³ that is, either 1094 or 1109. Scholars still hesitate to choose between these two dates, as both are perfectly acceptable.⁶⁴ There are, however, two arguments indicating the earlier date. First, the link between the second narrative of the *Diegesis merike* and the reinstallation of Symeon of Xenophon in 1089, already pointed out by Michel Angold and Rosemary Morris,⁶⁵ is more comprehensible if we place the disorder provoked by the Athonites in Constantinople before 1094. Irritated by Symeon's return, the monks reacted in the following years rather than many years later. Second, if we place these events around 1109, we must consider two different phases of the conflict, both centered on this second topic. However, this supposition is con-

61 On this text, see Venance Grumel, "Les prôtes de la Sainte-Montagne de l'Athos sous Alexis I^{er} Comnène et le patriarche Nicolas III Grammaticos," *REB* 5 (1947), 206–217; Venance Grumel and Jean Darrouzès, *Les Regestes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople. Les actes des patriarches*, 2–3 = *Les Regestes de 715 à 1206*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1989), nos 973–976, 983–984, and 997, pp. 432–434, 444–445, and 452; Franz Dölger and Peter Wirth, *Regesten des Kaiserurkunden des Oströmischen Reiches*, 2 = *Regesten von 1025–1204*, 2nd ed. (Munich, 1995), nos 1222a, 1235a, 1243a, 1248–1250, 1253, and 1265, pp. 160–161, 164, 167–168, 171–173, and 167–177; Angold, *Church and Society*, pp. 280–283; Morris, *Monks and Laymen*, pp. 275–279; Margaret Mullett, "Novelisation in Byzantium: Narrative after the Revival of Fiction," in *Byzantine Narrative: Papers in Honour of Roger Scott*, eds. John Burke et al., (Byzantina Australiensia) 16 (Melbourne, 2006), pp. 21–28.

62 *Diegesis merike*, pp. 170, line 26–175, line 37.

63 *Actes du Prôtaton*, Appendix 1a, p. 266, line 8.

64 Jean Darrouzès, "Listes des prôtes de l'Athos," in *Le millénaire du Mont Athos*, 1 (Chevetogne, 1963), pp. 413–415; Papachryssanthou, "Le monachisme Athonite," p. 132; Morris, "Symeon," p. 147.

65 Angold, *Church and Society*, pp. 280–281; Morris, *Monks and Laymen*, pp. 279–280; eadem, "Symeon," p. 147. Franz Dölger, Venance Grumel, and Jean Darrouzès have ignored this link because until 1986 scholars assumed that act no. 1 of Xenophon would have been issued in 1083, not 1089.

tradicted by the peace established at the latest in 1107⁶⁶ through the election of John Tarchaniotes as *protos* and Theodore Kephala as *hegoumenos* of Lavra. It is, therefore, more reasonable to think that the affair of the beardless and eunuchs preceded that of the Vlachs, as Venance Grumel already proposed—based on different arguments—a long time ago.⁶⁷

In this context, it is worth considering two letters of Nicholas III Grammatikos addressed to the *protos* Hilarion and the emperor, summarized in the section of the *Diegesis merike* concerning the beardless and eunuchs.⁶⁸ It is surprising to observe that the patriarch disagreed with Alexios and defended the Athonite position.⁶⁹ Moreover, to enhance his arguments, Nicholas referred in his first letter to the “eloquent and learned men,” even belonging to imperial circles, who had become monks and then returned to the world:

Do not be surprised that many have withdrawn [from the monastery] and limped on both sides [i.e., were of two minds] (1 Kings 18:21), even though they are eloquent and learned men, or from the [imperial] Palace. Egypt [the lay world] has undoubtedly captured their hearts to bring

66 John Tarchaniotes is attested in this year as *protos* of Athos, see *Actes du Pantocrator*, no. 2, ed. Vassiliki Kravari, (ArchAth) 17 (Paris, 1991), pp. 67–71.

67 Grumel, “Les prôtes,” pp. 214–217. See also Angold, *Church and Society*, p. 282 and n. 77. From this perspective, the list of the *protoi* of Athos in this period is the following: Sabas (1087), Hilarion (1094), Ioannikios (1096), Cosmas (1101/1102), John Tarchaniotes (1107), and Gabriel (1108). A link between the eunuchs’ and Vlachs’ affairs could be imagined if we look once again to Xenophon and its goods. In 1089, the monastery owned 14 pairs of oxen, 100 horses and donkeys, 130 buffaloes, 150 cows, and 2,000 goats and sheep (*Actes de Xenophon*, no. 1, p. 73, lines 153–155). It goes without saying that the products of the Vlach shepherds were not of great interest to Xenophon, but they were to other poorer Athonite monasteries. In the most plausible scenario, the monks of Xenophon, after being accused of the reception of eunuchs, blamed, in turn, other Athonite monks and houses for economic exchanges with the Vlachs, especially with their wives and daughters. Two prohibitions concerning the beardless and women therefore became a motif of scandal between two Athonite factions, each of them following only partially the regulations of the place. Economic competition between Xenophon and other large Athonite monasteries can also be suspected as one of the major causes of the whole conflict. Imperial and doubtful patriarchal interferences in Athonite internal affairs complete the picture of this turbulent period.

68 During the conflict, Nicholas kept a balanced position between the two opposite monastic parties. He protested against the reception of eunuchs on Mount Athos, criticized the exchanges between the Athonites and the Vlachs, and accepted children’s education in (non-Athonite) monasteries. On this last aspect, see *Diegesis merike*, p. 182, lines 13–27.

69 *Diegesis merike*, pp. 174, line 19–p. 175, line 29 and p. 175, lines 30–37.

them back. For this reason, they wisely invoke pretexts so that they do not appear ridiculous and impatient to people. It is, therefore, lawful that such people not be transplanted to a desert land, isolated and waterless.⁷⁰

The second letter, addressed to the emperor, contains almost the same assertions. Nicholas stated that “the monks from the City cannot live on Mount Athos,” and the Athonites have full rights not to accept “*sebastoi* and men from the Palace” on the mountain.⁷¹ The patriarch did not mention Symeon, but the allusion to him and his return to Constantinople was evident. Nicholas wanted to remind the emperor that the *hegoumenos* of Xenophon had provoked the whole conflict. Moreover, he did not mention a temporary stay in the city but a return to the world. These allusions to Symeon probably referred to the period before 1089, when Nicholas could have met or known of the *hegoumenos* in the capital. A second sojourn of Symeon in Constantinople after this date cannot, however, be excluded.

The conclusion of this very long argument concerns the stay of Symeon and his disciples in the capital. There are solid reasons to consider that the *hegoumenos* of Xenophon lived in Constantinople most of the time between 1081 and 1089; he may even have lived there after 1089. As we suppose that Symeon and his disciples more or less kept their monastic customs, the question that remains relates to their place of residence. Did they ask for accommodation among friends or in a monastic *xenodocheion*? It is not likely. Instead, I would suggest that Symeon either acquired a city residence or already had one or more. Given his still-recognized social position, the former *megas droungarios* would hardly have accepted another way of life. The acts of Xenophon do not mention goods or residences in Constantinople donated by Symeon; likely, he kept a *pied-à-terre* in the city for himself. If this is true, the course of events after 1078 proved that such a measure was not only welcome but also absolutely necessary.

70 *Diegesis merike*, p. 175, lines 2–9: Καὶ νῦν μὴ θαυμάζετε τοῦτο, εἰ ἐξέκλινάν τινες καὶ ταῖς ἰδίαις ἱγνύαις ἐχώλαναν, καὶ ῥήτορες καὶ ἐλλόγιμοί εἰσιν, ἢ καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ παλατίου, πάντως ἡ Αἴγυπτος ἐκράτησε τὰς καρδίας αὐτῶν εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω. Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ σοφῶς τὸ δέλεαρ ἐπιχρῶσθαι τῆς προφάσεως, ἵνα μὴ καταγέλαστοι καὶ ἀνυπομόνητοι φανῶσι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. Ἐξεστὶ τοίνυν τὰ τοιαῦτα φυτὰ μὴ φυτεύειν ἐν γῇ ἐρήμῳ καὶ ἀβάτῳ καὶ ἀνύδρῳ. See Grumel, Darrouzès, *Regestes*, no. 983.

71 *Diegesis merike*, p. 175, lines 31–37. See Grumel, Darrouzès, *Regestes*, no. 984.

6 Conclusion

The four cases discussed in this paper reveal the existence of two different kinds of Athonite *metochia* in Constantinople between the 10th and 12th centuries. On the one hand, Iviron and probably Xenophon had small residences that had belonged to their founders. There was no daily liturgical life in these residences, and monastic customs were likely adapted to local circumstances. Moreover, we are not sure that they were even occupied by monks who lived there permanently. The motherhouses used these small *metochia* only for travel and business in Constantinople, without any desire to organize vigorous monastic communities. Other Byzantine monasteries like tou Stylou on Mount Latros, the Theotokos Kosmosoteira, and ton Heliou Bomon, briefly considered above, followed the same model. The limited evidence concerning these *metochia* in Constantinople does not allow a deeper investigation into their economic affairs and management.

On the other hand, Lavra and Amalfion also began with small residences in the capital, but they permitted the monks sent there to organize themselves when circumstances became favorable. Anthony of Panagiotou was, therefore, able to transform Lavra's *metochion* into a well-known monastery in Constantinople. The same pattern is observed in the case of the monastery Sancta Maria Latinorum, probably Amalfion's former *metochion*, which played an important role in maintaining the relationships between the Latin monks living in Byzantium and the West. Both Panagiotou and Sancta Maria Latinorum became sister monasteries related to their monastic houses of origin.

Finally, Iviron and Amalfion had further motives to own properties in Constantinople. In their case, a residence in the city was not only a travel facility or economic investment but also a matter of ethnic identity. As foreigners, Georgians and Latins needed powerful monastic networks in Byzantium to facilitate human, cultural, and economic exchanges. As Constantinople and Mount Athos were two vital points in these networks, establishing appropriate *metochia* in the capital rapidly became a pressing issue for these monks living in a foreign and sometimes hostile land.

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Mount Athos and the Wealth of Constantinople (14th–16th Centuries)

Nicholas Melvani

Representatives of provincial monasteries were consistently present in Constantinople throughout the Middle Ages and were traditionally granted dependencies in Constantinople for the lodging and support of monks who went to the city on business. Various monasteries in Bithynia and the Nea Mone on Chios owned property in the imperial capital during the Middle Byzantine period,¹ whereas the famous monastery of St Paul on Mount Latros was in possession of a *metochion* in Constantinople in the 14th century.² Athos was no exception, since its communities were in frequent contact with the authorities. These contacts were particularly intense in the Palaiologan period, when three of the most powerful monasteries, those of the Lavra, Vatopedi, and Hilandar, acquired considerable landed property in Constantinople and its surrounding region. This was part of wide-reaching phenomena related to the growth of Athonite monasteries, the role of Constantinople within the economy of the late medieval eastern Mediterranean, as well as to the socio-political and ecclesiastical developments in the Byzantine capital.

The nucleus of the property of the Lavra in Constantinople was the monastery of the Virgin Zoodochos, situated within the walls of the capital.³ The Constantinopolitan monastery had been ceded by Andronikos III Palaiologos (r. 1328–1341) to Patriarch Isaiah in 1329, who arranged for the transfer of the Zoodochos to the Lavra upon his death in 1332.⁴ The economic assets of the Lavra and the Zoodochos, which originally consisted of land in the region of Parapolia in the Thracian hinterland (in the area around the villages of Angourina and Kentenarion), increased significantly in 1342, when Niphon, a monk

1 Kostis Smyrlis, *La fortune des grands monastères byzantins (fin du xe – milieu du xive siècle)*, (Monographies. Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance) 21 (Paris, 2006), pp. 120–121. See also the contribution of Daniel Oltean in this volume.

2 Otto Kresten, “Das Kloster des heiligen Paulos am Berge Latros oder vom Berge Latros?,” *JÖB* 50 (2000), 187–204.

3 Nicholas Melvani, “Athonite Presence in Constantinople during the Palaiologan Period,” in *Η εξακτίωση του Αγίου Όρους στον Ορθόδοξο Κόσμο: τα Μετόχια* (Thessaloniki, 2015), pp. 73–75.

4 *Actes de Lavra*, 3, nos 119, 122, ed. Paul Lemerle et al., (ArchAth) 10 (Paris, 1977), pp. 9–11, 15–19.

from the narrow circle of the emperor John V Palaiologos (r. 1341–1391), attached to the Athonite monastery the xenon of St Panteleimon in Constantinople, which he had restored, together with its immovable property in the area of the Golden Horn shore, namely shops, workshops, houses, and money-changing tables.⁵

The growth of the Lavra's land property soon prompted the monks of the Lavra to search for an additional estate that could serve as the base of their holdings in the city, from which they would be able to manage the financial and spiritual affairs related to their Constantinopolitan property. In 1367 the patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos, a former Lavriote himself, responded to this request and ceded to the Lavra the church of St Demetrios in the area of the Plateia on the Golden Horn, as the monastery's *metochion* or *kathisma*. At the same time, he declared that the new addition would function as the residence of representatives of the Lavra, whenever they sojourned to the Byzantine capital to conduct their business.⁶

Thus, it is possible to trace the expansion of the Lavra's *metochion* from 1332 to 1367 and place it within the urban and suburban context of Constantinople. A survey dated 1334 lists in detail the initial property of the Zoodochos,⁷ mainly land in the Thracian hinterland of Constantinople between the two lagoons of Küçükçekmece and Büyükçekmece: fields, vineyards, and gardens in the villages of Angourina and Kentenarion, together with various smaller plots and families of *paroikoi*.⁸ On the other hand, the center of the property donated by Niphon was the area of the historic hospice of St Panteleimon, located near the Propontis,⁹ and its revenues came from plots of land near the gates of the

5 *Actes de Lavra*, 3, no. 123, pp. 20–26. For Niphon, see *PLP*, no. 20681.

6 *Actes de Lavra*, 3, no. 144, 92–96. For St Demetrios, see Raymond Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin. 1. Le Siège de Constantinople et le Patriarcat Oecuménique. 3: Les églises et les monastères* (Paris, 1969), p. 90. For the Plateia, see Albrecht Berger, "Zur Topographie der Ufergegend am Goldenen Horn in der byzantinischen Zeit," *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 45 (1995), 152–155.

7 This foundation was different from the famous Pege shrine (which became known as the Zoodochos Pege in Palaiologan times) outside the Land Walls (contrary to older views, e.g. Janin, *Églises et monastères*, p. 225; Miltiades Isaak Nomidis, *Ἡ Ζωοδόχος Πηγή* (Istanbul, 1937), pp. 128–129).

8 Nicholas Svoronos, "Domaine de Lavra sous les Paléologues," in Paul Lemerle et al., *Actes de Lavra*, 4, (ArchAth) 11 (Paris, 1982), pp. 121–122; Andreas Külzer, *Ostthrakien*, (TIB) 12 (Vienna, 2008), p. 447. For a recent survey of the area, see Luca Orlandi, "The Ottoman Landscape of Büyükçekmece. A Case of Oversight or Misinterpretation of the Past?," in *Cultural Landscape in Practice*, eds. Giuseppe Amoroso and Rossella Salerno (Cham, 2019), pp. 298–311.

9 Paul Magdalino, "Medieval Constantinople," in Paul Magdalino, *Studies on the History and Topography of Byzantine Constantinople* (Aldershot, 2007), pp. 20–22, 32; Timothy Miller, *The*

Prodromos and of St Anastasia of the Golden Horn fortifications, as specified in the 1342 chrysobull confirming the donation by the monk Niphon. The Prodromos gate is identified with the Ottoman Balatkapi, but the gate of St Anastasia is otherwise unattested, although it appears that it should be connected with the church of St Anastasia Pharmakolytria at the Leomakellon, i.e. in the wider area of the Plateia (modern Unkapani).¹⁰ The donation included several houses, workshops and money-changing tables in the city, which yielded a yearly income of 900 *hyperpyra*, part of which was used to finance the hospital of the Lavra.

The activity of the monastery of Vatopedi followed a similar course: in 1347 the monks of Vatopedi petitioned the emperor John VI Kantakouzenos (r. 1347–1354) in requesting the Constantinopolitan monastery of the Virgin Psychosostria, in order to use it as the base for their activities in the capital, and John VI acceded to the Athonite monastery's request.¹¹ Vatopedi preserved its Constantinopolitan property after the abdication of John VI and secured a chrysobull by John V in 1356 renewing its privileges.¹² By then, the property of the Psychosostria had grown considerably. A few years later, in 1366, the monastery's landholdings in the wider area of the Byzantine capital expanded further, thanks to a donation by the dignitary Stephen Rhadenos. Rhadenos donated to the monastery his family estate in the region of Enneakosia, outside Constantinople, so that the monks would receive its revenues and use them for their needs, in exchange for weekly commemorations in his name at the Athonite foundation.¹³

Thus, the evolution of the Constantinopolitan possessions of Vatopedi is documented for a period of 19 years, from 1347 to 1366. The chrysobull of John VI listing the property of the Psychosostria in Constantinople and its surroundings mentions houses within the monastic enclosure and to the north of the

Birth of the Hospital in the Byzantine Empire (Baltimore, 1985), pp. 92–95, 112–116, 192–195; Vassileios Kidonopoulos, *Bauten in Konstantinopel: Verfall und Zerstörung, Restaurierung, Umbau und Neubau von Profan- und Sakralbauten*, (Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik) 1 (Mainz, 1994), pp. 223–225.

10 For the Gate of Prodromos, see Albrecht Berger, "Zur Topographie der Ufergegend am Goldenen Horn in der byzantinischen Zeit," *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 45 (1995), 152–156. For the church of St Anastasia: Arne Effenberger, "Topographica Corrigenda," *JÖB* 70 (2020), 48–50.

11 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 2, nos 95, 102, eds. Jacques Lefort et al., (ArchAth) 22 (Paris, 2006), pp. 206–208, 230–237; Janin, *Églises et monastères*, pp. 243–244.

12 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 2, no. 108, pp. 257–263.

13 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 2, no. 126, pp. 326–330, Külzer, *Ostthrakien*, pp. 349–350.

monastery,¹⁴ and the church of St Nicholas near the xenon of St Panteleimon together with six houses.¹⁵ In the Thracian hinterland the Psychosostria possessed houses and land with *paroikoi* and a mill in Herakleia and its territory, the dependency of the Archangel Michael with six *paroikoi* in Charioupolis,¹⁶ as well as two small monasteries (those of St Anastasia and St Paraskeve) with land and *paroikoi* at nearby Pamphilon (south of Adrianople).¹⁷ Moreover, the Psychosostria owned a dependency in Bithynia, at Pylopythia in the area of modern Yalova.¹⁸ The chrysobull also mentions that the Psychosostria was already united with another monastery, the monastery of Kenchrion, on the Asian side of the Bosphorus, which in turn was in possession of two smaller monasteries, mills, vineyards, and fields.¹⁹ All these lands became the property of Vatopedi, with the Psychosostria as the administrative center of a vast domain encompassing real estate in Constantinople, Thrace, and Bithynia.

The monastery of Hilandar was the recipient of a similar grant in Thrace, very close to Constantinople, but under a slightly different arrangement, which resulted from the patronage of the Serbian king Milutin. The land of the Thracian village of Mamytzon was divided between the Athonite monastery and the Xenon of the Kral, an annex of the monastery of St John of Petra, founded next to the Constantinopolitan monastery by the *kral* Stephen Uroš II Milutin (r. 1282–1321) in 1321.²⁰ In 1323 this arrangement was modified and the Hilandar monks received one-third of the revenues from Mamytzon, as opposed to

14 The location of the Psychosostria is unknown, as is that of the houses to its north.

15 Perhaps identical to the church of St Nicholas later attested as being in the area of Kontoskalion? See Raymond Janin, "Les églises byzantines Saint—Nicolas à Constantinople," *EO* 168 (1932), 418.

16 Modern Hayrabolu (Külzer, *Ostthrakien*, pp. 308–310). The shrine of St Michael is not among the sites identified in and around the city.

17 Külzer, *Ostthrakien*, pp. 350–352.

18 Pylopythia consisted of Pylai (formerly part of the Byzantine imperial domain) and Pythia: Klaus Belke, *Bithynien und Hellespont*, (TIB) 13, (Vienna, 2020), p. 964; Jean-Claude Cheynet, "L'époque byzantine," in *La Bithynie au Moyen Âge*, eds. Bernard Geyer and Jacques Lefort, (Réalités byzantines) 9 (Paris, 2003), p. 323.

19 For Kenchrion, see Raymond Janin, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins: Bithynie, Hellespont, Latros, Galèsios, Trébizonde, Athènes, Thessalonique* (Paris, 1975), p. 29, Belke, *Bithynien und Hellespont*, p. 662.

20 *Actes de l'Athos. v. Actes de Chilandar. —I. Actes grecs*, no. 58, ed. Louis Petit, (Suppléments aux *Vizantijskij vremennik*) 17 (Petrograd, 1911), pp. 137–139; Külzer, *Ostthrakien*, pp. 513–514; Urs Benno Birchler-Argyros, "Die Quellen zum Kral-Spital in Konstantinopel," *Gesnerus: Swiss Journal of the History of Medicine and Sciences* 45 (1988), 419–422; Mirjana Živojinović, "Bolnica Kralja Milutina u Carigradu," *ZRVI* 16 (1975), 106–111; Elias Petrou, "Intellectual Relationships between the Byzantine and Serbian Elites during the Palaiologan Era," in *Byzantium in Eastern European Visual Culture in the Late Middle Ages*, eds. Maria

two-thirds allotted to the hospice in the capital, but Hilandar also received the right to maintain three cells and a church in the courtyard of the Xenon for use by the monks whenever they sojourned in Constantinople.²¹ A *praktikon* drawn up in 1323 lists the revenues (in the form of taxes yielded by the *paroikoi*) from the fields, gardens, meadows, and mills exploited on the portion owned by Hilandar. Conversely, the ensemble comprising church and cells within the Xenon—Petra complex in the capital (in the northwest part of the city, in the vicinity of the open-air reservoir of Aetius) appears to have functioned as a *metochion*, from where the Thracian property of the Serbian monastery was managed in a manner analogous to the Constantinopolitan *metochia* of Vatopedi and Lavra.²²

In sum, all three major Athonite *metochia* grew out of preexisting Constantinopolitan foundations and inherited their landed property, which was analogous to that of most medium- and large-scale monasteries in the capital. In the city itself they were in possession of plots and structures used as houses, gardens, shops, and workshops in the maritime neighborhoods, in the vicinity of the fortification gates and the harbors of the Golden Horn and the Marmara Sea. Monastic proprietors and landlords in the commercial quarters, especially those along the Golden Horn shore, are attested since the Middle Byzantine period²³ and this pattern seems to have persisted in the Palaiologan period: the imperial convent of Lips, and the aristocratic nunnery of the Virgin Bebaia Elpidos, also held similar pieces of real estate in the same neighborhoods.²⁴ The entire shoreline of the Golden Horn was attested as a thriving commercial quarter throughout the Palaiologan period and the gates, especially those of St John

Alessia Rossi and Alice Isabella Sullivan, (East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450) 65 (Leiden, 2020), pp. 71–81.

21 *Actes de Chilandar*, no. 92, pp. 194–198.

22 The approximate location of the monastery of Petra north of the cistern of Aetius is fairly well known—Neslihan Asutay-Effenberger has suggested that the ruined building known as the Odalar Camii and the small neighborhood mosque known as the Kasım Ağa Camii were part of its building complex (Neslihan Asutay-Effenberger, “Das Kloster des Ioannes Prodromos τῆς Πέτρης in Konstantinopel und seine Beziehung zur Odalar und Kasım Ağa Camii,” *Millennium* 5 (2008), 299–325). The exact topographical relation between the monastery and the Xenon of the Kral (and the Hilandar *metochion*) is not known, but apparently the hospice occupied an extensive site adjacent to the monastic foundation.

23 Paul Magdalino, “The Maritime Neighborhoods of Constantinople: Commercial and Residential Functions: Sixth to Twelfth Centuries,” *DOP* 54 (2000), 219–226.

24 Smyrlis, *Fortune*, pp. 37, 62–63; Ekaterini Mitsiou, “Female Monastic Communities and the Patriarchate in the 13th and 14th c.,” in *The Patriarchate of Constantinople in Context and Comparison*, eds. Christian Gastgeber et al., (Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung) 41 (Vienna, 2017), pp. 105–114.

and the Plateia, were known for the concentration of money-changing booths, banking tables, shops, workshops, and warehouses.²⁵ Therefore, Athonite presence in this maritime zone was a promising investment: these properties could yield considerable income and their value on the real estate market would have been considerably high.

Owning property in the Thracian hinterland to the west and north of the walled city was also common for Constantinopolitan monasteries, including imperial ones. Like Vatopedi and the Psychosostria, the monastery of Lips was endowed with revenues from rural property at Enneakosia, whereas the imperial Kosmidion foundation had property in roughly the same area.²⁶ The Psychosostria seems to have been exceptionally wealthy in this respect even before it was attached to Vatopedi, thanks to a generous endowment of Gregory of Ohrid, a scholar from the circle of Andronikos II and Theodore Metochites: its extramural property extended as far west as Adrianople and Herakleia.

Constantinopolitan possessions in the Bithynian hinterland to the east had also been common since earlier times.²⁷ Vatopedi was granted access to the property of two monasteries, the Psychosostria in Constantinople (which had land of its own in Bithynia) and the monastery of Kenchrion on the Asian side of the Bosphorus. This type of union appears already in the 12th century, when John II Komnenos had affiliated well-known monasteries in the region opposite Constantinople with his Pantokrator foundation.²⁸ This practice was continued in the Palaiologan period, when Michael VIII united his family's monastery of St Demetrios in the capital with the famous Kellibara community on Latros.²⁹ Evidently, this was regarded as an effective method of control-

25 Nevra Necipoğlu, "The Social Topography of Late Byzantine Constantinople: Evidence from the Patriarchal Register," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 36 (2010), 135–137; Nicolas Oikonomidès, *Hommes d'affaires grecs et latins à Constantinople (XI^e–XV^e siècles)* (Montreal, 1977), pp. 106–107; Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, "Heptaskalon und weitere Anlegestellen am Goldenen Horn," in *Die byzantinischen Häfen Konstantinopels*, ed. Falko Daim, (Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident) 4 (Mainz, 2016), pp. 99–108; Neslihan Asutay-Effenberger, "Zum Stadtteil Kynegion und seinem Hafen in spätbyzantinischer und osmanischer Zeit," in Daim, *Häfen*, pp. 109–118.

26 Smyrlis, *Fortune*, p. 50; Eurydice Lappa-Zizicas, "Un chrysobulle inconnu en faveur du monastere des Saints Anargyres de Kosmidion," *TM* 8 (1981) (= Hommage à Paul Lemerle), 255–267.

27 Nicholas Melvani, "The History of the Stoudios Monastery," in *Stoudios Monastery in Istanbul*, eds. Esra Kudde, Nicholas Melvani and Tarkan Okçuoğlu (Istanbul, 2021), p. 128.

28 Paul Magdalino, "The Foundation of the Pantokrator Monastery in Its Urban Setting," in *The Pantokrator Monastery in Constantinople*, ed. Sophia Kotzabassi, (Byzantinisches Archiv) 27 (Berlin, 2013), p. 38.

29 Henri Grégoire, "Imperatoris Michaelis Palaeologi de vita sua," *Byzantion* 29–30 (1959–

ling property in Anatolia, which was increasingly under pressure due to the expansion of the Turkish emirates. By acquiring a monastery that was united with a foundation on the other side of the Bosphorus, Vatopedi gained access to such property. In short, the Athonite *metochia* were created from pre-existing wealthy monasteries with their own networks of dependencies and resources; the chrysobulls and patriarchal acts in the Athos archives indicate that the Athonite presence on the Bosphorus was encouraged and sanctioned by the lay and religious authorities.

The documents do not mention details about the types of crops grown in the Athonite *metochia* of eastern Thrace and western Bithynia. Cultivation in these rural domains may have involved poly-culture units, although based on the example of large *metochia* in Macedonia (also belonging to Athonite monasteries) cereals must have been the primary produce, with vineyards and orchards on the fringes. Indeed, the Athonite documents regarding Thrace and Bithynia describe the rural dependencies as fully-functioning units consisting of fields, as well as vineyards (*ampelotopia*) and gardens (*esokepia*) in the surrounding area. The analysis of archaeobotanical evidence from the excavated site of Küçükyalı on the Asian side of Istanbul, identified as the monastery of Satyros, which still existed until the 14th century, shows that wheat and flax were predominant in this monastic environment.³⁰ This may have been the case, at least with the Asian properties mentioned in the hands of the Athonites, since it is reasonable to assume that Satyros was organized in a similar manner; indeed, it seems to have undergone a course analogous to that of the above-mentioned estates attached to Constantinopolitan monasteries, albeit at an earlier point in time, since it was one of the minor foundations granted to the great Pantokrator by the Komnenoi in the 12th century and thus incorporated into the monastic economy of Constantinople proper.³¹

The rural properties that belonged to these dependencies comprised cultivated land with *paroikoi* that yielded revenues and taxes collected by the monks, as was the case for example with Mamytzon. The revenues from the actual production are not mentioned in the documents, but the texts regarding the ships of the Psychosostria and by extension Vatopedi mention products

1960), 447–476; John Thomas, “*Kellibara 1: Typikon* of Michael VIII Palaiologos for the Monastery of St. Demetrios of the Palaiologoi-Kellibara in Constantinople,” in *BMFD*, no. 38, 3:1237–1239; Janin, *Grands centres*, pp. 230–231.

30 Burhan Ulaş, “Küçükyalı: İstanbul’da Bir Bizans Manastırının Tarımsal Ekonomisi,” *Arkeoloji ve sanat dergisi* 154 (2017), 192–195. For the site, see Alessandra Ricci, “The Küçükyalı ArkeoPark (Istanbul), 2016–2018: Excavation, Conservation, Cultural Heritage and Public Archaeology,” *Anatolia Antiqua* 27 (2019), 255–277.

31 Magdalino, “Pantokrator,” p. 38.

destined to be sold by the monks.³² The watermills and public roads attested in the estates of Enneakosia and Mamytzon reveal that the villages in question formed part of the networks and infrastructure that characterized the landscape of Thrace. The rent from the urban properties used by artisans and merchants was also a considerable source of income for the Athonites. The revenues from the Vatopedi estate at Enneakosia were destined for the Athonite monastery's hospital, just like those at Mamytzon, which were reserved for the Serbian hospice in the capital. This format, which aimed to secure funds for charitable institutions, reveals that these *metochia* were perceived by patrons as multipurpose endowments. It is no coincidence that all three *metochia* were connected with Constantinopolitan hospitals, including the historic St Pan-teleimon.

On the other hand, Athonite monasteries were used to controlling other monasteries and their land in urban contexts: the case of Thessalonike is the most characteristic example, but similar properties in Serres and Beroia are also known.³³ By the 14th century the Lavra and Vatopedi, followed by Iviron, had grown accustomed to managing estates in several cities of Macedonia; they were probably regarded as suitable for doing the same with *metochia* in Adrianople and Herakleia further to the east. The development of the Athonite *metochia* within Constantinople clearly shows that the latter were part of the wider networks formed by the monastic dependencies of Eastern Macedonia, Thrace, and the Northern Aegean. Given the maritime activity of the Lavra and Vatopedi in the Northern Aegean, with *metochia* on Thasos and at Ainos, as well as the frequent communication with the numerous estates on Lemnos, Constantinople, and the Golden Horn were a key location along these routes for provisions and for the influx of revenues to the Athonite monasteries from their *metochia*, as well as for distributing their marketed surplus.³⁴ The monks of the Lavra openly stated that they were in search of an ideal location for their dependency opposite Galata in order to have direct access to the market of the Genoese settlement and its busy port, thanks to which they acquired openings towards a much broader area that even included the Black Sea.³⁵ The chrysobull of 1356 granting tax exemptions to the ship owned by the Psychosostria and

32 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 2, no. 109, p. 265, line 10: ἐν αἷς μέλλει ποι(εῖν) πραγματείαις.

33 Angeliki Laiou, "The Agrarian Economy, Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries," in *Economic History of Byzantium*, ed. Angeliki Laiou, (DOS) 39 (Washington, D.C., 2007), pp. 328–331; Smyrlis, *Fortune*, pp. 47–48, 52–55, 96–98 and *passim*.

34 Melvani, "Athonite Presence," pp. 80–81.

35 *Actes de Lavra*, 3, no. 144, p. 95, line 14: ἔχειν καὶ περὶ τὸν λιμένα [τῆς μεγαλοπόλεως τὸν ἀπαντικρὺ τοῦ] Γαλατᾶ μετόχιον.

Vatopedi illustrates this network by explicitly referring to permissions to buy and sell at the ports of the Aegean and the Black Sea, as well as in Constantinople itself.³⁶ Constantinopolitan monasteries were in fact benefiting from routes connecting the capital with the Black Sea: a ship belonging to the monastery of St Athanasios was active in 1361 at the trading post of Kilia at the estuary of the Danube.³⁷

This expansion was clearly encouraged by the Constantinopolitan elites and by patriarchal circles, who openly supported the process. Indeed, the three 14th-century Athonite *metochia* in Constantinople originated from patrons with high connections in the capital. The process of establishing these multipurpose estates involved finding a small monastic complex in the city with its own urban and rural property: this could entail revenue-producing gardens, orchards, shops, and houses in the fortified area or at the harbors, as well as large fields with marginal vineyards and orchards in the Bithynian and Thracian hinterland. Monks were expected to travel regularly to their Constantinopolitan land and oversee economic and spiritual matters, and this apparently entailed contact with local authorities, economic transactions (perhaps also at Galata), as well as meetings with ecclesiastical figures, especially from Patriarchal circles. This process included the practice of charity and the management of assets destined to finance hospitals and other foundations.

The acquisition of Athonite property in Constantinople and its Bithynian and Thracian hinterland was concomitant with the increased visibility of leading Athonite figures in the public life of Constantinople and of the Empire. Patriarch Isaiah (1323–1332), who initiated the gifting of Constantinopolitan property to Athos, had been a member of the Lavra community before 1323, whereas the monk Niphon, who intervened in favor of the Lavra in 1342, may have also been an Athonite. When Kallistos I (1350–1353, 1354–1363) became patriarch, followed by Philotheos Kokkinos (1353–1354, 1364–1376), who orchestrated the cession of St Demetrios at the Plateia to the Lavriotes, the Athonite community reached the height of its ecclesiastical power and its impact on developments in the capital city was particularly strong.³⁸ This enhanced position was established at approximately the same time as the expansion of the

36 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 2, no. 109, p. 265, lines 10–24: εἰς τὴν ἐπάνω καὶ κάτω θάλασσαν, ἔτι τέ εἰς τὴν (...) Κωνσταντινούπολιν καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ κάστρα πάντα καὶ τὰς νήσους.

37 Ekaterini Mitsiou, “Das Doppelkloster des Patriarchen Athanasios I. in Konstantinopel: historisch-prosopographische und wirtschaftliche Beobachtungen,” *JÖB* 58 (2008), 99–106.

38 John Meyendorff, “Mount Athos in the Fourteenth Century: Spiritual and Intellectual Legacy,” *DOP* 42 (1988), 158–163.

Vatopedi and Lavra *metochia*. Although the Hilandar dependency had been inaugurated slightly earlier, thanks to an international player on the rise (the Serbian ruler Milutin), it seems that the conspicuous presence of Athos in the economic and ecclesiastical affairs of Constantinople, fueled by the monasteries' relationships with the imperial family and with the social elites, was a manifestation of two aspects of the same phenomenon. Indeed, the presence of influential patriarchs originating from the ranks of Athos and willing to sanction the establishment, organization, and growth of Athonite dependencies in Constantinople and its hinterland must have triggered a sense of optimism among their fellow monks from the Holy Mountain that they could launch large-scale projects in the heart of the Byzantine Empire and play a role in the entangled economic networks of the Eastern Mediterranean after the middle of the 14th century. Conversely, the expanding fortunes of the Athonites toward the islands and the coast of Asia Minor were an encouraging sign for the ecclesiastical and secular authorities that the great monasteries of Athos could be viewed as a reliable solution to the problems of administering monastic land in Ottoman-ruled Bithynia.

The great Athonite dependencies in Constantinople disappear from the archival records by the end of the 14th century. It is likely that these estates suffered greatly from the military campaigns and the Ottoman expansion in Thrace, which must have compromised the stability of the *metochia*, by depriving them of their productive hinterland.³⁹ Moreover, the events of the 1380s, especially the first Ottoman conquest of Athos, must have resulted in the disruption, or at least aggravation, of communications between the Athonite monasteries and the region of Constantinople. For example, the area of Enneakosia, where the Vatopedi *metochion* was situated, is referred to as borderland already in the 1360s.⁴⁰

The Athonite monasteries reappeared as owners of real estate in Constantinople during the 15th century, but on a much smaller scale. The minor monastery of Hagion Panton, founded around the middle of the 15th century and absorbed by the Lavra in the 16th century, received a donation in 1445 (i.e., at a time when Athos was already under Ottoman rule) from the Cretan merchant Theodore Batatzes, who had established his business in Constantinople. Batatzes donated a building, probably a workshop, which was situated in the

39 Raül Estantüi-Gómez, *Byzance face aux ottomans: Exercice du pouvoir et contrôle du territoire sous les derniers Paléologues (milieu xive – milieu xve siècle)*, (Publications de la Sorbonne. Série Byzantina Sorbonensia) 28 (Paris, 2014), pp. 271–313.

40 Külzer, *Ostthrakien*, p. 350.

area of the Oraia Gate, outside the Golden Horn fortifications, in exchange for commemorations of the donor and his family.⁴¹ This pattern, i.e. the donation of an industrial installation on the shore of the Golden Horn, is reminiscent of analogous gifts dating from the 14th century, but this time no fields in Thrace or the Bosphorus were included and the property is not attested in Athonite hands after 1453.

Shortly after the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople, Vatopedi acquired the famous monastery of Christ of the Chora (well-known for its role in Palaiologan culture, especially under its patron, the great scholar and statesman Theodore Metochites) as a *metochion*, thanks to a generous donation by Mara Branković, the daughter of the Serbian despot George Branković.⁴² An act by the Cadi of Serres in the archival collection of Vatopedi describes the property in Mara's possession, which was supposed to pass to the Athonite monks: it included a mill and a bakery, a granary (conceivably for storing produce from cultivated lands belonging to the Chora), as well as vineyards in the surroundings of the historic monastic foundation.⁴³ This appears to have been an ambitious attempt to revive the 14th-century *metochia* with their multifaceted building facilities and organized networks, which would have signaled the dynamic return of Vatopedi to the scene of Constantinople. However, the Athonite monastery was eventually unable to hold on to the property and the

41 *Actes de Lavra*, 3, no. 170, pp. 188–191; Thierry Ganchou, “Giacomo Badoer et kyr Théodôros Batatzès, “chomarchier di pesi” à Constantinople (lor. 1401–1449),” *REB* 61 (2003), 49–95. For this gate, which can be identified with the Ottoman Oryakapi, see: Neslihan Asutay-Effenberger, “Die ‘porta veteris rectoris’ und weitere Tore der Mauer am Goldenen Horn—Zu einer osmanischen Stadtansicht von Istanbul aus dem 16. Jahrhundert,” in *Fund-Stücke—Spuren-Suche, Georges Bloch Annual 2010/2011*, eds. Adriano Boschetti-Maradi and Barbara Dieterich (Berlin—Boston, 2011), pp. 133–134.

42 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 3, appendix XII, no. 3, ed. Jacques Lefort et al., Raül Estangüi-Gómez, (ArchAth) 23 (Paris, 2019), pp. 439–440; Nicholas Melvani, “Patronage in Constantinople after 1453,” in *Ἐν Σοφία μαθητεύσαντες: Essays in Byzantine Material Culture and Society in Honour of Sophia Kalopissi-Verti*, eds. Charikleia Diamanti and Anastasia Vassileiou (Oxford, 2019), pp. 415–416. For Mara, see Mihailo Popović, *Mara Branković: Eine Frau zwischen dem christlichen und dem islamischen Kulturkreis im 15. Jahrhundert*, (Peleus, Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Griechenlands und Zyperns) 45 (Mainz, 2010).

43 Halil İnalçık, *The Survey of Istanbul, 1455: The Text, English Translation, Analysis of the Text, Documents* (İnalçık, Halil, 1916–2016. Works, Selections), 6 (Istanbul, 2013), p. 310. The vast landed property of the Chora was due to its early Palaiologan restorer, Theodore Metochites: Ihor Ševčenko, “Theodore Metochites, the Chora, and the Intellectual Trends of his Time,” in *Studies in the Art of the Kariye Djami and Its Intellectual Background*, ed. Paul Underwood, (The Kariye Djami) 4; (Bollingen Series) 70 (Princeton, 1975), pp. 17–92; Kostis Smyrlis, “Contextualizing Theodore Metochites and his Refoundation of the Chora,” *REB* 80 (2022), 69–111.

donation apparently remained only on paper, since the Chora monastery was shortly afterwards converted into an Islamic shrine (in the early years of the 16th century).⁴⁴

Later, in 1546, a widow known by the family name Pegene, apparently a member of a wealthy Greek family in Ottoman Istanbul, dedicated a two-story house in the southern area of Kontoskalion, modern Kumkapı, to the recently-founded monastery of Stavroniketa.⁴⁵ The Greek community was well represented in this part of the city, according to the 1540 and 1544 population censuses, as were the Armenians. Fifty-five Christian hearths are attested at Kumkapı, a number consistent with the data regarding other maritime neighborhoods in 16th-century Istanbul, where the Greek element was particularly strong.⁴⁶ This donation of a building close to a harbor is reminiscent of older practices from Byzantine times. The same donor was also the source of a 13th-century illustrated Gospel book (Stavroniketa, cod. 56) which bears a note with her full name, Euphrosyne Pegene, on fol. 186^v, after the main text of the gospels.⁴⁷ The manuscript was actually donated to the Athonite monastery by the *prohegoumenos* Ioasaph (according to another note on fol. 4^r), but it is possible that Ioasaph acquired it during a trip to Constantinople within the framework of Stavroniketa's transactions with Euphrosyne Pegene. That the networks of *metochia* also served as channels for the circulation of objects is known from other cases, already since Byzantine times: an icon of the Virgin Psychosostria from the eponymous monastery in Constantinople (mentioned above as a dependency of Vatopedi) ended up in Ohrid through its early 14th-century *ktetor* Gregory, who, after endowing his Constantinopolitan foundation, became archbishop in the Macedonian city, taking the panel with him.⁴⁸

44 Robert Ousterhout, *The Architecture of the Kariye Camii in Istanbul*, (DOS) 25 (Washington, D.C., 1987), pp. 4–11.

45 Antonis Giannakopoulos, *Αρχείο της Ι.Μ. Σταυρονικήτα* (Athens, 2001), pp. 56–58.

46 Stéphane Yerasimos, “Les Grecs d’Istanbul après la conquête ottomane,” *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 107–110 (2005), 375–399.

47 Giorgos Galavaris, *Ιερά Μονή Σταυρονικήτα: Εικονογραφημένα χειρόγραφα. Από τον 10ο έως τον 17ο αιώνα* (Mount Athos, 2007), pp. 149–166. Galavaris, based on the ink of the note, which is very similar to the one used for the main text of the book, had suggested that Euphrosyne Pegene was the scribe of the manuscript, but there seems to be no direct evidence connecting Pegene with the book. From the prosopographical point of view it seems more likely that the name is associated with the seller of the same name known from the 1546 document.

48 *Byzantium, Faith and Power (1261–1557)*, Exhibition Catalogue, Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, 2003), pp. 179–180. Perhaps the icon, an early Palaiologan example of the Hodegetria image, was regarded by Gregory as an effective means to link his see with Constantinople.

Thus, by the 15th and 16th centuries the concept of a large *metochion* based in Constantinople and operating as a large-scale economic unit had been abandoned. Mara's ambitious plan to endow Vatopedi with the property of the Chora monastery was apparently unsuccessful and remained an isolated endeavor. Apart from this exception, whenever Athonite presence is mentioned in 15th- or 16th-century Constantinople, it is centered on small urban properties, such as storage facilities, shops, or residential buildings. The continuity in terms of location (i.e. consistent presence of Athonite property in the harbor areas) seems to agree with the demography of the transition from the late Palaiologan to the early Ottoman phase of the city, when the Greek population of Constantinople/Kostantiniyye remained economically active on the strips of land by the Golden Horn and the Marmara shore; the donation of this type of property to Stavroniketa in the 16th century shows the willingness of the re-organized Orthodox population to maintain ties with Athos.

To conclude, Athonite expansion toward the Bosphorus in the 14th century appears to have been an extraordinarily ambitious, but short-lived experiment that was facilitated by the enhanced visibility of the great monastic center in Palaiologan Constantinople. For most of their history, Athonites were rarely active east of Adrianople, but nevertheless remained physically present in the Byzantine and later the Ottoman capital and never lost touch with economic developments and social elites in the heart of the respective empires.

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PART 2

***Problems of Property: Founding and Financing
Monasteries on Medieval Mount Athos***



General Legal Norms for Monastic Property in Byzantium and Their Implementation on Mount Athos: The Case of Hilandar

Kirill A. Maksimovič

1 Introduction

Practitioners of monastic austerity in the early Christian epoch sought to achieve a perfect spiritual state, that of “an earthly angel, a heavenly man.”¹ That implied, along with other means of physical and spiritual training, an almost complete rejection of ‘creature comforts,’ primarily of property. From the end of the 3rd century on, inspired by Christ’s commandments to leave one’s family and property behind, to take up one’s cross and follow Him,² thousands of ascetics populated the Egyptian and Palestinian deserts. Initially, the monks lived either in full isolation, as so-called “hermits” or “recluses” (ἀναχωρηταί, ἀσκηταί, ἀποτακτικοί), or assembled in small groups of disciples under the leadership of a person of authority. St Anthony the Great (251–356) is believed to have been the first outstanding leader of such groups. The solitary life in the desert was advantageous in the times of paganism and persecutions of Christians by the Roman state. Beginning with the twenties of the 4th century, after the religious reforms of the saint-emperor Constantine I, or, perhaps, even earlier,³ the monks under Pachomios the Great (282–346) in Egypt and under

1 Cf. lat. *terrestris angelus, caelestis homo*; Greek: ἐπίγειος ἄγγελος καὶ οὐράνιος ἄνθρωπος. This was a typical way of addressing or describing a saint in Christian hymns or prayers. This commonplace was evidently referred to by the emperor Nikephoros II Phokas in his famous novel of 964 restricting the acquisition of properties by monasteries: “Look with me into the life of the Holy Fathers who once thrived in Egypt, Palestine, Alexandria and in many other places of the world, and you will find that it was simple, so simple indeed that they appear to have been living only with their souls and to have reached the bodily form of angels,” (cited after: Peter Charanis, “The Monastic Properties and the State in the Byzantine Empire,” *DOP* 4 (1948), 56). For an analytical survey of contents and bias of the novel see: Rosemary Morris, *Monks and Laymen in Byzantium, 843–1118* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 166–168.

2 Cf. Matt. 8:22; 10:38; 19:21; Mark 8:34.

3 Cf.: Hermann Weingarten, *Der Ursprung des Mönchtums im nachkonstantinischen Zeitalter* (Gotha, 1877), pp. 1–36; Karl Heussi, *Der Ursprung des Mönchtums* (Tübingen, 1936); Dervas J. Chitty, *The Desert A City. An Introduction to the Study of Egyptian and Palestinian Monas-*

Hilarion the Great (291–371) in Palestine started founding so-called ‘cenobitic’ (communal) monasteries, which then became more and more common in deserts and mountains, later also in towns and cities.

Immediately after the foundation of the first monasteries, the vexed question of their material basis arose. Early on, very concise regulations are contained in the church canons of the early epoch. The Byzantine emperors later issued a number of state laws (novels), in which the topic of monastic property was discussed in detail. By the time of the foundation of the Great Lavra by St Athanasios the Athonite in the 10th century, Byzantine law already had at its disposal a vast variety of norms regarding regulation of church property. The present contribution seeks to outline basic legal approaches to church property in general and to that of monasteries in particular.

2 *Res sacrae* as an Object of Divine Law: The Principle of the Inalienability of Church Property⁴

According to the statement of a prominent Dutch historian of Byzantine law, “The treatment of almost any subject in Byzantine law has to begin with Roman legal doctrine and its exposition in the Justinianic legislation, and, if it has an ecclesiastical aspect, its regulation in the canons.”⁵ In accordance with this incontrovertibly correct approach, this contribution’s analysis of a concrete legal phenomena will begin with an outline of the juridical norms, on which the Byzantine legal practices were based.

ticism under the Christian Empire (Crestwood, NY, 1966); Ewa Wipszycka, *The Second Gift of the Nile: Monks and Monasteries in Late Antique Egypt* (The Journal of Juristic Papyrology. Supplement) 33 (Warsaw, 2018); for Palestine: Joseph Patrich, *Sabas, Leader of Palestinian Monasticism: A Comparative Study in Eastern Monasticism, Fourth to Seventh Centuries*, (DOS) 32 (Washington, DC, 1995).

4 The following concise description of the Byzantine civil as well as ecclesiastical legislation regulating issues of church property is based on the (yet unpublished) version of the *Nomocanon in 14 Titles* with Theodore Balsamon’s commentary, substantially enlarged by the Anonymus Sinaiticus at the very end of the 12th century, s.: Kirill A. Maksimovič, “Die anonyme Überarbeitung des Nomokanon in 14 Titeln im Codex Sinaiticus gr. 1117 (14. Jh.)” (with literature; in press). It seems reasonable to analyze Athonite documents concerning monastic properties with the background of the relevant Justinianic legislation. Besides, given the lack of scholarly surveys of this kind (at least in English, see n. 5 below), this summary may be of value for all historians of law whose research deals with church and, especially, with monastic property not only on Achos, but also in other monastic centers of the Byzantine world.

5 Bernard Stolte, “Law for Founders,” in *Founders and Refounders of Byzantine Monasteries*

According to the *Institutes* (2.1.7–8) and the *Digest* (1.8.6.3) of Justinian, a thing is regarded as divine if it were publicly dedicated to God by pontiffs.⁶ The *Digest* (1.8.1.pr.) states that sacred things (*res sacrae*) belong to divine jurisdiction (*ius divinum*) and, therefore, have no proprietor.⁷ By implication, a sacred thing has no price and cannot be sold or bought or claimed as a private property.⁸ Only in one single case is a sacred thing (real estate) exchangeable—if the buyer wasn't aware of its sacred status. Otherwise, the purchase was regarded as illegal and had to be annulled.⁹

Below I will analyze other legal texts in which sale and purchase of sacred objects is allowed under certain conditions—those texts obviously contradict the just mentioned norm of the pricelessness of such things. It is just one of many cases of contradiction between the relevant regulations of Roman-Byzantine Law.

[*Papers of the Fifth Belfast Byzantine International Colloquium, Portaferry, Co. Down, 17–20 September 1998*], ed. Margaret Mullett, (Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations) 6/3 (Belfast, 2007), p. 137; on the topic see also: Waldemar Nissen, *Regelung des Klosterwesens im Rhömäerreiche bis zum Ende des 9. Jahrhunderts* (Hamburg, 1897); Gustav Pfannmüller, *Die kirchliche Gesetzgebung Justinians, hauptsächlich auf Grund der Novellen* (Berlin, 1902); August Knecht, *System des Justinianschen Kirchenvermögensrechtes*, (Kirchenrechtliche Abhandlungen) 22 (Stuttgart, 1905; repr.: Amsterdam, 1963); Hamilkar Alivisatos, *Die kirchliche Gesetzgebung des Kaisers Justinian I* (Berlin, 1913; repr.: Aalen, 1973); the chapter “Monasteries and the Law” in: Rosemary Morris, *Monks and Laymen in Byzantium*, pp. 145–165; Eleutheria Papagianni, “Legal Institutions and Practice in Matters of Ecclesiastical Property,” in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, eds. Angeliki Laiou et al., 3 vols (Washington, DC, 2002), 3: 1059–1068 (both with further literature); Mary K. Farag, *What Makes a Church Sacred? Legal and Ritual Perspectives from Late Antiquity* (Oakland, CA, 2021).

6 *Institutes* 2.1.7–8, ed. Paulus Krueger, *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, 3 vols (Berlin, 1954), 110; *Digest* 1.8.6.2–3, ed. Theodorus Mommsen, *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, 3 vols (Berlin, 1954), 1:39–40.

7 *Digest* 1.8.1 pr., p. 39: *quod autem divini iuris est, id nullius in bonis est*.

8 *Digest* 1.8.9.5, p. 40: *Res sacra non recipit aestimationem; Institutes* 3.23.5, p. 40: *Loca sacra vel religiosa, item publica, veluti forum basilicam, frustra quis sciens emit, quas tamen si pro privatis vel profanis deceptus a venditore emerit, habebit actionem ex empto, quod non habere ei liceat, ut consequatur, quod sua interest deceptum eum non esse; Digest* 6.1.23.1, p. 121: *Loca sacra, item religiosa, quasi nostra in rem actione peti non possunt*.

9 *Digest* 18.1.4, p. 263: *Et liberi hominis et loci sacri et religiosi, qui haberi non potest, emptio intellegitur, si ab ignorante emitur; D* 18.1.6 pr., p. 263: *Sed Celsus filius ait hominem liberum scientem te emere non posse nec cuiuscumque rei si scias alienationem esse: ut sacra et religiosa loca aut quorum commercium non sit, ut publica, quae non in pecunia populi, sed in publico usu habeantur, ut est campus Martius; Digest* 18.1.62.1–2, p. 267: *Qui nesciens loca sacra vel religiosa vel publica pro privatis comparavit, licet emptio non teneat, ex empto tamen adversus venditorem experietur, ut consequatur quod interfuit eius, ne deciperetur. Res in aversione empti, si non dolo venditoris factum sit, ad periculum emptoris pertinebit, etiamsi res adsignata non sit. Cf. above Institutes* 3.23.5.

2.1 *Individual Poverty vs. Communal Property: Poverty as One of the Monastic Vows*

Beginning in the 8th century, as the first formal rites of monastic tonsure arose, the novice (in reply to questions posed by the abbot) made three basic vows (ἐπαγγελίαι): that of celibacy, that of poverty (rejection of any kind of property), and that of obedience. In the times of the Primitive Church the vows, albeit not in a unified and commonly-accepted form, had been also expressively formulated during the act of consecration of a monk.¹⁰

However, the needs of organized cenobitic life made it impossible to exclude the purchase of property. Indeed, monks needed food and clothes, as well as sacred objects for the liturgy. To secure the livelihood for everyday life, monasteries had to possess considerable sums of money or, at least, produce some market-goods for sale or exchange. By implication, monasteries were not able to neglect property as such, they could only observe certain rules for the 'pious use' of property. The basic rule of cenobitic life was that every single monk wasn't allowed to possess any property, whereas a church or a monastery as an institution had the right to ownership. This rule was common for civil as well as for canon law.

2.2 *Monastic Ownership. Legal and Illegal Ways of Acquiring Property up to the Age of Justinian: Wills*

From the year 321 a single church community could function as a legal heir of bequeathed property.¹¹ In the fifth Novel of Justinian (a. 535), which deals with the organization of monastic life in general and with issues of bequeathing property before entering a monastery in particular, the norm of bequeathing property to a church is applied to monasteries. Chapter five states that he who retired to a monastery had to bequeath almost all of his property to this "divine house", excepting a quarter of it (the so called 'Falcidian Share'), which was to be divided between his children according to intestate succession (inheritance *ab intestato*, Gr. ἐξ ἀδιαθέτου), or excepting the part of the property which was to be given to his wife in case of death of her spouse.

10 Cf.: Daniel Oltean, *Devenir moine à Byzance: coutumes sociales, règles monastiques et rituels liturgiques*, (Bibliothèque de Byzantion) 24; (Orientalia Lovaniensia analecta) 291 (Leuven, 2020), pp. 16–29, 223, 233, 317, 319.

11 *Codex Justinianus* 1.2.1, ed. Paulus Krueger, *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, 3 vols (Berlin, 1954), 2:12 [a. 321]; *Codex Justinianus* 1.2.13, p. 13 [a. 455]. Cf. similar regulations in the following centuries up to the great codification of the *Basilica* (9th century): *Codex Justinianus* 1.2.23 and 25 (both a. 530); 1.3.45-9, 12–14 (a. 530); *Institutes* 4.6.19; *Novels* 131.9 (a. 545) = *Basilica* 5.3.10; *Novels* 131.12.2.

Thus, the monastery was actually regarded as a *legatarius*—the recipient of a bequest / *legatum* (ληγάτον), that is of the three-quarters' part of the legacy which remained after the subtraction of the Falcidian Share.¹² By means of such prescriptions of state laws monasteries, as well as churches and other 'divine houses,' were included in the traditional Roman regulation of the acquisition of property through inheritance and became an object of civil ecclesiastical legislation.

It is obvious that the regulation of the fifth Novel implied that, by embracing the monastic life, a novice had to share his property with his new domicile. True, Justinian modified the regulation of the fifth Novel by issuing his 76th Novel three years later (a. 538). It is stated here that before an owner took the monastic tonsure, his private property might be given to his children (or other persons) in its entirety, and not as just the Falcidian Share. However, this applied only to those who had entered a monastery before the year 535, that is before the fifth Novel was issued (since a law is not retroactive). Hence, those who became monks after that year had to obey the law then in force, that is the fifth Novel.

In the fifth Novel by Leo the Wise from the early 10th century, some innovations were made. The novel states that someone who had chosen monastic life but thereafter inherited some property could dispose of it as he wished if he had, when he came to the monastery, brought some property with him. If not, he was to dispose only of the 2/3 of the inherited bequest, whereas the remaining third share would fall to the monastery.¹³

2.3 Donations

Donations were a common way of acquiring church or monastic property. Most donations were bound to certain conditions, often including the liturgical commemoration of the donor. Thus, according to the *Codex Justinianus* (6.48.1.16; 26), donations to divine houses had an eternal legal force, and were immune to any kind of claims and/or lawsuits.¹⁴ Indeed, even in the case of errant dona-

12 Cf. *Digest* 35.2.1.5, 1:549: *Ad municipum quoque legata vel etiam ea, quae deo relinquuntur, lex Falcidia pertinet.*

13 Leo VI, *Novels*, no. 5, ed. Spyros N. Troianos, *Οι νεαρές Λέοντος Γ' τοῦ Σοφοῦ* [The novels of Leo the Wise] (Athens, 2009), pp. 54–60; cf. Efi Ragia, "Μονές ως περιουσιακά στοιχεία: η περίπτωση του Αγίου Όρους (10ος–11ος αι.) [Monasteries as assets: The case of the Holy Mountain, 10th–11th centuries]," in *Αντικλήνωρ, Τιμητικός Τόμος Σπύρου Ν. Τρωιάνου*, 2 vols (Athens, 2013), 2:1513, n. 10.

14 *Codex Justinianus* 6.48.1.16; 26, 2:277–278 (a. 528–529).

tions, the property couldn't be claimed back.¹⁵ *Codex Justinianus* 1.2.22.pr. prescribed the exemption of donated property from any tax or duty.¹⁶

2.4 *Illegal Divorce*

According to Novel 117 (a. 542) of Justinian, monasteries might also profit from cases of illegal divorce. Indeed, in the Novel (chapter 13) it is stated that if a wife divorced (ῥεπούδιον πέμψη) her husband for illegal reasons, she was to be punished by lifelong enclosure in a monastery. Her children—if she had any—were to then receive two thirds (δίμοιρον) of her own property, while a third part was to go to the monastery. If she had no children, the monastery would receive the “children’s” half of the property.¹⁷

2.5 *Adultery*

A curious case of enclosure in a monastery as punishment for female adultery, which brought certain material advantages for the monastery, is found in a number of civil laws. The Novels 117.8.2 init. (a. 542) and 134.10pr.4–13 + 134.10.1–2 (a. 556) by Justinian determine concrete shares of property which the guilty wife has to bring to the monastery—namely 1/3 (τετραοὔγκιον) if she had children (who would then receive the rest), or 2/3 if she has only relatives on the ascending line who were not involved in the adultery. If they were, or the wife had no relatives at all, the monastery would receive the entire property.¹⁸ These norms were then some three and a half centuries later repeated in Novel 32 by Leo the Wise.¹⁹

2.6 *Illegal Transactions with Church Real Estate*

Another way of monasteries acquiring property is stated in Novel 7 of Justinian (a. 535), which forbade any kind of alienation of church real estate, such as by sale, donation, exchange, leasing, and loan collateral/pledge (ch. 5).²⁰ More-

15 *Institutes* 3.27.7, p. 42.

16 *Codex Justinianus* 1.2.22 pr., p. 16.

17 *Novels of Justinian*, no. 117, ed. Rudolph Schoell and Guilelmus Kroll, *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, 3 vols (Berlin, 1954), 3:562–563.

18 *Novels of Justinian*, nos 117.8.2 init. (a. 542) and 134.10pr.4–13 + 134.10.1–2 (a. 556), 3:557–558; 685–686.

19 *Novels of Leo VI*, no. 32, pp. 130–131. These curious legal prescriptions of women's punishment for adultery haven't been treated in the chapter “Adultery” (L'adultère) in the voluminous monograph by Joëlle Beaucamp, *Le statut de la femme à Byzance (4.–7. siècle)*, 2 vols (Paris, 1990–1992), 1: 139–170.

20 *Novels of Justinian*, no. 7.5, pp. 57–58. This norm is then repeated in the 9th century in the

over, if a creditor, when loaning money to a monastery, accepted church real estate as collateral for the loan, he would lose his money as well as the collateral in favor of the monastery.²¹ The same, or an even harsher, punishment occurs in ch. 7 for leasing real estate of a church or monastery—in that case the property would go back to the divine house, whereas the unlucky businessman would be forced “all the time/throughout” (*continuo*) to pay the rent according to the lease agreement, even if the leased object no longer remained at his disposal.²²

In ch. 10 of the same Novel it is stated that the prohibition of renting or leasing of church real estate remains unchangeable, even if someone refers to a certain ‘divine order,’ that is to an edict of the emperor, which proscribed such misuse of Church property.²³

The unalienable nature of church real estate couldn’t, in its turn, remain free from exceptions, the needs of earthly life being necessary even for those who dedicated themselves to spiritual austerity. A special case of alienation is mentioned in the 120th Novel of Justinian (a. 544), which stated (c. 7 §1 init.) that a church or a monastery has the right to sell its real estate if it stood under many public charges and if its possession brought material or financial ruin to the divine house.²⁴ This is the only exception regarding alienation of church real estate that I could find in Byzantine legal texts.

2.7 *Illegal Transactions with Liturgical Objects (Primarily with Sacred Vessels)*

A punishment similar to that for alienation of real estate is prescribed in the civil law for the alienation (in the form of purchase or collateral) of liturgical objects—such as sacred vestments, vessels, and the like. Every transaction of that kind was regarded as illegal, so unworthy businessmen would lose their money along with the sacred object, which had been misused for profane purposes.²⁵

An exception could only be made if the liturgical objects were sold for a noble purpose—such as the ransom of Christian captives (Nov. 7.8).²⁶ Another exception was reserved for this case in the Nov. 120.10 (s. above), which prescribed that the liturgical objects could be sold to another church or divine

“Photian” *Nomocanon in Fourteen Titles*, tit. XI, ch. 1, 4–5, see: Stolte, “Law for Founders,” pp. 124–125.

21 *Novels of Justinian*, no. 7.6, p. 58.

22 *Novels of Justinian*, no. 7.7, p. 59.

23 *Novels of Justinian*, no. 7.10, p. 61.

24 *Novels of Justinian*, no. 120, pp. 586–587.

25 Cf.: *Codex Justinianus* 1.2.21, p. 16; *Institutes* 2.1.8, p. 10; *Novels* 7.5; 120.10 pp. 57–58; 586–587.

26 *Novels of Justinian*, no. 7.8, p. 59.

house, if the donating church had no need of them and if the resulting income was needed to cover the debts of another church.

Hence, the legal norms regarding liturgical objects are based on the same principle of the inalienability of church property, but still they allowed two exceptions: liturgical objects could be sold or otherwise alienated either for the ransom of Christian captives or to make them available for other divine houses—but only if the sacred objects were redundant and the donating church didn't need them for its own divine services.

The regulations mentioned above illustrate very clearly two basic principles of handling church property in Christian Roman Law—1) the inalienability of church real estate (church liturgical objects, by way of exception, might be alienated—however, for a very small number of reasons), and 2) material punishment for an illegal alienation, with compensation in favor of the church.

2.8 *Canon Law as a Legal System Regulating Issues of Monastic Property*

According to canon law, church property had a sacred status; consequently, the foundation of monasteries was considered a dedication and a gift to God (Protodeut 1). As such, the property of monasteries enjoyed the status of *res sacrae* and, therefore, were to remain inalienable.²⁷ By contrast with the civil legislation regarding church property, canon law from the very beginning made no distinction between church liturgical objects and real estate. Most of the canons operate with the generalizing notion “church things” (ἐκκλησιαστικά πράγματα) (Ap 38, Chalc 24) or, sometimes, with quite concrete designations, as a “golden vessel,” “silver vessel” or “sacred veil” (Ap 73; Protodeut 10).

The bishop was to supervise church property as a “manager appointed by God” (ὡς θεοῦ οἰκονόμος). He was not allowed to dispose of church property as if it were his own (Ap 38).²⁸ Moreover, the person who misused sacred objects for private purposes was to be excommunicated (Ap 73; Protodeut 10).²⁹ Liturgical objects and real estate were inalienable (Cyr Alex ad Domnum, c. 2). At the beginning of the 5th century, for the first time in canon law the distinction was drawn between real estate (κτήσεις ἀκίνητοι) and liturgical vessels (χειμήλια).³⁰ Transactions resulting in the alienation of church property were legally

27 *Discipline générale antique (Ive–IXe s.)*, ed. Périclès-Pierre Joannou, 2 vols (Rome 1962–1963), 1.2: Les canons des Synodes Particuliers, 448.2. See also: Stolte, ‘Law for Founders,’ p. 126.

28 Joannou, *Discipline générale antique*, 1.2: 66–67; 26–27.

29 Joannou, *Discipline générale antique*, 1.2: 45; 464–467.

30 Joannou, *Discipline générale antique*, 2:280: Χειμήλια μὲν γὰρ καὶ κτήσεις ἀκινήτους ἀνεκ-

invalid if they were made in absence of the bishop (Ancy 15, 11 Nic 12).³¹ Finally, monks had no right to ownership, since all they had possessed belonged to the monastery (Protodeut 6).³²

3 Issues of Property in the Extant Monastic Documents of the Middle Ages (General Overview)

In the extant (and very extensive) literature on topics of monastic property in the Middle Ages, there are many striking examples of the great importance this topic had in certain epochs and places.³³ From small hermitages of ascetics of the early days of Christianity to the much larger cenobitic institutions of the Early Middle Ages, then to ‘idiorrhymic’ ones of the late Byzantine period and up to the famous dispute between ‘Josephites’ and ‘non-possessors’ in Muscovite Russia in the late 15th–16th centuries—during the whole evolution of monastic life the issue of property remained the focus of activity of secular legislators and church canonists.

Since the 7th century the so-called ‘stauropegial’ monasteries are known—as regards their legal status, they were subordinate not to local bishops, but directly to patriarchs.³⁴ This was the first step on the way to a gradual emancipation of monastic institution from the local churches. In the early 9th century the ‘imperial’ monasteries (μοναστήρια βασιλικά or μοναστήρια τοῦ δημοσίου)—that is those founded by the emperor or his family members—appear, marking an important milestone in the history of Byzantine monasticism.³⁵ Thereafter, a monastery might be founded not only by ecclesiastical authorities (local bishops, patriarchs), but also by private persons, who were responsible also for material upkeep of the newly-founded monastic houses.

The appearance of private monastic institutions meant, according to some interpretations, a further emancipation of Byzantine monasticism from church

ποιήτως ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις σώζεσθαι χρή, θαρσεῖσθαι δὲ τοὺς κατὰ καιρὸν τὴν θεῖαν διέποντας ἱερωσύνην τῶν παραπιπτόντων ἀναλωμάτων τὴν οἰκονομίαν.

31 Joannou, *Discipline générale antique*, 1.1: 66–67; 266–268.

32 Joannou, *Discipline générale antique*, 1.2: 457–459.

33 See, for example, the recent edited volume: Roumen Avramov et al. (eds), *Monastic Economy Across Time. Wealth Management, Patterns and Trends* (Sofia, 2021).

34 On which see: Warren Becket Soule, “The Stauropegial Monastery,” *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 66 (2000), 147–168.

35 On which see: Rosa Benoit-Meggenis, *L'empereur et le moine: les relations du pouvoir impérial avec les monastères à Byzance: IXe–XIIe siècle* (Lyon, 2017).

tutelage.³⁶ The next step in this direction was the introduction in the late 10th century of the so called “independent,” “self-managing,” or “free” (*autodespota*, *autexousia*, *eleuthera*) monasteries, which were not subject to any church or worldly authority.³⁷ At the same time, or even earlier, the institute of *charistike*—donation of monasteries to private persons—became a logical continuation of the phenomenon of the emancipation and ‘privatization’ of monastic houses.³⁸ This process reached its apex in the introduction of the so-called *idiorrhymia* (self-regulation) of monasteries.³⁹ The ‘idiorrhhythmic’ monasteries, in which monks, contrary to primitive monastic ideals of the rejection of every material value, were allowed to neglect the communal life and to possess property, appeared in Byzantium in the 14th century and gradually prevailed over the traditional *koinobia*. This last phenomenon, according to some views, marked the definite victory by which the earthly ‘reality’ won over the heavenly ‘theory.’⁴⁰

The growing independence of monasteries from church guardianship meant, by necessity, their exclusion from the material supply by the church.

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- 36 On the topic see the recent studies by Zachary Chitwood, “Stiftungsorganisation,” in *Enzyklopädie des Stiftungswesens in mittelalterlichen Gesellschaften*, Bd. 2: *Das soziale System Stiftung*, ed. Michael Borgolte (Berlin, 2016), pp. 564–567; idem, “The Proprietary Church and Monastery in Byzantium and the Eastern Christian World,” *Viator* 47.3 (2016), 27–46 (both with further literature); Stolte, “Law for Founders,” pp. 128–131 (with literature); Benoit-Meggenis, *L'empereur et le moine*, pp. 173–179; Johannes Pahlitzsch, “Bischöfe und ihre Stiftungen in Byzanz (10.–12. Jahrhundert),” in: *Die ‘Episcopalisation der Kirche’ im europäischen Vergleich/The ‘Episcopalization of the Church’ in European Comparison*, eds. Andreas Bihrer and Hedwig Röckelein, (Studien zur Germania Sacra N.F.) 13 (Berlin—Boston, 2022), pp. 285–300.
- 37 See the studies: John Philip Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire*, (DOS) 24 (Washington, D.C., 1987); and especially *BMFD*; with regard to the *hypotyposis* of the monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis (11th century), see: Stolte, “Law for Founders,” pp. 136–137.
- 38 On the early development of the institution of the *charisticariat* (whose beginnings on Mount Athos can be observed already in the second half of the 10th century), see: Ragia, “Μονές ως περιουσιακά στοιχεία,” 2:1514, 1534–1537; see also: Mark C. Bartusis, “Charistikion,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, eds. Alexander P. Kazhdan et al., 3 vols (Oxford, 1991): 1:412–413 (both with further literature).
- 39 Placidus de Meester, *De monachico statu iuxta disciplinam byzantinam* (Vatican City, 1942), p. 5; Philip Meyer, “Beiträge zur Kenntnis der neueren Geschichte und des gegenwärtigen Zustandes der Athosklöster, pt. 1–2,” *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 11 (1890), 405–412.
- 40 Cf.: Ioannes M. Konidares, *Το δίκαιον της μοναστηριακής περιουσίας από του 9ου μέχρι του 12ου αιώνα* [The law of monastic property from the 9th to the 12th century] (Athens, 1979), pp. 21, 29; Efi Ragia, “Μονές ως περιουσιακά στοιχεία,” 2:1541 (with literature). Nowadays, however, there are no longer any idiorrhhythmic monasteries on Athos.

Monasteries had to cover their material needs⁴¹ by themselves or, in many cases, through sponsorship by rich patrons. That is the reason why they became transformed, step by step, into a sort of Christian economic project, becoming in a number of cases amazingly effective agricultural enterprises. Thus, the issues of property had to play, and in fact played, an increasingly important role in monastic life from one century to another.

In the middle and the late Byzantine period monasteries acquired property primarily by means of legal acts, which are generally divided in primary and secondary ones. The primary acts were as follows:

- 1) Occupation (*occupatio*, κατάληψις)—the appropriation of an unclaimed object or plot of land, the latter especially for the foundation of a new monastery in a wilderness or other uninhabited area.
- 2) Long-term use (*usucapio* + *longi temporis praescriptio*, χρονία νομή)—for movable property acquisition could be made by three years of use, for real estate 10 or 20 years, depending on the presence or absence of the user.⁴² Justinian introduced an innovation (μακροῦ χρόνου παραγραφή), according to which the long-term use was prolonged for up to 30 years, for church estates even up to 40 years.⁴³ In case of litigation between churches, however, the term had to be the usual 30 years.⁴⁴
- 3) Usufruct (*usufructus*, καρποκτησία)—use of an alien property with the right of appropriation of fruits.
- 4) Monastic crafts and trading activities—working with one's own hands—such as through handicrafts (ἐργόχειρον), construction work, gardening, winery, apiary and the like—belonged to the main duties of a monk and is registered in many monastic charters (*typika*). Such goods and handicrafts were consumed in the monastery itself or sold in the local market (ἀγοραπωλησία, πρᾶσις, ὠνή).

41 Monasteries were interested in or, more probably, dependent upon profitable material possessions not only for covering their own everyday needs, but also for the sake of local bishops to whom they were obliged to pay a sort of a tax, the *kanonikon*; cf.: Konidares, *Δίκαιον*, p. 28. On the provenance and nature of the *kanonikon* see: Emil Herrmann, "Das bischöfliche Abgabewesen im Patriarchat von Konstantinopel vom XI. bis zur Mitte des XIX. Jahrhunderts," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 5 (1939): 447–457.

42 *Codex Justinianus* 7.31.1 = *Basilic.* 50.10.4.

43 *Codex Justinianus* 7.39.8.1 = *Basilic.* 50.14.9; *Basilic.* 5.3.7 = *Nov.* 131.6, cf. *Nov. Leon.* 104.

44 Cf. the commentary of Theodore Balsamon to *Chalc* 17, in: *RP*, ed. Georgios A. Rhalles and Michael Potles, *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων* [Syntagma of the divine and holy canons], 6 vols (Athens, 1852–1859), 2:262.14–19.

Among the secondary legal acts, the most important was the acquisition of property (mostly real estate) by donation.⁴⁵ The primary goal of much charitable activity by donors in favor of monastic houses seems to have been the motive of the salvation of soul by means of commemoration of the donor in the liturgy. Donations of this kind were marked in the documents with the special reference: εἰς ψυχικόν “as a part for (the benefit of) the soul”;⁴⁶ or εἰς μνημόσυνον “as a part for commemoration” (s. below).⁴⁷

As donors of real estate, Byzantine emperors and their family members should be first mentioned,⁴⁸ followed by the rulers of individual Christian monarchies—Hungarians, Serbs, Russians, Bulgarians, Georgians etc.—and local rulers of Western regions, such as Italy or Sicily. In addition, diverse churchmen of all ecclesiastical ranks (including those with monastic status⁴⁹) also acted as donors, as well as laypersons, both men and women.⁵⁰

The beneficiaries of these gifts, either in material values and/or incomes, were single monasteries, actually in the person of their founders (*ktetores*) and their successors as well as (in case of private donations) abbots and other members of administration, sometimes including even simple monks. In the documents usually the abbot is mentioned with the addition: καὶ πρὸς τὸ μέρος τῆς μονῆς (“and for monastery’s part”).⁵¹

The material substance of monastic property consisted of a number of diverse movable objects as well as of real estate. Movable things were of two

45 The legal basis for this had already been created in the early imperial legislation, s. above.

46 Konidares, *Δίκαιον*, p. 74.

47 For extensive information on the treatment of these two kinds of commemorative endowments in Byzantine law, see Eleutheria Papagiannē, “Περὶ “ψυχικῶν” καὶ “μνημοσύνων”: τὸ νομικὸ ὑπόβαθρο μιᾶς ἡθικῆς ὑποχρέωσης [Regarding *psychika* and *mnemosyna*: The legal background of an ethical obligation],” *Επιστημονικὴ Επετηρίδα Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Αριστοτελείου Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης. Τμήμα Θεολογίας* 13 (2008), 171–181.

48 It is no coincidence that, for example, in the extant Serbian lists of commemoration written on Athos, the *župans* of Raška and kings of Serbia are mentioned in the first place (cf. ms. Hil. Slav. 519, the oldest of the kind)—it reflects not only their royal and, accordingly, sacred status in the Church, but also highlights their key role as the benefactors of certain monasteries.

49 Konidares, *Δίκαιον*, p. 60, n. 19.

50 In the Athonite lists of commemoration (like in Hil. Slav. 519 mentioned above, n. 47) there are to be found a surprisingly large number of female names, signifying that both nuns as well as women of lay origin had evidently made a material contribution (donation or bequest) to the monastery—otherwise it would be unclear why they were commemorated in male monasteries, the access to which by female persons was strictly prohibited by a sort of Athonite unwritten law (the so-called *abaton*).

51 Konidares, *Δίκαιον*, pp. 61–63.

kinds—sacred and profane: among the sacred things we find relics of saints, liturgical vessels and garments, spiritual writings, icons, while profane things were sums of money, quantities of grain, mounts and other livestock.

The real estate in the possession of monasteries included parcels of land (beginning from the second half of the 11th century—along with the *paroikoi*, i.e. dependent peasants), islands in the sea, pastures and fields, forests, wineries and vineyards, apiaries, and even whole mountains. Other monasteries could also serve as objects of exchange or purchase objects.⁵²

The usual form of donation were royal (imperial) charters—“chrysobulls” (χρυσόβουλλοι λόγοι, or, more rarely, χρυσόβουλ(λ)α σιγγίλλια).⁵³ Private donations were formalized through simple acts (charters) of donation confirmed with seals and signatures of the donors.⁵⁴

4 Monastic Property on Mount Athos—The Case of Hilandar

The legal principles of the acquisition and administration of church and especially monastic property discussed above represent only a “theoretical” basis for the phenomenon. Its practical implementation demonstrates a number of peculiarities which differed from time to time and in different places. Rich material for legal studies is presented by the most famous monastic center of the Mediterranean: Mount Athos. On the one hand, we have at our disposal a large number of various documents (monastic founders’ statutes [*ktetorika typika*], charters, chrysobulls, contracts of purchase and sale, etc.) preserved in the Athonite monastic archives. On the other hand, these documents reflect close relations between single monasteries and state figures (Serbian *župans* and kings, emperors and high officials of Byzantium), between monasteries and ecclesiastical hierarchs, and—last but not least—economic ties (including sometimes litigation about property and/or boundaries) between monasteries and/or their subsidiary institutions.

52 Konidares, *Δίκαιον*, pp. 63–69. See also: Kostis Smyrlis, *La fortune des grands monastères byzantins: fin du xe – milieu du xive siècle* (Paris, 2006).

53 Cf.: Franz Dölger and Ioannis Karagiannopoulos, *Byzantinische Urkundenlehre. Bd. 1: Die Kaiserurkunden* (Munich, 1968), p. 117.

54 Konidares, *Δίκαιον*, p. 73. In early Byzantine times informal (unwritten) donations (ἄγραφοι δωρεαί) were also in common use, though transactions of this kind had to be attested by three witnesses (the number was increased to five by the empress Eirene [r. 797–802]). Normal, written transactions (ἔγγραφοι δωρεαί) required five witnesses, after the Novel of Eirene, however, seven were needed (*ibid.*, 72).

In this part of the article a brief overview will be offered of the earliest legal material concerning just one monastic institution on Mount Athos: the Serbian monastery of Hilandar. The acts of Hilandar (in Greek⁵⁵ and Slavonic) contain, along with historical, toponymic and prosopographical evidence, rich legal material, since they mostly concern issues of acquiring and administering property.

Seven charters in Slavonic granted to Hilandar over the course of the 12th–13th centuries by rulers of the Nemanjid dynasty are known, but surely not all of them are genuine:

1. A charter (chrysobull) by the monk Symeon (the former grand *župan* of Raška Stefan Nemanja, r. 1167–1196), attesting that the emperor of Byzantium, Alexios III Angelos, donated to Hilandar several estates (villages) near Prizren (now south of the Kosovo and Metokhija region).⁵⁶ Two vineyards and four apiaries were to be planted there. Along with the villages, a summer pasture at Bogača and two groups of workers (of Wallachian origin⁵⁷) were donated to Hilandar. From his own property Stefan/Symeon donated 30 mares and 30 *spud'* (ca. 50 kg) of salt.⁵⁸ The charter has no exact date, but can only have been issued between the accession of Alexios III (1195) and the death of Symeon Nemanja (1199). According to

55 S. the exemplary study and edition: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, ed. Mirjana Živojinović, Vassiliki Kravari and Christophe Giros, (ArchAth) 20 (Paris, 1998).

56 Several charters by Alexios III Angelos concerning privileges of Hilandar are known (cf. Franz Dölger and Peter Wirth, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565–1453. 5. Teil, 3: Regesten von 1204–1282* [Munich, 1977], nos 1644–1645 [both before 1198], 1646 [June of 1198], 1653 [1199]), but none of them contains donations mentioned in the charter of the monk Symeon.

57 With regard to Wallachians and their relations to Hilandar in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern epoch, see especially: Radu G. Păun, “Quelques notes sur les débuts des rapports entre la Valachie et le monastère de Chilandar au Mont Athos,” *Revue des Études Sud-Est-Européennes* 46 (2008), 151–164; idem, “La Valachie et le monastère de Chilandar au Mont Athos. Nouveaux témoignages (xve–xvie siècles),” *Medieval and Early Modern Studies for Central and Eastern Europe* 2 (2010), 137–179; idem, “La Moldavie de Ștefan le Grand (1457–1504) et le monastère de Chilandar au Mont Athos. Témoignages et hypothèses,” *Revue des Études Sud-Est-Européennes* 50 (2012), 167–190; idem, “La Moldavie de Ștefan le Grand (1457–1504) et le monastère de Chilandar au Mont Athos. Une rectification nécessaire,” *Revue des Études Sud-Est-Européennes* 51 (2013), 423–426; idem, “L’ordre de l’éternité. Sur la mémoire liturgique du monastère de Hilandar (Mont Athos, xvii–xviii siècles),” *Histoire, mémoire et devotion: regards croisés sur la construction des identités dans le monde orthodoxe aux époques byzantine et post-byzantine*, ed. Radu G. Păun (Seysssel, 2016), pp. 257–302 (with an extensive bibliography).

58 *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, p. 4.

- F. Barišić, the charter was authored in 1198.⁵⁹ Only a photograph of the document is preserved, the charter itself is now lost.⁶⁰
- II. The so-called *Hilandarska povelja*—the famous charter given to Hilandar by the great *župan* of Raška, Stefan Nemanjić (r. 1196–1217), later the first king of Serbia, with the epithet “First-Crowned (*pervovēnčannyj*)”, 1217–1228;⁶¹ donation of estates (villages, vineyards, a pasture and a market) in the region of Hvosno (the northern part of the Metokhija region, now Kosovo) and in Zeta (the region around Lake Skadar, today on the border between Albania and Montenegro). Stefan’s pilgrimage to Hilandar is mentioned in the preface. The document is dated only by indication of the day and the month: 29 September.⁶² According to F. Barišić, the charter was composed in 1199 or 1200.⁶³
 - III. A charter by King Stefan Vladislav of Serbia (son of Stefan the First-Crowned, r. 1233/34–1243; later the monk Symeon) donating a village in the region of Hvosno (s. above), given on 22 August, between 1234 and 1237.⁶⁴ It was placed at the end of the previous charter.⁶⁵
 - IV. A charter by the king of Serbia Stefan Dragutin (r. 1276–1282) or Milutin (r. 1282–1321), donating to Hilandar estates in the regions of Prizren and Peć. The purpose of the donation was to attain the salvation of the soul

59 Franjo Barišić, “Hronološki problemi oko godine Nemanjine smrti,” *Hilandarski Zbornik* 2 (1971), 48.

60 See: *Actes de Chilandar*, 2 (*Deuxième partie: Actes slaves*), no. 3, ed. B. Korablev, (= *Actes de l’Athos* 5, (*Vizantijskij Vremennik*) 19 (St Petersburg, 1915), *Prilozhenie* 1 (repr.: Amsterdam 1975), pp. 375–377.

61 Stefan the First-Crowned, apart from his royal status and being one of the greatest saints of the Serbian Orthodox Church, also can be counted among the most important writers of the Serbian Middle Ages: besides being the author of a *vita* of the saint Stefan Nemanja (1216), his own father and the founder of the Nemanja dynasty, he also wrote a number of treaties and charters for other monasteries. The *Hilandarska povelja*, being formally only a legal document, was conceived and composed as a *sui generis* literary work, bearing clear traits of high Slavonic ecclesiastical style. It contains a poetic description of Hilandar along with some personal biographical passages from the life of Stefan himself. The literary elements of the charter strongly influenced the style of subsequent Serbian medieval literature.

62 *Actes de Chilandar*, 2, no. 2, ed. Korablev, pp. 371–375; cf. *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, p. 5.

63 Barišić, “Hronološki problem,” 48–49.

64 Vladimir A. Mošin, *Spomenici za srednovjekovnata i ponovata istorija na Makedonija*, 3 vols (Skopje, 1975–1980), 1:273.

65 Edition: Alexander Solovjev, “Hilandarska povelja velikog župana Stefana (Prvovenčanog) iz godine 1200–1202,” *Prilozi za književnost, jezik, istoriju i folklor* 5 (1925), 12; Stojan Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici srpskih država srednjega veka* (Belgrade, 1912), p. 386; cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, p. 5.

on the day of the Last Judgment. The charter is of great interest because of its legal character—it is a sort of a statute defining functions, duties, and privileges of workers at the donated villages and stating that one half of donated lands should belong to the monastery while the other half should fall to the workers. A church of St Demetrios at Prizren with its vineyards, pastures, and mills is mentioned as belonging to Hilandar; the people there were exempted from the duties which other inhabitants of the city had to perform. In the same way, the workers of the valley (*planina*) Često Kamenje were exempted from any duty as well as from the duty of *obrok* (the provision of food and lodging for traveling officials). The charter is undated (1277 or ca. 1299).⁶⁶

- v. A charter by the king of Serbia Stefan Uroš Milutin (r. 1282–1321), confirming the donations made to Hilandar by his predecessors. The great grandfather (Stefan the First-Crowned) and the grandfather (Stefan Uroš I, r. 1243–1276) of the king are mentioned in the preface. The donations of the kings mentioned above were confirmed, since many estates had been abandoned or lost. The document deals with villages, vineyards, pastures and apiaries in the regions of Prizren, Peć (already mentioned in the previous charters of donation, see above), Zeta, Bistrica and Morava. The date of its issuance is presumably ca. 1283 (if the document is genuine—there are, however, doubts regarding its authenticity).⁶⁷
- vi. A charter by the same king Stefan Uroš Milutin restoring to Hilandar a small monastery (*kellion*—slav. *kelija*) dedicated to St Paraskeve near Skopje, with all its property (undated, ca. 1300). Listed among the property is a piece of land of 15 *modioi* (*k'bl'*) acquired by donation, and another piece of land, of 100 *modioi*, acquired by purchase. Another piece of land of 300 *modioi* had been donated to Hilandar by the founder of the *kellion* of St Paraskeve, the *protosebastos* Pribo. In addition, Milutin donated to Hilandar a hill or mountain (*gora*) and other allotments. Apart from the aforementioned estates, the donation included dependent workers—15 *otroci* and 33 *paroikoi*. The *kellion* was freed from any local or imperial exaction and from any intervention by worldly authorities.⁶⁸

66 64 *Actes de Chilandar*, 2, no. 6, pp. 389–391; cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, p. 6.

67 *Actes de Chilandar*, 2, no. 32, pp. 473–476. In this edition the document is falsely attributed to the king of Serbia Stefan Dušan (r. 1331–1355). Another ed.: Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici*, p. 389, cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, pp. 6–7.

68 *Actes de Chilandar*, 2, no. 9, ed. Korabiev, pp. 400–402, cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, pp. 7–8.

VII. A charter by the same king Stefan Uroš Milutin on the foundation of the Tower of Chryse. The charter is of uncertain date, between 1299 and 1302. The original is now lost, and publications are based on an extant photograph. The hieromonk and abbot Kyriakos with other monks of Hilandar came to the king seeking aid against pirates and asking to provide them with a quiet place on the coast to live in. In reply to the query, the king ordered the erection of a tower, with a church dedicated to the Savior on its top, which he furnished with books, draperies, icons, vessels, and other necessary objects for worship, with the purpose that the monks might pray for him. The tower was built soon afterward that under the same abbot, Kyriakos.⁶⁹

Four further relevant documents are transmitted in Slavonic:

1. A charter (chrysobull) issued by Milutin in 1317/1318 (of doubtful authenticity) gave objects (books, icons and other cult objects) for the hermitage (*kelija*) of Saint Sava at Hilandar. The charter also contains a list of monks at Hilandar, with a probable date of 1316.⁷⁰
2. An act of the archbishop of all Serbia Nikodem, the abbot of Hilandar, from 1321/22, which has an autobiographical character. However, in the final part of the document several items of material support (oil, sums of money etc.) for the *kellion* of St Sava at Karyes are mentioned.⁷¹
3. A "composite" (enlarged) charter containing the charter no. v (see above) without the final part, instead of which a notice of confirmation is placed with a list of bishops from the year 1303/1304 and an act by King Milutin granting to Hilandar a pasture in Serbia with Wallachian shepherds as well as granting to the Tower of Chryse mares and beekeepers. It also contains an act by Milutin mentioning the foundation of the Tower of Chryse and granting to it the monastery of St Niketas near Skopje and certain lands in Serbia with a note by Milutin's son Stefan Dečanski, who had this charter copied and confirmed, with a signature of a king named Stefan and an act by the king of Serbia Stefan Dušan.⁷²
4. A (presumably forged) charter (a self-designated—"chrysobull") by King Milutin for Hilandar and the Tower of Chryse, undated—given with the purpose of praying for salvation of the king's soul.⁷³

69 *Actes de Chilandar*, 2, no. 10, ed. Korablev, pp. 402–403, cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, p. 8.

70 Edition: Vladimir A. Mošin, "Akti bratskog sabora iz Hilandara," *Godišnjak Skopskog filozofskog Fakulteta* 4 (1939/1940), 173–203 (no. 1) = *Actes de Chilandar*, 2, no. 17, pp. 418–423, cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, p. 8.

71 *Actes de Chilandar*, 2, no. 20, pp. 439–445; cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, p. 8.

72 Mošin, *Spomenici*, 1:304–316; cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, pp. 8–9.

73 Edition.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 2, no. 11, pp. 403–407; Mošin, *Spomenici*, 1:326–331 (dated 1313); cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, p. 9.

Apart from these royal charters, many other documents with regard to Hilandar in Slavonic and Greek are transmitted through the Middle Ages. Most of them deal with issues of property, while a minority is dedicated to other topics, for instance, the delimitation of boundaries (*periorismos*) between estates, the exemption from corvees, taxes and other duties, etc. Indeed, we have at our disposal a catalogue of charters given to Hilandar from ca. 1300, in which 101 documents are listed (but only 40 of them have been preserved until the present).⁷⁴ This list contains many documents which refer to various cases of acquiring and administering property. Among them the most relevant for this contribution are:

- No. 5: A chrysobull by the Nicean emperor John III Doukas Vatatzes (r. 1222–1254) granting to Hilandar a piece of the Holy Cross (the document perished in a fire in 1722).⁷⁵
- No. 17: Purchase of the vineyard of Karakala.
- Nos 33, 38 (lost): Exemption from taxes.
- No. 46: Possibly an act of purchase(?).
- No. 44: *Periorismos* of a *kellion* in Thessalonike.
- No. 48: *Periorismos* (delimitation) of boundaries between Hilandar and Esphigmenou.
- No. 49 (between 1262 and 1265, now lost): Acts of donation to Lozikion by Demetrios Spartenos (cf. below No. 53).
- No. 51: “*Periorismos* of St George above the monastery” (now lost). “St George” was a small monastic institution near Hilandar.⁷⁶
- No. 53: An act of confirmation of donation to Lozikion (Lužac) by the sons of Demetrios Spartenos in 1265 (cf. above No. 49).⁷⁷
- Nos 56 and 57: Two *periorismoι* (now lost) in the region of Strymon, possibly one of them could be that by Mandoukas—it contains a delimitation of Munzianis, near Strymon.⁷⁸

74 *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, p. 14. This category of Athonite document—acts which are mentioned but have not survived—is discussed by Rosemary Morris, “In Praise of *actes mentionnés*: Making Use of the Lost Documents of Athos (10th–11th c.),” in *Lire les Archives de l’Athos*, eds. Olivier Delouis and Kostis Smyrliis, (TM) 23/2 (Paris, 2019), pp. 19–44.

75 From more than one hundred documents issued by the emperor John III, only one deals with Athos (cf. Franz Dölger and Peter Wirth, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565–1453. 3. Teil: Regesten von 1204–1282*, 2nd ed. [Munich, 1977], no. 1747), but there is not a single document regarding Hilandar.

76 Cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, pp. 20, 55.

77 Cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, no. 7, pp. 122–126.

78 Cf. a Slavonic translation in: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, appendix no. 1, pp. 287–288.

- No. 61: *Periorismos* of Lozikion (Lužac) (now lost). Probably an act of delimitation by Demetrios Apelmene (1300).
- No. 64: *Periorismos* between Roudaba and the Great Lavra (now lost, possible date: 1274).
- No. 65: An act by the *protos* John from 1288, attributing to Hilandar a piece of land at Chrometissa which belonged to the monastery of Skorpion,⁷⁹ or the one by Abbot Ioannikios from 1294 settling a conflict between Hilandar and Skorpion.⁸⁰
- No. 70: *Periorismos* between Roudaba and Xeropotamou (now lost).
- No. 79: An act of the monk Gregory concerning the purchase of a vineyard in Thessalonike by Hilandar (now lost).
- No. 80: *Periorismos* between Zygon and Gromitza.⁸¹
- No. 81: An act by Manuel Trixas regarding a conflict between Hilandar and Vatopedi regarding estates in the region of Zygon (May 1297).
- No. 85: An act of Xeropotamou about a vineyard at Hierissos (lost).
- No. 86: Another act of Xeropotamou, now lost—it was an act of sale of a pasture near Hierissos to Xeropotamou (1295).⁸²
- Nos 89, 90: An act of donation of a parcel of land to Mounzianis by the *logothetes tou dromou* Basil Metretopoulos (between 1267 and 1280)⁸³ and an act of Michael VIII confirming this donation.⁸⁴
- Nos 92, 93, 94, 95, 96—acts of sale, the latter one concerning the sale of a pasture to Lavra at Hierissos, ca. 1290–1300.⁸⁵ All acts (except possibly for no. 94) are now lost.
- No. 99: An imperial chrysobull for the Tower of Chryse.⁸⁶
- No. 100: An agreement (συμφωνία καὶ ὁμολογία) between the Council of Athos (in the person of the *protoi* Eusebios and Theoktistos, along with a number of *hegoumenoi*) and Archbishop Sava of Serbia, from 1229(?), about the acquisition by the latter of a parcel of land near Kokhliara (with a previous delimitation of boundaries between the estate and the monastery of St

79 Cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, no. 11, pp. 138–144.

80 *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, no. 14, pp. 150–158.

81 Cf. a copy from the 13th century: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, no. 1, pp. 91–96.

82 Cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, no. 15, pp. 158–162.

83 Mentioned in: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, no. 17 (actes mentionnés no. 4), p. 169. Act 17 is a chrysobull by Andronikos II Palaiologos (1299).

84 Mentioned in: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, no. 17 (actes mentionnés no. 5), p. 169; cf. Dölger and Peter Wirth, *Regesten* 3 (1204–1282), no. 2066 (sine anno).

85 *Actes de Lavra*, 2, no. 83, ed. Paul Lemerle et al., (ArchAth) 8 (Paris, 1977), pp. 57–60.

86 About the tower see: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, no. 15, p. 55.

Demetrios) for the purpose of planting a vineyard.⁸⁷ The act is remarkable inasmuch as Archbishop Sava, in his turn, made a contribution of 300 *hyperpyra* to Protaton and to the Monastery of St Demetrios with the clarification: χάριν εὐλογίας εἶτουν εὐχετηρίου. One might actually define this transaction as a normal act of purchase/sale and the arranged sum of money as a compensation for the parcel of land granted. In the charter itself, however, the given money isn't regarded as 'payment' or 'compensation,' but rather as a "benediction" (εὐλογία) or "commemoration fee" (εὐχετήριον) to pray for Sava's salvation. This case demonstrates, in my opinion, quite clearly that the exchange of property within the Church, even if it occurred for money, might not be formally registered as an act of purchase/sale, but rather as an arrangement with a purely spiritual background—benediction, commemoration, and pious prayers for the salvation of soul.

The material described above for the sake of clarity may be presented in the form of a table:

TABLE 3.1 A table of documents concerning the property of Hilandar (12th–early 14th century)

	Imperial and royal chrysobulls and charters	Other acts (given mostly by high officials)
Real estate		
– estates/villages	I, II, III, IV, V, 3), 4)	Nos 49, 53, 65, 81, 89 ⁸⁸
– fields	VI	
– pastures	I, II, IV, V, 3)	No. 86
– apiaries	V	
– vineyards	II, IV, 4)	Nos 17, 79, 85
– markets	II,	
– hills or mountains	I,	
– mills	IV, VI,	
– churches, chapels, <i>metochia</i> , towers or <i>kellia</i>	IV, VI, VII, 1), 3), 4), No. 99	

87 Cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, no. 6, pp. 117–122.

88 For the sake of thoroughness, another Greek act from the 13th century should be mentioned, which confirmed Hilandar's ownership over the village of Kastrin near Strymon, granted to the Serbian house by Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos (1277), cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, no. 10, pp. 135–138; Dölger and Peter Wirth, *Regesten 3 (1204–1282)*, no. 2031, cf. nos 1978–1979 (1271).

TABLE 3.1 A table of documents concerning the property of Hilandar (12th–early 14th century) (*cont.*)

	Imperial and royal chrysobulls and charters	Other acts (given mostly by high officials)
– dependent peasants (<i>paroikoi</i>)	I, VI, 3), 4)	
Acts of delimitation		Nos 44, 48, 51, 56, 57, 61, 64, 70, 80, 100 ⁸⁹
Movable property		
– sums of money	1), 2)	
– mares	4)	
– food	1), 2), 4)	
– clothes	1), 4)	
– cult objects: icons, vessels, relics etc.	VII, 1), 4), No. 5	
Exemption from taxes, corvees and duties	IV, VI	Nos 33, 38
Acts of purchase		Nos 46 (?), 79, 100
Acts of sale		Nos 86, 92–96

The numbering follows the model above: I, II, III ... 1), 2), 3)—acts in Slavonic; nos 1, 2, 3 ...—acts in Greek

5 Conclusion

In summation, suffice it to say that church and, more concretely, monastic property in Byzantium, though proclaimed as belonging to the realm of ‘divine law’ (that is, in case of the Christian Church, to the realm of Canon Law), nevertheless became an object of civil legislation (that is, of public law).

It happened, in my opinion, for the following reasons. Firstly, the notion of ‘divine law’ didn’t contradict the legal practice of Roman civil law, since the constitutions of Roman emperors regarding Church affairs also had ‘divine’ status

89 It is noteworthy that the earliest-known Greek act of Hilandar (more precisely, of its predecessor-monastery of Zygon) was that of a delimitation. It describes the drawing of borders between the lands of the monasteries Zygon and Khremitzena by a commission of Athonite abbots (1018, in a copy of the 13th century); another (later) commission recognized the fact of an injury to Hilandar (previously Zygon) by the monastery of Skorpiou (previously Khremitzena), cf.: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, no. 1, pp. 91–96.

(Gr. θεῖοι τῶποι = Lat. *sacrae*). Secondly, the system of Roman civil law included quite a lot of norms concerning the Church, since up to the time of Justinian the latter has long become a part of the Roman state and, thus, played an important role in people's everyday life. True, the Church created its own corporative legal system known as canon law—however, it was by no means as well elaborated and systematic as civil law.

And—last but not least—church property, including that of monasteries, was believed to secure the material support of divine houses in their principal function of corroborating the earthly powers through spiritual support by means of ecclesiastical rites, prayers, charity, ascetic institutions, and supervision upon social morals in general.⁹⁰ Such a crucial function—or one might better say, mission—of the Church necessarily required the possession of many kinds of material objects.

The Athonite Serbian monastery of Hilandar is but a typical example of how rich and versatile the material life of ascetics in the High and Late Middle Ages could be. Extant monastic sources represent a wide variety of material values which became objects of exchange, sale, donation, 'benediction' etc. for the purpose of not only creating a solid foundation for the well-being and prosperity of monks, but also of securing the well-being of worldly as well as ecclesiastical donors and patrons during their life on earth and their afterlife in heaven. This kind of many-sided, spiritual and material, 'synergy' between religious and lay institutions, monastic centers and church hierarchy, abbots, bishops and state functionaries, was one of the most remarkable peculiarities of social life in Byzantium and the lands within the sphere of its cultural impact.

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90 Cf. e.g.: Peter Charanis, "The Monk as an Element of Byzantine Society," *DOP* 25 (1971), 82–83; Demetrios J. Constantelos, *Byzantine Philanthropy and Social Welfare*, 2nd ed. (New Rochelle, NY, 1991), pp. 11–12, 15–21, and especially 75–88.

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Pourquoi fondait-on des monastères sur l'Athos aux ^xe et ^xi^e siècles ?

Michel Kaplan

Il me paraît inutile de revenir sur l'attrait exercé par les montagnes sur les moines byzantins en quête de l'érémisme, généralement considéré comme le stade suprême de la "carrière" monastique¹. À l'époque iconoclaste, la plus célèbre était l'Olympe de Bithynie, qui a pu servir de refuge aux iconodoules impénitents; le rétablissement du culte des images entraîne un afflux de moines, la transformation de colonies d'ermites en cénobes et un surpeuplement de l'Olympe. D'où la recherche de nouvelles montagnes, comme le mont Kyminas et l'Athos². Les premiers ermites, de provenance locale, pourraient être apparus à la pointe de la Chalcidique dès le ^{viii}e siècle. La Vie d'Euthyme le Jeune, qui y séjourna quelque temps à partir de 859, montre que les ermites sont déjà organisés en petits groupes anachorétiques³. Peu après, on y trouvait vers 896 Blaise d'Amorion et certains de ses disciples, venus du monastère de Stoudios à Constantinople⁴; il se rend dans la capitale en 908 avec d'autres athonites pour obtenir de Léon ^{vi} un acte limitant les prétentions de Jean Kolobos⁵. À cette époque, il existe un *prôtos* de l'Athos, mais pas de monastère sur la presqu'île; le *prôtos* préside une communauté d'ascètes isolés. Il en va de même lorsque, en 934, Romain Lécapène confirme l'acte de 908⁶.

1 Alice-Mary Talbot, "Les saintes montagnes à Byzance," in *Le sacré et son inscription dans l'espace à Byzance et en Occident. Études comparées*, éd. Michel Kaplan, (Byzantina Sorbonensia) 18 (Paris, 2001) p. 263-275; ead., *Varieties of Monastic Experience in Byzantium, 800-1453* (Conway Lectures in Medieval Studies) (Notre Dame, Ind., 2019), p. 101-132.

2 Génésios, au ^xe siècle, prétend que les moines étaient venus pour le rétablissement de l'orthodoxie en 843 de l'Olympe, de l'Athos, du mont Ida et du mont Kyminas. Cela traduit plus probablement la prééminence des montagnes quand il écrit. Joseph Génésios, *Regum libri quatuor*, éd. Annie Lesmüller-Werner et Hans Thurn, (CFHB) 14 (Berlin – New York, 1978), p. 58.

3 *Actes du Prôtaton*, éd. Denise Papachryssanthou, (ArchAth) 7 (Paris, 1975), p. 33.

4 *Actes du Prôtaton*, p. 49-52. Sur le rôle de Blaise d'Amorion et Jean Kolobos, Paul Magdalino, "Monasticism and Imperial Power in the 9th and 10th Centuries," dans *Lire les archives de l'Athos*, éd. Olivier Delouis et Kostis Smyrlis, (TM) 23/2 (Paris, 2019), p. 190.

5 *Actes du Prôtaton*, n° 2, p. 184-185.

6 *Actes du Prôtaton*, n° 3, p. 187. Paul Magdalino, "Monasticism and Imperial Power," p. 190-191. C'est le premier chrysobulle impérial connu en faveur d'un monastère.

En revanche, un chrysobulle de Constantin Porphyrogénète de 957/958, cité dans l'acte d'Iviron n° 32 de 1059⁷, énumère les domaines et parèques ἀτελείς détenus dans la presqu'île de Pallène par la μονή τοῦ Ἀθω⁸, alors possession d'Iviron. Deux hypothèses : soit il est le seul monastère de l'Athos, soit il est, de loin, le plus important, d'où son nom symbolique⁹. Parmi les suscripteurs de l'accord passé entre les habitants de Hiérissos et les moines athonites sur la délimitation du territoire athonite en 942 figurent l'higoumène de la μονή τοῦ Ἀθω et un de ses moines, tandis que deux autres suscripteurs sont qualifiés de "moine" Ἀθωνίτης¹⁰. Ce monastère devient propriété d'Iviron peu après 979/980, date à laquelle il n'apparaît pas dans l'énumération des biens de ce monastère¹¹, car il ne figure plus dans aucun document athonite ultérieur. Il paraît vraisemblable qu'il fût situé près de l'endroit où s'est établi Iviron. Quand il est entré dans les possessions d'Iviron, ce monastère a bénéficié du transfert des titres de propriété de celui qu'il acquérait, en l'occurrence le chrysobulle de 957/958.

À cette date, il n'est pas le seul. En effet, en avril 956, le protospathaire Jean, cartulaire du *logothésion* général (le bureau des finances, qui gère les terres clasmatiques), sur ordre impérial, attribue 950 *modioi* de terres en Chalcidique au monastère Saint-Nicéphore de Xèropotamou, parce que ce monastère ne possède aucune fortune en dehors des terres qui entourent le monastère ; il est donc de fondation récente¹². Le fondateur est Paul et la fondation date du règne de Constantin VII et Romain II, car l'acte mentionne un *horismos* de ces

7 Sur les actes mentionnés, voir Rosemary Morris, "In Praise of *actes mentionnés*. Making Use of the Lost Documents of Athos (10th–11th C.)," in dans *Lire les archives de l'Athos*, éd. Olivier Delouis et Kostis Smyrlis, (TM) 23/2 (Paris, 2019), p. 32.

8 Ce monastère peut difficilement être situé ailleurs qu'à l'Athos. Il était richement doté dans la presqu'île de Kassandra, comme le révèle l'acte d'Iviron n° 32, cité n. 11.

9 *Actes du Prôtaton*, p. 63 et n. 17.

10 *Actes du Prôtaton*, n° 4, l. 2-3, p. 191.

11 *Actes du Prôtaton*, p. 64. Il fait en revanche partie des biens pour lesquels le juge Léon fait le décompte des parèques détenus par Iviron : *Actes d'Iviron*, 2, éd. Jacques Lefort, Nicolas Oikonomidès et Denise Papachryssanthou, (ArchAth) 16 (Paris, 1990), n° 32 (1059 ou 1074), p. 80-87.

12 *Actes de Xèropotamou*, éd. Jacques Bompaire, (ArchAth) 3 (Paris, 1964), p. 39-40 ; l. 22-23 : διὰ τὸ μὴ βῆμα ποδὸς κεκτημένη πρὸς αὐτάρκειαν ἢ μόνῃ. Le bénéficiaire est qualifié de μονή, mais nous n'avons qu'une copie du XII^e siècle qui peut avoir modifié le vocabulaire en fonction de la situation au moment de la copie. Toutefois, une telle donation n'est pensable qu'au bénéfice d'un établissement dûment établi, donc un monastère et non une simple communauté d'ermites. Fondation récente malgré les forgeries du monastère, qui tente de se créer une origine remontant à Théodose II à l'aide de plusieurs faux, dont un chrysobulle attribué à cet empereur. Voir *ibid.*, p. 3-4.

deux empereurs ordonnant à Jean de donner 1000 *modioi* de terres au monastère. Romain II a été couronné dès 945, mais l'ordre de donation est de toute évidence proche de la mise en possession par Jean¹³. La tradition fait d'un nommé Paul le fondateur du monastère. Il nous est connu par la Vie d'Athanase, arrivé à l'Athos en 958, qui fait de Paul de Xèropotamou un des moines les plus éminents de l'Athos, sans le qualifier d'higoumène¹⁴. Il est possible que ses qualités, reconnues par la Vie d'Athanase, aient entraîné un afflux de disciples et que, comme d'autres, il ait été plus ou moins contraint de fonder un *koinobion*. Comme cela arrive fréquemment, pour ne pas être importuné, il aurait abandonné sa fondation et serait parti ailleurs sur l'Athos pour y fonder entre 972 et 980 un *monydrion* Saint-Paul, qualifié lui aussi de *Ξηροποταμίτης*¹⁵ et qui devient à son tour un *koinobion*. Retenons la première raison pour laquelle on fonde un cénobe : la nécessité de donner un cadre de vie, pour ne pas dire une règle, aux disciples du fondateur, dont le nombre s'accroît sans cesse. Pour autant, l'aspiration initiale de primauté de la vie érémitique ou en petits groupes d'ermites demeure, entraînant un violent conflit entre Athanase et les autres moines athonites. Ces derniers, en 970-971, viennent se plaindre à l'empereur Jean Tzimiskès sous la conduite du *prôtos* et de Paul. Il en sortira le *typikon* de Tzimiskès¹⁶, très favorable à l'autorité des higoumènes, et donc, globalement, à la ligne du fondateur de Lavra.

S'agissant de Bouleutèria, un acte de garantie (*ἀσφάλεια*) de 1010 indique que, voici quelques années, Poimèn, qui en était le propriétaire depuis plus de

13 La nature exacte de l'acte délivré par Jean, contrairement à l'habitude, n'est pas précisée dans le texte.

14 *Vie d'Athanase l'Athonite* (Vie A par Athanase de Panagiou, BHG 187), (Vie B, BHG 188), éd. Jacques Noret, *Vitæ duæ antiquæ sancti Athanasii athonitæ*, (CCSG) 9 (Louvain, 1982), p. 3-124 et p. 127-213. Sur les rapports entre ces deux Vies, voir : Paul Lemerle, "La Vie ancienne de S. Athanase l'Athonite, composée au début du XI^e s. par Athanase de Lavra," in *Le Millénaire du Mont Athos, 963-1963* (Études et Mélanges), t. I (Chevetogne, 1963), p. 59-100, repris dans *Le Monde de Byzance. Histoire et institutions* (Variorum Collected Studies Series) 86 (Londres, 1978), XXI ; Julien Leroy, "Les deux Vies de S. Athanase l'Athonite," AB 82 (1964), 409-429 ; Justin Mossay, "À propos des « Actes de Lavra ». Note sur les deux Vies de saint Athanase l'Athonite," AB 91 (1973), 121-132. Paul de Xèropotamou est mentionné Vie A, 50-51, p. 25-26 et Vie B, 18, p. 144.

15 *The Medieval Greek and Bulgarian Documents of the Athonite Monastery of Zographou* (980-1600), n° 1, éd. Cyril Pavlikianov, (Universitetska biblioteka) 512 (Sofia, 2014), l. 29 : Παῦλος μοναχὸς καὶ ἡγούμενος τοῦ Ξηροποτάμου. Il signe après le *prôtos* et un autre higoumène dont le monastère n'est pas précisé (il signe de sa propre main, mais en onciales). Même signature de Paul sur Lavra n° 9 (991) et n° 12 (996) : *Actes de Lavra*, 1, éd. Paul Lemerle et al., (ArchAth) 5 (Paris, 1970), respectivement p. 121, l. 41 et p. 132, l. 26.

16 *Actes du Prôtaton*, n° 7, p. 205-215.

cinquante ans, a vendu son monastère dont il était l'higoumène (καθηγούμενος μονῆς τῶν Βουλευτηρίων) à un nommé Eustratios¹⁷. À supposer que Poimèn ait été le fondateur, et que le chiffre trop rond de 50 ans soit exact, la fondation remonterait aux années 950. Sans doute la fondation d'un monastère venait-elle, là encore, de la nécessité de donner un cadre à de trop nombreux disciples, le côté nombreux pouvant être ressenti dès un nombre effectif d'ascètes relativement faible.

Autre monastère ancien, celui de Zygyou, situé à proximité de la délimitation de l'Athos déterminée en 942. Son existence n'est prouvée dans les actes qu'en 991 (Lavra n° 9) et 996 (Lavra n° 12)¹⁸. Certes, les Vies d'Athanase nous parlent du refuge qu'aurait trouvé le fondateur de Lavra auprès d'un ascète dans la région du Zygos (Vie A) ou près du monastère de Zygyou (Vie B). Cette seconde mention renvoie à la situation que connaissait l'auteur de la Vie, après 1028¹⁹. Pour autant, l'on peut penser que l'ensemble des moines athonites a favorisé la création d'une sorte de vigie à proximité d'une frontière qu'il fallait sans cesse surveiller et qui, en tout état de cause, était fréquemment franchie par des paysans, parfois venus de loin, et leurs troupeaux.

Voilà pour les cénobes dont l'existence semble assurée avant la fondation de Lavra par Athanase. Pour notre sujet, celle-ci constitue le dossier le mieux documenté. D'abord parce que nous disposons de plusieurs écrits dictés directement par le fondateur : la règle (*hypotypôsis*)²⁰, connue sous sa rédaction de 1020, mais en réalité écrite après 964 et avant le *typikon* de 973, qui semble y faire allusion²¹; un testament (*diatypôsis*)²², daté d'entre 985 et 990; et surtout le *typikon*²³, datable de 973-975²⁴. Les deux Vies²⁵ nous donnent la version

17 Actes de Xèropotamou, n° 2, l. 4-9, p. 43.

18 Actes de Lavra, 1, respectivement l. 53, p. 122, et l. 30, p. 133.

19 Actes du Prôtaton, p. 69, n. 69.

20 Athanase l'Athonite, *Hypotypôsis*, ed. Philipp Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte der Athosklöster* (Leipzig, 1894), (réimprimé par Damant Media Corporation, 2005), p. 130-140.

21 Actes de Lavra, 1, p. 21.

22 Athanase l'Athonite, *Diatypôsis*, ed. Philipp Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden*, p. 123-130.

23 Athanase l'Athonite, *Typikon*, ed. Philipp Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden*, p. 101-122.

24 Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden*, p. 19.

25 Voir n. 14. La dernière version découverte de la Vie d'Athanase (Konstantinos Manaphes and Giorgos Pitsinele, "Ἀγῶστος Βίος τοῦ ὁσίου Ἀθανασίου τοῦ Ἀθωνίτου," *EEBS* 2013, 201-248), bien qu'elle semble la plus ancienne n'apporte pas grand-chose de nouveau. Cf. Jacques Noret, "Notes sur la 'Vita' 'sinaïtique' d'Athanase l'Athonite récemment éditée," *AB* 138 (2020), 93-99; idem, "Nouvelles avancées dans la connaissance des 'Vitae de saint Athanase l'Athonite,'" *AB* 136 (2018), 436-445; Dirk Krausmüller, "Sophisticated Simplicity: On the Style of the 'Vita prima' of Athanasius the Athonite," *Erytheia* 42 (2021), 39-58.

des intentions du fondateur telles que perçues une bonne vingtaine d'années après sa mort, mais cette tradition lavriote n'est pas sans intérêt. Il en ressort la jonction de deux volontés, celle d'Athanase et celle de Nicéphore Phocas, qui convergent dans un résultat à tous égards unique : la fondation ex nihilo d'un grand et puissant cénobe, rendu marginalement compatible avec la tradition érémitique de l'Athos par l'adjonction de *kellia* de moines appartenant au monastère, mais vivant par petits groupes d'hésychastes à l'écart du cénobe.

Athanase a fait la connaissance de Nicéphore Phocas d'abord à Constantinople où il a rencontré l'oncle de celui-ci, Michel Maléinos, issu, comme Nicéphore, de l'une des familles aristocratiques les plus puissantes d'Asie Mineure²⁶. Il suit Michel au mont Kyminas et reçoit de lui la tonsure, changeant son nom d'Abraamios pour le nom monastique sous lequel il va faire carrière. Là se situe une deuxième rencontre avec Nicéphore Phocas, qui lui aurait fait part de sa volonté de devenir son disciple. Craignant de devoir succéder à Michel Maléinos à la tête de sa laure de Kyminas²⁷, Athanase part pour l'Athos, où il tente de demeurer incognito grâce à l'aide du *prôtos*²⁸. Léon, frère de Nicéphore Phocas, finit par le trouver et donne des fonds pour reconstruire l'église du Prôtaton²⁹. Dès lors, les disciples se pressent auprès d'Athanase, qui part se réfugier à la pointe de la presqu'île pour vivre dans une cabane à Mélana, où il passe au moins un an³⁰. Pour autant, Nicéphore Phocas sait où il se trouve et parvient à le faire venir en Crète conquise en mars 961³¹. Il demande au moine de construire sur l'Athos une laure où il pourra se retirer, et offre d'en payer la construction³². Pour obtenir satisfaction, Nicéphore Phocas envoie le moine Méthode avec six livres d'or ; Méthode reste six mois durant lesquels sont édifiées les *kellia* pour abriter Athanase et Nicéphore tandis que la construction de

26 *Vie de Michel Maléinos* (BHG 1295), éd. Louis Petit, "Vie et office de S. Michel Maléinos," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 7 (1902), 549-568 = (*Bibliothèque Hagiographique Orientale*), 4 (Paris, 1903), p. 7-26 ; *Vie A d'Athanase l'Athonite*, 19-20, p. 11-12 ; *Vie B*, 8, p. 134-135, qui résume toute la démarche auprès de Michel Maléinos et les premiers contacts avec Nicéphore Phocas.

27 *Vie A d'Athanase l'Athonite*, 35-37, p. 16-18 ; *Vie B*, 12, l. 5-38, p. 138-139.

28 *Vie A*, 52, 26 ; *Vie B*, 19, p. 145.

29 *Vie A*, 55-56, p. 27-28 ; *Vie B*, 20, p. 145-146.

30 *Vie A*, 57-59, p. 28-29 ; *Vie B*, 21, p. 146-147.

31 *Vie A*, 60-69, p. 27-28 ; *Vie B*, 22, p. 147-149.

32 *Vie A*, 70, p. 53 : ἅμα χρυσίον ἐπεμέτρει πρὸς ἀνέγερσιν τοῦ μέλλοντος αὐτοῦς ὑποδέχεσθαι καταγωγίου, ἔτι δὲ καὶ πρὸς ἀπαρτισμὸν κα' σύστασιν κοινοβίου ; *Vie B*, 22, l. 31-41, p. 148-149. Cette seconde vie utilise mieux les termes techniques : κελλία ἡσυχαστικά, νὰός, λαύρα, ἀδελφοί, ἡγούμενος.

l'église est entamée³³. La prise du pouvoir par Nicéphore Phocas (juillet 963) bouleverse le schéma préétabli. Après une fuite jusqu'à Chypre, Athanase ose affronter le nouvel empereur, qui réitère sa volonté d'intégrer le *koinobion* dont il est le fondateur aux côtés d'Athanase – point essentiel qui fait dès le départ de Lavra un monastère impérial – dès qu'il pourra se défaire du trône impérial et de Théophano, la veuve de Romain II qu'il vient d'épouser. En attendant, l'empereur gratifie Lavra de trois chrysobulles, dont un seul nous est parvenu, concernant des reliques, mais les deux autres concernaient des biens et des dotations : 244 nomismata de rente annuelle, plus un *sitèresion* en grain. Par ces mêmes chrysobulles, il fixait le nombre de moines à quatre-vingts et donnait d'important subsides ; l'un d'entre eux constituait une sorte de charte de fondation (τὴν διὰ χρυσοβουλίου καθόλον διάταξιν τοῦ δηλωθέντος μακαριωτάτου βασιλέως τοῦ κυροῦ Νικηφόρου)³⁴.

Donc, Lavra a été fondé par Athanase et Nicéphore Phocas, avec des intentions complémentaires. Renonçant à la vie solitaire, aspiration suprême de tout moine byzantin, Athanase fonde une laurie à l'imitation de son maître Michel Maléinos ; Nicéphore compte bien le rejoindre un jour pour vivre la vie monastique à laquelle il aspire depuis longtemps, sans doute à l'instigation de son oncle, le même Michel. Pour l'un et pour l'autre, leur commune fondation leur permettra de tenter d'atteindre la vie de chrétien parfaite qui leur garantira, avec l'aide de la prière des moines de la fondation, d'attendre sereinement "le jour terrible du Jugement". Mais, pour cela, il faut dépasser des contradictions. Le *typikon* d'Athanase a beau dire que les moines ne doivent pas accumuler les biens et se contenter d'une vie frugale, Athanase se lance dans des investissements considérables et, disons-le, rentables, encore renforcés par les générosités des empereurs suivants : acquisitions de terres, creusement de canalisations permettant l'irrigation des terres proches du monastère, édification d'un *xénodocheion*, aménagement d'un port en eaux profondes permettant non seulement d'abriter la flotte du monastère qui permettra de monnayer les produits de ses domaines dans l'Athos et en dehors, mais aussi d'accueillir l'escale de navires de commerce³⁵. Lavra cesse immédiatement d'être une petite entre-

33 Je fais ici la synthèse entre la *Vie A*, 71-73, p. 34-35 et la *Vie B*, 23, p. 149-150. La *Vie B* est, comme toujours, beaucoup plus concrète, par exemple en mentionnant le montant de l'apport monétaire de Nicéphore Phocas.

34 Athanase l'Athonite, *Typikon*, p. 115, l. 4-6 : la *diataxis* (charte de fondation) authentique par voie de chrysobulle du dit bienheureux empereur kyr Nicéphore.

35 Athanase l'Athonite, *Hypotypôsis*, c. 18, p. 135, texte emprunté à celle du Stoudios, c. 24. Voir Michel Kaplan, "Aumônes, artisanat, domaines fonciers : les monastères byzantins et la logique économique (v^e-x^e siècle)," in *La vie quotidienne des moines en Orient et en Occident (iv^e-x^e siècle)*, 2, *Questions transversales*, éd. Olivier Delouis et Maria Mossakowska-

prise. Le tout avec un privilège considérable : au moment même où Nicéphore Phocas devient empereur, le monastère qu'il a co-fondé devient, comme toute sa fortune, bien impérial et Lavra devient monastère impérial. En revanche, il ne recevra que plus tard le statut d'autodespote³⁶. Bref, un monastère fondé par deux membres de l'aristocratie, dont l'un est issu de l'une des familles les plus puissantes d'Asie Mineure. Comme empereur, Nicéphore Phocas promulgue en 964 une novelle qui condamne le souci incessant des monastères d'acquérir de nouvelles terres, qu'ils sont d'ailleurs souvent incapables de mettre en valeur : "toute l'attention de leur âme, ils la portent à cela, rendant la vie monastique semblable à la vie laïque, consumée de préoccupations nombreuses et vaines."³⁷

La fondation d'Iviron, le monastère des Ibères, est également politique et la suivre est facilité par l'existence d'une Vie de ses fondateurs, Jean et son fils Euthyme³⁸, et de toute une série de sources géorgiennes anciennes conservées au monastère, notamment des colophons de manuscrits, le synaxaire géorgien et le *synodikon* d'Iviron³⁹. Cette fondation est due pour l'essentiel à quatre membres de l'aristocratie géorgienne, Jean, son fils Euthyme, Georges, neveu de Jean, et Tornikios, un parent par alliance. Elle se situe dans une période, la deuxième moitié du x^e siècle, qui voit se nouer une alliance entre l'Empire et l'aristocratie géorgienne, notamment celle de la principauté du T'ao-K'lardzheti⁴⁰ dont le prince David reçut le titre byzantin de curopalate.

Gaubert, (Bibliothèque d'Étude) 170 (Le Caire, 2019), p. 367 et Id., "Monasteries: Institutionalisation and Organisation of Space in the Byzantine World until the End of the 12th Century," in *Diverging Paths, The Shape of Power and Institutions in Mediaeval Islam and Christendom*, eds. Ana Rodriguez et John Hudson, (The Medieval Mediterranean) 101 (Leyden, 2014), p. 342-345; Id., "The Economy of Byzantine Monasteries," *The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the West*, eds. Alison Beach et Isabelle Cochelin, 2 vols (Cambridge, 2020): 1:340-362.

36 Kaplan, "Monasteries: institutionalisation and organisation," p. 345, n. 103.

37 Nicéphore Phocas, Novelle 8, *proïmion* 1, éd. Nicolas Svoronos, *Les nouvelles des empereurs macédoniens concernant la terre et les stratiotes. Introduction, commentaires*, éd. Paris Gounaridis (Athènes, 1994), p. 157. Voir notre étude de cette novelle dans Michel Kaplan, *Les hommes et la terre à Byzance du vie au xie siècle: propriété et exploitation du sol*, (Byzantina Sorbonensia) 10 (Paris, 1992), p. 434-436.

38 *Vie de Jean et Euthyme*, éd. et trad. Bernadette Martin-Hisard, "Vie de Jean et Euthyme et le statut du monastère des Ibères sur l'Athos," *REB* 49 (1991), 67-142. La traduction du texte géorgien se trouve aux p. 84-134.

39 Toutes ces sources sont présentées, analysées et critiquées dans l'introduction de *Actes d'Iviron*, 1.

40 Bernadette Martin-Hisard, "Du T'ao-K'lardzheti à l'Athos: moines géorgiens et réalités politiques (VIII^e-XI^e siècles)," *Bedi Kartlisa* 41 (1983), 34-46 et "L'aristocratie géorgienne et son passé: tradition biblique et références bibliques," *Bedi Kartlisa* 42 (1984), 13-34.

Jean se fait d'abord moine dans cette principauté, à la laure des Quatre-Églises, puis, pour fuir l'afflux de disciples, gagne un monastère non spécifié de l'Olympe de Bithynie. Au début du règne de Nicéphore Phocas, il apprend que son fils adolescent Euthyme a été envoyé en otage à Constantinople; il s'y rend et obtient de repartir avec lui. Pour fuir à nouveau la notoriété, Jean, maintenant accompagné d'Euthyme, gagne l'Athos et se fait admettre à Lavra, sans révéler son identité et en se faisant confiner à d'humbles tâches. Pourquoi Lavra? À l'évidence, parce qu'ils cherchent un cénobe et que Lavra correspond le mieux à leur niveau social. Ajoutons qu'Athanase est originaire de Trébizonde. Comme nous l'avons vu, il en existe d'autres, mais cet aristocrate et son fils se dirigent logiquement vers le monastère du natif de Trébizonde, où leur parent Tornikios possède un monastère. Jean devient un disciple d'Athanase⁴¹, qui appartient à la même génération que lui, sans révéler son identité et en travaillant au moins deux ans à la cuisine. Au début des années 970, Tornikios, qui s'est fait moine dans son pays, part à la recherche de Jean, d'abord à l'Olympe, où il apprend que celui-ci est parti pour Lavra. Tornikios gagne alors ce cénobe, où Athanase l'accueille selon son rang, ce qui révèle du même coup celui de Jean et Euthyme. Leur présence entraîne la venue de quelques Ibères, ce qui met en cause le fonctionnement de Lavra. Elle ne va pas sans quelques contreparties: de passage à Constantinople, Jean obtient de Jean Tzimiskès, donc après 969, un chrysobulle attribuant à Lavra un *solemnion* de 244 nomismata pris sur les revenus fiscaux de l'île de Lèmnos⁴².

Avant même la rédaction du *typikon* de Lavra, entre 973 et 975, Athanase a demandé à Jean et Euthyme de construire pour eux, à un mille de sa laure, une église dédiée à saint Jean l'Évangéliste et quelques *kellia*, à condition que leurs successeurs restent soumis aux successeurs d'Athanase, sans pouvoir les étendre, ni dépasser le nombre de huit, ni pouvoir se défaire de ces *kellia* par donation ou vente, condition semblable aux autres *kellia* prévues par le *typikon* d'Athanase. Entre 976 et 979/980, Jean fait une nouvelle donation impériale en faveur de Lavra. Il lui transfère le bénéfice du chrysobulle qu'il avait obtenu de Basile II, l'île de Néoi (aujourd'hui Hagios Eustratios⁴³), dont, à en croire la Vie de Jean et Euthyme, les revenus étaient considérables⁴⁴.

Mais ce sont des événements politiques qui vont entraîner la fondation d'Iviron. Pour parer à la révolte de Bardas Sklèros, qui contrôlait une grande partie de l'Asie Mineure et qui venait de défaire une armée conduite par Bar-

41 *Actes d'Iviron*, 1, n° 6 (984), l. 8, p. 138: ὑπετάγη τῇ ἐμῇ οὐθενότητι.

42 *Actes d'Iviron*, 1, n° 6, l. 13-14, p. 138.

43 Une trentaine de km au sud-sud-ouest de Lèmnos.

44 *Vie de Jean et Euthyme*, § 16.

das Phocas à proximité d'Amorion, menaçant Constantinople, les empereurs eurent recours à l'allié géorgien. L'administration envoie à l'Athos un haut fonctionnaire muni de lettres impériales ordonnant à Tornikios de se rendre auprès de David de T'ao-K'lardzheti. Ce prince accepte contre la promesse d'une concession territoriale et celle de laisser le bénéfice du butin à Tornikios qui commandera l'armée. Tornikios l'emporte le 9 mars 979, fait un butin considérable, dont il fait profiter ses troupes et David, revient à Constantinople où il reçoit l'accueil qu'il méritait, puis repart à l'Athos avec le reste du butin.

Honoré par les empereurs du titre de syncelle, Tornikios, qui était suivi d'aspirants moines athonites, fait part aux souverains de sa volonté de fonder à l'Athos un monastère d'Ibères; ceux-ci acceptent et multiplient les cadeaux, puis confirment le tout par un chrysobulle, donc en date de 979/980, malheureusement perdu, mais dont le contenu est connu par un acte du juge Léon de 1059 ou 1074: il donne les monastères de Léontia à Thessalonique, de Kolobou⁴⁵ à Hiérissos, monastère impérial, et, sur l'Athos, le monastère de Klémentos dédié à Jean-Baptiste⁴⁶; en échange, les Ibères donneront le monastère τῆς Ἰβερίσσης à Constantinople et le monastère Saint-Phocas à Trébizonde.

Les Ibères se portent donc 11 km au nord de Lavra pour édifier leur fondation autour du monastère de Klémentos, plus ou moins en ruine et semble-t-il dépourvu de moines. Tornikios apportait de quoi construire quelque chose qui égalait au moins Lavra; le chantier semble avoir duré jusqu'au milieu du XI^e siècle. L'église de la Théotokos paraît quasiment achevée dès 982, celle de Jean-Baptiste sans doute restaurée. Dans l'idéal, le monastère devait être réservé aux Ibères, mais il fallut bien avoir recours à des ouvriers de la région, hellénophones. Notons que Jean, qui en est l'higoumène, et surtout Euthyme qui en est le philologue, chargé de traduire en géorgien tout ce qui était nécessaire à la vie proprement monastique, mais aussi Tornikios, savaient le grec. Fondé sur ordre de l'Empereur, recevant un monastère impérial dans sa dotation, Iviron n'est pas dès le début, comme Lavra, un monastère impérial. Il est le résultat de l'expansion des régions géorgiennes à cette époque, réservoir d'immigra-

45 Sur Kolobou, voir l'analyse des documents perdus et mentionnés dans d'autres documents dans Morris, "In Praise of *actes mentionnés*," p. 40-43.

46 Le monastère de Léontia devait être devenu impérial, pour que l'Empereur puisse le donner. Celui de Klémentos, ayant été bâti sur des terres clasmatiques et plus ou moins déserté, devait, pour cette raison (les terres dont les impôts n'ont pas été payés durant trente ans font l'objet d'un retrait [*klasma*] du cadastre communal au bénéfice du fisc), être devenu propriété du fisc.

tion d'une population qui, contrairement aux Arméniens, monophysites, est chalcédonienne. Pour se résumer, Iviron apparaît comme une fondation hautement politique, même si la vocation monastique de ses fondateurs, dont l'un n'hésita pourtant guère à troquer la bure pour l'armure le moment venu, est indiscutable. Remarquons encore que, à ce moment, Iviron est plus richement doté que Lavra. Iviron n'obtient le statut d'autodespote que dans un chrysobulle de Nicéphore III Botaniatès de 1079⁴⁷ et celui de monastère impérial peut-être à cette époque, puisqu'il est qualifié ainsi dans un acte de 1080 du *prôtos* Paul⁴⁸. Aucun acte d'Alexis I^{er} Comnène en sa faveur ne le qualifie pourtant ainsi.

La fondation de Vatopédi ne bénéficie pas de sources hagiographiques, contrairement à Lavra et Iviron. Mais le monastère se situe à un endroit où subsistent des restes antiques, ce qui a favorisé la naissance de légendes⁴⁹. Ainsi l'église aurait été bâtie sous Constantin et ruinée par Julien; Théodose y aurait fait édifier un monastère par le fils de Batos, son frère (lui-même légendaire). Le fils de Batos aurait été sauvé d'une tempête en abordant à cet endroit. Les Arabes l'auraient ruiné et incendié au IX^e siècle et trois frères, riches aristocrates originaires de la région d'Andrinople, Athanase, Nicolas et Antoine, désireux de fonder un monastère à l'Athos, se seraient fait indiquer par Athanase de Lavra, dont le monastère est alors en construction, l'endroit où rebâtir Vatopédi. Dans les faits, le monastère a sans doute été fondé autour de 980: aucun représentant ne signe le *typikon* de Tzimiskès pour l'Athos, de 972; en janvier 985, l'higoumène Nicolas suscrit et signe en onciales un acte du Conseil de Karyés⁵⁰. L'higoumène de Vatopédi signe en dernier, ce qui traduit une place modeste. Nicolas est donc le vrai fondateur de l'actuel monastère de Vatopédi. Comme le montre la qualité investie dans la construction de l'église, qui date de cette époque, il devait être un aristocrate doté de moyens importants, comme nous l'avons mentionné. Nicolas signe son dernier acte en 1012. Mais le monastère est rapidement monté dans la hiérarchie athonite: dès 996, il figure avant Iviron dans la liste des signataires d'une garantie délivrée par le *prôtos* à Lavra⁵¹. Par la suite, sa place peut varier, mais il précède l'higoumène d'Iviron et ne le cède que devant le *prôtos* et l'higoumène de Lavra au bas du *typikon* de Constantin Monomaque pour l'Athos (1045)⁵². Pour des raisons inconnues, les

47 *Actes d'Iviron*, 2, n° 41, l. 29, p. 133.

48 *Actes d'Iviron*, 2, n° 42 (1080), l. 1, p. 139.

49 Spyridon Lampros, "Τὰ Πάτρια τοῦ Ἀγίου ὄρους," *Νέος ἑλληνομνήμων* 9 (1912), 116-244.

50 *Actes d'Iviron*, 1, n° 7, l. 5, p. 148 et l. 63, p. 151.

51 *Actes de Lavra*, 1, n° 12, l. 25, p. 132.

52 *Actes du Protaton*, n° 8, l. 186, p. 231.

propriétés sans doute importantes dont jouissait Vatopédi hors de l'Athos ont été confisquées ; le monastère pourtant très peuplé (πολυπληθές), risque de disparaître, mais il obtient en 1018 de la communauté athonite d'autres biens hors de l'Athos⁵³. En 1045, Vatopédi a droit à un couple de bœufs pour faire fonctionner la boulangerie, en fait le pétrin, et il est autorisé à détenir un grand bateau, ce qui indique un prompt rétablissement. Il constitue un autre exemple de fondation aristocratique. Il faut attendre 1297 pour qu'un document officiel le qualifie d'impérial⁵⁴.

Le *typikon* de Constantin Monomaque émis au bénéfice des athonites en 1045 fait apparaître les monastères de Docheiariou et d'Esphigménou, qui avaient donc été fondés auparavant. Mais d'autres monastères étaient apparus autour de la fin du x^e siècle : Xénophon, dont l'higoumène signe un acte du *prôtos* Nicéphore en faveur de Vatopédi en 998⁵⁵ ; le monastère des Amalfitains.

Commençons par ce dernier, le plus original, puisqu'il s'agit d'un monastère bénédictin⁵⁶. Son higoumène Jean est le dernier signataire, en latin et de sa propre main – "Jean, moine et higoumène" – d'un acte collectif du *prôtos* et des higoumènes qui concèdent à Lavra la propriété du lieu-dit Platys en 991⁵⁷. Jean, sans doute le même, est le second signataire en 1017 d'un acte du *prôtos* Nicéphore départageant les monastères de Lavra et Philothéou ; sa position avant même Iviron s'explique par la proximité géographique⁵⁸. Jean apparaît encore dans un acte du *prôtos* Nicéphore et des higoumènes qui règlent en 1018 un conflit entre le monastère des Amalfitains et ceux de Lavra et de Caracalla, qui ont lésé le premier nommé⁵⁹. Dans le *typikon* de Constantin Monomaque de 1045, la μονή τῶν Ἀμαλφινῶν se voit concéder, avec un consentement général, la possession d'un grand bateau qui servira exclusivement à chercher auprès des Amalfitains de Constantinople le ravitaillement qu'ils ne peuvent se procurer autrement (διὰ τὸ μὴ ἄλλως αὐτὴν δύνασθαι συνεστάναι). On en déduira que ce monastère ne dispose pas de beaucoup de biens. La situation se modifie rapidement : sous le règne de Nicéphore III Botaniatè, le monastère du Kos-

53 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 1, n° 5, éd. Jacques Bompaire et al., (ArchAth) 21 (Paris, 2001), p. 83-86.

54 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 1, n° 27, p. 193, l. 7-8 et 194, l. 31-32.

55 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 1, n° 2, l. 45, p. 70.

56 Paul Lemerle, "Les archives du monastère des amalfitains au mont Athos," *Επετηρίς Εταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 23 (1953), 548-566.

57 *Actes de Lavra*, 1, n° 9, l. 54, p. 122.

58 *Actes de Lavra*, 1, n° 21, l. 3 et 39, p. 164-165.

59 *Actes de Lavra*, 1, n° 23, p. 169-170.

midion, situé à proximité de la muraille terrestre de Constantinople attenante aux Blachernes, a vendu moyennant 24 livres d'or, un domaine situé dans l'*épiskipsis* de Prinarion, à l'est du Strymon, au monastère des Amalfitains, qualifié de βασιλική⁶⁰. Cet acte sera confirmé dans le chrysobulle d'Alexis Comnène de juillet 1081, qui récapitule les possessions du monastère dans cette région et renvoie à deux chrysobulles précédents, l'un d'Isaac Ier, l'autre de Nicéphore Botaniatè⁶¹. Les Amalfitains bénéficient de l'*exkousseia* pour eux et leurs parèques ἀτελείς installés (προσκαθήμενοι) sur ces terres. Le monastère existe encore à l'extrême fin du XIII^e siècle. De 991 à 1198, il occupe une place importante dans la hiérarchie athonite. Notons toutefois la transformation importante intervenue entre 1045 et le règne d'Isaac Ier (1057-1059) : le monastère a acquis des terres et n'attend plus tout des Amalfitains de Constantinople. J'en déduis une raison vraisemblable pour la fondation du monastère : servir d'appui à la navigation des navires amalfitains vers Constantinople, puisque le monastère est situé sur la côte orientale de la presqu'île athonite, en échange de quoi les Amalfitains de Constantinople le ravitaillent. Naturellement, rien ne s'oppose à la règle bénédictine, fort proche des conceptions d'Athanase. Ajoutons que les relations sont faciles, puisque les Amalfitains connaissent le grec, même si Jean a, peut-être par coquetterie, signé le premier acte mentionné en lettres latines. En 1287, toutefois, le monastère est en ruine et donné à Lavra par un acte du *prôtos* Jean⁶². Cet acte est confirmé par une lettre du patriarche Grégoire II et par un *prostagma* d'Andronic II Paléologue, de la même année⁶³. Notons que, dans ces trois actes, le monastère est qualifié de μονή τῶν Μολφη-νῶν.

Comme Vatopédi, Esphigménou se trouvait entouré de ruines antiques, plus anciennes encore, puisque remontant à la ville perse et phénicienne de Samarie. Notons aussi la présence de ruines de la plus ancienne église de l'Athos ; elle aurait pu être celle d'un monastère qui serait l'ancêtre d'Esphigménou. Une tradition fait remonter le monastère à Théodose II et sa sœur Pulchérie, tradition qui existe aussi à Xèropotamou⁶⁴. En fait, nous ne savons rien qui puisse être démontré avant le premier acte conservé mentionnant le monastère : l'acte de Vatopédi n° 2 de 998 témoigne d'un *agros* disputé mais qui appartient à Théodore, moine et higoumène d'Esphagménou⁶⁵ à la suite de nombreux juge-

60 *Actes de Lavra*, 1, n° 42, p. 233-235. Cet acte garantit la vente effectuée auparavant.

61 *Actes de Lavra*, 1, n° 43, p. 239-240.

62 *Actes de Lavra*, 2, n° 79, éd. Paul Lemerle et al., (ArchAth) 8 (Paris, 1977), p. 48-50.

63 *Actes de Lavra*, 2, n° 80, p. 52-53 et n° 81, p. 54.

64 Voir ci-dessus, n. 12.

65 C'est l'orthographe du document.

ments⁶⁶. Cela permet de faire remonter le monastère à... un certain temps, peut-être une trentaine d'années qui garantit par la prescription la contestation des jugements évoqués. Nous retrouvons cette époque où avaient été fondés Xèropotamou et Lavra. Nous ne savons rien des fondateurs effectifs. Tout juste pouvons-nous dire que l'acte n° 2 d'Esphigménou montre la présence d'aristocrates, notamment Théoktistos et Nicéphore. Ce dernier revient au monastère après être allé en Asie Mineure, dans le thème de Charsianon, fonder un important monastère. Quant à Théoktistos, sans doute successeur de Théodore comme higoumène, il obtient d'être élu *prôtos* de l'Athos en 1035. Mais force est de constater qu'il faut attendre les années 1060 pour que le monastère commence à bénéficier de donations hors de l'Athos. À la question pourquoi a-t-on fondé le monastère d'Esphigménou, nous n'avons pas d'autre réponse que l'occupation d'un site déjà exploité dans l'Antiquité et qui est le premier favorable sur le territoire athonite en venant de l'embouchure du Strymon.

Le monastère de Docheiariou a d'abord été fondé sur un territoire exigu, à Daphné, bien au sud de la localisation actuelle sur la côte occidentale de l'Athos, sans doute par un nommé Jean, à l'orthographe chancelante, peut-être un moine de Xèropotamou ; il était situé un peu au nord de Daphné, port d'accès vers Karyès, au plus tard en 1013. Dans les années 1050, le monastère de Daphné, déjà appelé Docheiariou dans plusieurs actes et de façon constante à partir de 1037, a été déplacé plusieurs km au nord sur son actuel terrain. Il faut dire que le monastère de Daphné était déjà richement doté, notamment par l'immense domaine de Périgardikeia en Chalcidique⁶⁷ ; l'on ne sait comment le monastère a acquis ce bien. L'allusion, dans un mémorandum de 1037 dû au juge du thème, à la longue détention (le monastère en est le propriétaire depuis des temps immémoriaux) renvoie à la prescription trentenaire, donc à une fondation antérieure à 1007. Mais on ne peut exclure que le monastère ait trouvé un fonctionnaire de complaisance pour enregistrer le bien au nom du monastère dans un *isokôdikon* remis au monastère à l'occasion d'une révision cadastrale. Cela supposerait de solides relations dans l'administration du thème de Boléron, Strymon, Thessalonique, possibles seulement pour un aristocrate. À la fin du XI^e siècle, le monastère entretient des relations étroites avec Alexis I^{er} et sa mère et régente Anne Dalassène, à en juger par un acte de ces deux gouvernants de 1089⁶⁸ ; cela suppose probablement qu'il compte dans ses rangs de

66 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 1, n° 2, p. 69-70. Voir aussi *Actes d'Esphigménou*, éd. Jacques Lefort, (ArchAth) 6 (Paris, 1973) p. 18.

67 *Actes de Dochiareiou*, n° 1, éd. Nicolas Oikonomidès, (ArchAth) 13 (Paris, 1984), p. 53.

68 *Actes de Dochiareiou*, n° 2, p. 58-59.

hauts aristocrates. Ce monastère nous fournit un autre exemple, après Iviron, de monastère athonite fondé à partir d'un autre ; il est probablement, lui aussi, une fondation aristocratique. Il est qualifié de monastère impérial à compter d'un acte de 1311⁶⁹.

À vingt minutes de marche au sud de Docheiariou, le monastère de Xénophon date également de la fin du x^e siècle, sous le vocable de saint Georges. Son fondateur portait le nom de l'historien antique⁷⁰. Par chance, Xénophon apparaît dans la Vie d'Athanase l'Athonite : l'auteur narre que Xénophon lui aurait rapporté la guérison par Athanase de son frère Théodore⁷¹. Certes, le prénom est assez répandu parmi les moines athonites, mais Théodore est le successeur de Xénophon à l'higouménat de Saint-Georges. La signature de Xénophon, moine et higoumène, apparaît dans plusieurs actes, le plus ancien, mémorandum du *prôtos* Nicéphore en faveur de Vatopédi, datant de 998⁷². Il signe également, cette fois-ci comme higoumène de Saint-Georges, l'acte suivant de Vatopédi, une vente et garantie au bénéfice de ce monastère ; il est alors en 9^e position sur 14⁷³. En 1018, c'est Théodore qui signe comme higoumène de Saint-Georges, en avant-dernière position, une garantie du *prôtos* Nicéphore en faveur de Vatopédi⁷⁴ ; un moine Xénophon étant cité parmi les témoins, il est possible que ce soit le premier higoumène qui aurait démissionné en faveur de son frère. De cette époque-là, nous ne connaissons avec certitude qu'un bien situé hors de l'Athos : le monastère *tôn Hiéromnêmôn* sur la presqu'île de Longos, donné au monastère par Basile II, donc avant 1025. Les hauts et les bas que connaîtra ce monastère par la suite ne sont pas notre sujet. Nous avons donc une fondation familiale par deux frères, issus d'une famille instruite, le seul prénom laissant présager un haut degré d'instruction, tout comme le nombre de fois où des higoumènes ignorants utilisent ses talents pour apposer à leur place leur signature au bas des actes ; mais pas forcément une famille fortunée. Faute de documents, nous ne savons pas si les deux frères avaient par exemple exercé des fonctions publiques à quoi leur instruction les préparait. En tout état de cause, Xénophon reste un monastère modeste d'après le rang occupé dans les listes de signatures, rang qui est probablement amélioré après la refondation

69 *Actes de Dochiareiou*, n° 11, p. 118-119.

70 *Actes de Xénophon*, n° 1, éd. Denise Papachryssanthou, (ArchAth) 15 (Paris, 1986) : l'homme y est qualifié de κτήτωρ, l. 161 et 186, p. 174.

71 *Vie A*, p. 203-206, p. 95-97. Absent de la *Vie B*.

72 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 1, n° 2, l. 45, p. 70 : Ξενοφών μοναχὸς καὶ ἡγούμενος, en 23^e position sur 27 higoumènes.

73 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 1, n° 3, l. 50, p. 76.

74 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 1, n° 5, l. 54, p. 86.

opérée à la fin du XI^e siècle par un eunuque drongaire de la Veille, Étienne. Le monastère est qualifié pour la première fois d'impérial dans un *praktikon* de 1333.

Pour finir, nous devons confesser que nous n'avons traité qu'une partie du sujet. Pas seulement faute d'être allé jusqu'à l'époque des Paléologues, mais bien involontairement faute de sources. Quand nous examinons les listes de signataires, par exemple les 27 higoumènes que l'on trouve au bas de l'acte de Vatopédi n^o 2, on note une majorité d'absences de noms des monastères : 19. Certains des monastères cités ont une longue histoire postérieure, comme celui de Xèrocastro, probablement voisin de Kastamonitou et de Docheiariou et qui fut pourtant à un moment dépendant de Lavra, ce qui ne nous éclaire en rien sur sa fondation⁷⁵. De même, le monastère de Rabda, proche de Karyès : nous suivons son histoire ultérieure, pas sa fondation⁷⁶. Pareillement pour le monastère Saint-Nicolas le Paphlagonien, dont le destin ultérieur indique qu'il était probablement proche de Vatopédi⁷⁷. Le destin ultérieur du monastère de Gyreutou, dernier signataire donnant le nom du monastère dont il est higoumène, est aussi mal connu que sa fondation⁷⁸.

Ce manque d'informations fragilise donc la conclusion à laquelle nous aboutissons en nous limitant aux débuts du monachisme athonite, à cette phase décisive où l'Athos, à l'origine ultime refuge d'ascètes soucieux de vivre dans l'isolement, marqué vraisemblablement, avant le milieu du X^e siècle, par des regroupements en petits monastères dont le nombre de moines serait en général inférieur à une dizaine. Arrive alors la fondation de grandes laures. Lavra n'est pas la première, mais sa fondation par Athanase et Nicéphore Phocas est un tournant décisif : Athanase prévoit un effectif de 80 moines, qu'il se voit contraint par le succès à porter à 120, non sans soulever l'indignation des autres occupants de l'Athos. Pour abriter et nourrir ce nombre de moines, il faut des moyens matériels en finances et en terres, que le lien avec le pouvoir impérial va assurer à Lavra. Si l'on se tourne vers la "filiale" la plus remarquable de Lavra, Iviron, le succès vient en grande partie de hauts aristocrates géorgiens, de leurs succès militaires et du butin qu'ils en tirent. Bref, dans la deuxième moitié du X^e siècle, l'Athos n'échappe pas au mouvement d'aristocratisation du monachisme byzantin, déjà commencé depuis au moins deux siècles.

75 *Actes de Lavra*, 2, p. 7-8.

76 *Actes d'Iviron* 1, p. 204.

77 *Actes d'Iviron* 1, p. 210.

78 *Actes d'Iviron* 1, p. 212.

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Annuity Endowments and Sovereign Foundations on Mount Athos

Zachary Chitwood

1 Introduction

If you own fortresses, or perhaps villages, on your own land, and are a toparch, and hold power in them, don't let wealth or titles or big promises from the Emperors lead you astray, and give your land to an emperor, and get money and possessions in exchange for it, even if you are going to get four times as much, but own your land, even if it is small and insignificant; for it is better for you to be an independent friend than a slave, and a dependant. You are likely to be noble, valued and praised and honoured by the Emperor, and by everyone, just as long as you are on your land, and in your position of power—both you, and your children, and their descendants. But, when you abandon your land, and fall from your office, for the moment you will befriend the Emperor, (but), after a little time, you will be despised by the Emperor, and considered by him (to be) worth nothing, and you will know that you are a slave, and not a friend (...) And then you will remember that little land of yours, and your power, and how, from among free men, you voluntarily became a slave; and you, who once used to judge and punish others justly, will then be unjustly condemned and punished. Perhaps the Emperor, even if he knew that you were accused falsely, yet, in order to get back again what he gave you, and what he promised, will overlook justice. It is better for you to be in your land (trans. Roueché).¹

1 Kekaumenos, *Strategikon* v, ed. Charlotte Roueché, <https://ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/library/kekaumenos-consilia-et-narrationes/intro-kekaumenos/index.html> (online, 2013): 'Ἐὰν εἰς ἰδίαν χώραν κάστρα τυχόν ἢ χωρία ἔχῃς εἰ δὲ ἐν αὐτοῖς τοπάρχης καὶ ἐξουσιαστής, μὴ σε πλανήσῃ πλοῦτος ἢ ἀξιώματα ἢ ὑποσχέσεις μεγάλαι τῶν βασιλέων καὶ δώῃς τὴν χώραν σου βασιλεῖ καὶ ἀντ' αὐτῆς λάβῃς χρήματα καὶ κτήματα, εἰ καὶ τετραπλασίονα μέλλεις λαβεῖν, ἀλλὰ ἔχε τὴν χώραν σου καὶ μικρὰ καὶ οὐδαμινὴ ἔστι· κρεῖττον γὰρ σοὶ ἐστὶν εἶναι σε φίλον αὐτεξούσιον ἢ δοῦλον καὶ ὑπεξούσιον. ἕως τότε γὰρ θέλεις εἶναι εὐγενής, τίμιος καὶ ἐπαινετός καὶ ἔνδοξος παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ παρὰ πάντων, ἕως ἂν εἰς τὴν χώραν σου καὶ εἰς τὴν ἐξουσίαν σου καὶ σὺ καὶ οἱ παῖδες σου καὶ οἱ ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐστέ. ὁπνίκα δὲ ἀποβάλῃ τὴν χώραν σου καὶ ἐκπέσῃς τῆς ἀρχῆς σου, προσάπαξ ἀγαπηθῇς

As surmised in the quotation above from Kekaumenos' 11th-century *Strategikon*, land was considered the basis of wealth in Byzantium: even if the emperor were to offer you four times the value of your lands in money and possessions, so Kekaumenos' logic, you were better off retaining your landed property. Even though Kekaumenos directed this particular piece of advice at local magnates or toparchs, that land ownership was the principal avenue to accumulating and retaining wealth would have been recognized as a basic fact not just for the ambitious aristocrats that were the *Strategikon*'s intended readers. Though exact figures for its extent are lacking in the Byzantine case, landed property probably would have constituted a major part of the wealth of society's most economic important actors, including the state, the peasantry, the church, and monasteries, besides the aristocracy addressed by Kekaumenos.

Landholding by monasteries in Byzantium—or, more precisely, its absence—is the central topic of the present contribution. The importance of the accumulation of land by the Church in the societies of the post-Roman Western Europe has recently been underlined by Ian Wood in his monograph examining the economic development of the early medieval West through the lens of the 'temple society' paradigm.² Wood's emphasis on the alienation of landed wealth to the clergy and monks, in particular through the endowment of churches, monasteries and philanthropic establishments by the aristocracy of the early medieval West, dovetails nicely with the interdisciplinary work carried out on foundations in the medieval world carried out by Michael Borgolte.³ According to the definition of Borgolte, the *sine qua non* of a foundation was an endowment that produced revenues facilitating its long-term existence and hence pursuance of goals set by the founder.⁴ In most pre-modern cases, such endowments mainly consisted of land.

At first glance, monasteries were no exception to this axiom of the centrality of landed wealth, even though, unlike Kekaumenos' aristocratic peers, the

ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως, μετ'ὀλίγον καταφρονήθησθαι παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ ἀντ'οὐδενὸς παρ'αὐτοῦ λογισθῆσθαι καὶ γνῶσθαι ὅτι δοῦλος καὶ οὐ φίλος εἶ (...) καὶ τότε μνησθῆσθαι τῆς μικρᾶς σου ἐκείνης χώρας καὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας σου καὶ ὡς ἀπὸ ἐλευθέρων δοῦλος γέγονας ἐκουσίως, καὶ ὅποτε κρίνων καὶ τιμωρῶν ἄλλους δικαίως ἔσθαι τότε ἀδίκως κατακρινόμενος καὶ τιμωρούμενος, καὶ τάχα καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἵνα διέγνω ὅτι ψευδῇ κατηγορήθης, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ ἀναλαβέσθαι αὐτὸν πάλιν ἃ σοὶ δέδωκε καὶ ὅσα ὑπέσχετο παραβλέψεται τὸ δίκαιον. ἔστι δέ σοι κρεῖττον ἵνα εἶ εἰς τὴν χώραν σου.

2 Ian Wood, *The Christian Economy of the Early Medieval West: Towards a Temple Society* (Binghamton, NY, 2022).

3 Michael Borgolte, *World History as the History of Foundations, 3000 BCE to 1500 CE*, trans. Zachary Chitwood (Leiden, 2019); Michael Borgolte (ed.), *Enzyklopädie des Stiftungswesens in mittelalterlichen Gesellschaften*, 3 vols (Berlin, 2014–2017).

4 Borgolte, *World History*, p. 2: "What a foundation is cannot be defined for all periods; one can, however, generalize many of its forms via an ideal type. Accordingly, in a foundation a sum

accumulation and preservation of wealth was not an explicit goal of monastic life. The trope of the well-endowed monastery with extensive landed property is known to us above all from the medieval West, and real estate, in the form of rural properties and urban buildings, did in fact constitute the basis of endowments in Latin Christian foundation culture.⁵ Critiques of monasteries' excessive wealth, particularly their landholdings, were already widespread in the Middle Ages, foreshadowing later criticism of the same phenomenon that led to the confiscation of church and monastic property throughout Europe.⁶

This contribution will seek to nuance this debate about the importance of landed wealth as a prerequisite for foundations by examining a particular subset of foundations from the Byzantine world, which will here be termed 'annuity endowments.' An annuity endowment was a specific subtype of foundation, in which the founder endowed his foundation with the promise of a sum of money or goods, to be rendered annually. In essence, the beneficiary of an 'annuity endowment' was granted a claim to a sum in money or kind to be paid by the founder or his descendants. This type of foundation created a fundamentally different sort of relationship than that of a landed endowment. In the Byzantine context, when a monastery was endowed with land, it was forced to create a regime of economic oversight: to employ monastic or lay administrators to manage landed property and to exploit its economic potential. Two of the present contributors to this edited volume, Michel Kaplan and Kostis Smyrlis, are among the world's leading foremost experts regarding the acquisition and exploitation of monastic wealth in Byzantium.⁷

of capital is allocated, with whose revenues a certain goal can be followed over the long term. In contrast to a donation, which consists of a one-time gift, a foundation should, due to its inexhaustible and inalienable endowment, enable a periodic task to be repeated unendingly. Foundations supplement the activities of others and overcome shortcomings; they serve to help the needy, poor, sick and strangers; support state institutions in the fulfillment of their public duties; and further religious worship, as well as art and learning. They are to be found again and again in developed societies with a division of labor, which allow the accumulation of wealth in the hands of individuals. Yet it remains an open question as to whether the idea and practice of foundations were invented in different societies or were spread via imitation." Cf. the definition given in Zachary Chitwood et al., "Endowment Studies—Interdisciplinary Perspectives," *Endowment Studies* 1 (2017), 8.

5 Tillmann Lohse, "Stiftungsvermögen und -erträge: Lateinische Christen," in *Enzyklopädie des Stiftungswesens in mittelalterlichen Gesellschaften*, Bd. 2: *Das soziale System Stiftung*, ed. Michael Borgolte (Berlin, 2016), pp. 290–293.

6 Tillmann Lohse, "Kritik, Reform und Aufhebung: Lateinische Christen," in *Enzyklopädie des Stiftungswesens in mittelalterlichen Gesellschaften*, Bd. 3: *Stiftung und Gesellschaft*, ed. Michael Borgolte (Berlin, 2017), pp. 348–363.

7 In addition to their contributions in this edited volume, see especially Michel Kaplan,

By contrast, an annuity endowment did not necessarily require the setting up of a financial administration. Instead, the means by which the annual sum, the endowed annuity, was produced remained entirely at the discretion of the founder. A monastery which was granted an annuity endowment merely had to organize the transfer of the sum to the monastery's coffers. As we shall see, there were a number of ways of collecting this annual sum, whether from the tax receipts of the local administration, by travelling directly to the location of the founder or even by specifying that a certain economic unit, such as another monastery, produce the required sum. At a basic level, it spared the foundation from embarking on the laborious, time-consuming and—especially relevant in the monastic context—spiritually hazardous process of economic oversight.

Though the phenomenon of annuity endowments in Byzantium has been remarked upon in passing,⁸ it did not receive article-length treatment until quite recently, when in 2018 Dirk Krausmüller devoted an article to monastic communities without landed endowments in the 11th and 12th centuries.⁹ Krausmüller's study is a welcome contribution, but, as will be demonstrated in this article, financing monasteries with annuity endowments was not an invention of the monastic reformers around the year 1100, as he argued, but instead, as he suspected, "(...) was broader and we can safely assume that the evidence we possess is only a fraction of what originally existed."¹⁰ Indeed, as this contribution will demonstrate, this Middle Byzantine phase of annuity endowments in fact represents the revival of an old tradition, one that predates the familiar model of endowing monastic communities with land.

"Aumônes, artisanat, domaines fonciers: Les monastères byzantins et la logique économique (ve–xe siècle)," in *La vie quotidienne des moines en Orient et en Occident (Ive–xe siècle)*, ed. Olivier Delouis and Maria Mossakowska-Gaubert, (Bibliothèque d'étude) 170/2 (Cairo, 2019), pp. 359–371; idem, "The Economy of Byzantine Monasteries," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West*, eds. Alison I. Beach and Isabelle Cochelin, 1 (Cambridge, 2021), pp. 340–364; Kostis Smyrlis, *La fortune des grands monastères byzantins: fin du xe – milieu du xive siècle*, (Monographies. Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance) 21 (Paris, 2006); idem, "Monasteries, Society, Economy, and the State in the Byzantine Empire," in *The Oxford Handbook of Christian Monasticism*, ed. Bernice Martha Kaczynski (Oxford, 2020), pp. 155–167.

8 Zachary Chitwood, "Stiftungsvermögen und -erträge: Griechisch-orthodoxe Christen," in *Enzyklopädie des Stiftungswesens in mittelalterlichen Gesellschaften, Bd. 2: Das soziale System Stiftung*, ed. Michael Borgolte (Berlin, 2016), pp. 330–331.

9 Dirk Krausmüller, "Take No Care for the Morrow! The Rejection of Landed Property in Eleventh- and Twelfth-century Byzantine Monasticism," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 42 (2018), 45–57.

10 Krausmüller, "Take No Care for the Morrow!," 55.

Due to the unusually good state of preservation of the archival holdings of the monasteries of Mount Athos, we possess an excellent picture, especially by Byzantine standards, of the landholdings of Athonite monasteries from the end of the 9th century onwards. Athos is also, interestingly enough, where the phenomenon of annuity endowments is best attested in the Byzantine world. These Athonite annuity endowments, moreover, are almost all sovereign foundations: benefactions of the Byzantine emperor or other Orthodox potentates. This examination is therefore specifically devoted to the phenomenon of sovereign annuity endowments on medieval Mount Athos.¹¹

In what follows, I will first sketch the early history of sovereign annuity endowments in the Byzantine world before the rise of monasticism on Mount Athos in the 9th century. Thereafter, the specific role of annuity endowments on Mount Athos in the golden age of Hagiorite monastic foundations in the 10th and 11th centuries will be explored. This will be followed by an examination of a second major phase of Athonite sovereign annuity endowments, from the end of the 14th century until the middle of the 16th century. In conclusion, I will seek to offer an explanation for the popularity of this type of sovereign foundation, and why the annuity endowment, at least in certain contexts, seems to have been preferred to endowing monasteries directly with land.

2 An Ambiguous Attitude: Monastic Landholding in the Late Antique Eastern Mediterranean

It is worth emphasizing that well into Late Antiquity there is little evidence for churches or monasteries being major landholders in the Eastern Roman Empire. Of course, the picture on the ground was mixed, depending on the region:¹² for Egypt, the birthplace of Christian monasticism, clear documentation for landholding by monasteries appears first in the period from the 6th to the 8th century, even if some scholars posit that monasteries must have become

11 In a separate examination, I took a look at the phenomenon of annuity foundations in Byzantium more broadly, and not only in the Athonite context: Zachary Chitwood, "Connecting Courts and Cloisters: Memoria, Sovereign Patronage and Annuity Endowments in the Byzantine World," in *Comparative Study of Donation Strategy*, ed. Toru Miura, (Toyo Bunko Research Library Series) 24 (Tokyo, 2024), pp. 13–32.

12 A thorough framework for issues of property and landholding in post-Roman societies is offered by Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800* (Oxford, 2005).

significant landowners before that time.¹³ The source material for late antique Syria, although less abundant than for Egypt, offers even less proof for monastic landholding, and much of this material stems from after the Arab-Islamic conquest.¹⁴ The legislation of the emperor Justinian I (r. 527–565), which assumes that churches and charitable establishments were major landholders rather than monasteries, suggests that well into the 6th century monasteries were not important enough as economic actors to require regulation.¹⁵

As an alternative to landholding, in Late Antiquity it was quite common for individuals to finance their foundations through so-called *presbeia annalia*, yearly payments to churches, monasteries or philanthropic establishments.¹⁶ As with landholding, the evidence for such annuities has a regional tinge, but there is substantial evidence for the practice in Egypt and Palestine, less so for Syria.¹⁷ As with the phenomenon of founding churches and monasteries more generally, endowing such institutions with annuity endowments was mostly restricted to the elite, and eventually became discernable in the imperial household itself. The hagiographical works of Cyril of Skythopolis (mid-6th century) yield several examples of emperors or members of the imperial family choosing to grant monastic communities annuity endowments. Thus, the widowed empress Eudokia, for instance, shortly before her death assigned incomes in her testament for the Church of St Stephen in Jerusalem, as well as other churches she had founded.¹⁸

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- 13 Ewa Wipszycka, "Resources and Economic Activities of the Egyptian Monastic Communities," *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 41 (2011), 171–172.
 - 14 On the Syrian material, see now Ewa Wipszycka, "The Economy of Syrian Monasteries (Fifth-Eighth Century)," *U schyłku starożytności—Studia źródłoznawcze* 19 (2020): 179–259.
 - 15 Kaplan, "Economy of Byzantine Monasteries," p. 344.
 - 16 John Philip Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire*, (DOS) 24 (Washington, D.C., 1987), p. 49.
 - 17 Egypt: Joanna Wegner, *Monastic Communities in Context: Monasteries, Economy, and Society in Late Antique Egypt*, (Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplements) 41 (Leuven—Paris—Bristol, CT), pp. 27–28; Palestine: Konstantin Klein, "Von Hesychie zu Ökonomie: Zur Finanzierung der Wüstenklöster Palästinas (5.–6. Jh.)," *Millennium-Jahrbuch* 15 (2018): 37–67, esp. 41–44; Syria: Wipszycka, "Economy of Syrian Monasteries," 235: "It is important to note that mentions about establishing systematic subsidies in kind or in money for monasteries are extremely rare, although we know these took place in Egypt, where they constituted a considerable source of income."
 - 18 Specifically, she promised a testamentary annuity to Euthymios in his *vita*: Cyril of Skythopolis, *Life of Euthymios* 35, ed. Eduard Schwartz, *Kyrrillos von Skythopolis*, (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur) 49/2 (Leipzig, 1939), p. 53, line 28–p. 54, line 7: ἐβούλετο γὰρ καταλεῖψαι αὐτῷ κατὰ διαθήκας πρόσοδον ἱκανήν. καὶ δρομαίως ἐπὶ τὴν ἀγίαν πόλιν ὁρμήσασα καὶ τὸν ἀρχιεπίσκοπον μεταστελαιμένη καὶ τὰ παρὰ τοῦ

Justinian also seems to have also mainly employed such annuity endowments as a patron. To give just one example, in Cyril of Skythopolis' *Life of Sabas*, when Sabas went to the court of Justinian to request aid in rebuilding Palestine after the Samaritan revolt, the saint was asked by the emperor if he needed a state subsidy for the monasteries under his care, which Sabas refused, instead asking for five specific favors. One of these favors was a request to construct a hospital in Jerusalem, which Justinian initially endowed with an income in its first year of 1850 *solidi*, before doubling this sum in subsequent years, along with its capacity, from 100 to 200 beds.¹⁹ As astutely noted by Daniel Caner, Cyril of Sythopolis' portrayal of Sabas and his strict refusal to acquire landed property for the communities under his care reflects growing unease within the monastic communities of the Eastern Roman Empire, between traditionalists content to live on the offerings of the faithful and more enterprising monks ready to secure the economic livelihood of their communities through the acquisition of land.²⁰

From the monastic perspective, in Justinian's day monastic landholding was viewed with a certain degree of skepticism, as evidenced in the anecdotes and sayings of the collected monastic lore of Egypt and Palestine, the *apophthegmata patrum*, which attained written form by around 500.²¹ Monastic landholding, as well as the alternative of annuity endowments, was seen with ambiguity in these tales, which is representative of the collection as a whole, as it accommodated a range of views on the topics it covered.

As one example, we have the story of a monk who became so renowned for his spiritual gifts that the emperor asked for his prayers.²² The monk received much gold and with this money began to improve his fields and other possessions, yet his increasing wealth was accompanied by a loss of his spiritual powers. When summoned to exorcize a demon from a possessed man, he

μεγάλου Εὐθυμίου ῥηθέντα διηγησαμένη ἀπλήρωτον ὄντα τὸν ναὸν τοῦ ἁγίου πρωτομάρτυρος Στεφάνου ἐγκαινισθῆναι παρεσκεύασεν τῇ πεντεκαίδεκάτῃ τοῦ Ἰουνίου μηνὸς καὶ τούτῳ πολλὴν ἀφορίσασα πρόσοδον κύριον πάσης τῆς διοικήσεως κατέστησεν τὸν Γαβριήλιον. καὶ περιήρχετο πᾶσας τὰς ὑπ' αὐτῆς κτισθείσας ἐκκλησίας ἐγκαινίζουσα καὶ ἐκάστηι ἀρκοῦσαν ἀφορίζουσα πρόσοδον.

19 Cyril of Skythopolis, *Life of Sabas* 72–73, ed. Schwartz (Leipzig, 1939), pp. 174–178.

20 Daniel Caner, *The Rich and the Pure: Philanthropy and the Making of Christian Society in Early Byzantium* (Oakland, CA, 2021), pp. 222–223.

21 For a study of the monastic life evidenced by the *apophthegmata patrum*, see John Wortley, *An Introduction to the Desert Fathers* (Cambridge et al., 2019).

22 *Apophthegmata patrum, Systematic Collection* x1.80, ed. Jean-Claude Guy, *Les apophtegmes des pères: collection systématique*, 3 vols (Sources chrétiennes) 287, 474, 498 (Paris, 1993–2005), 2:182.

was unable to do so, and the demon explained to the monk that he had lost the power of exorcism because he now traded spiritual for worldly concerns. Such stories, which emphasized the spiritual danger that worldly wealth represented, could be easily multiplied.²³

While this general critique of monastic wealth is not unsurprising, there is also a small number of stories which treat the specific issue of the comparative advantages or dangers of monastic landholding as opposed to an annuity endowment. The strongest endorsement for the idea of monastic landholding comes from the figure of Abbot Gelasios, who had espoused the notion of extreme monastic poverty and withdrawal from the world in his youth, yet when it came time to establish his own monastery accepted donations of land and acquired draft animals for the monastery.²⁴ This story about Abbot Gelasios was apparently used in later centuries to justify monastic landholding, since the 11th-century author Nikon of the Black Mountain warned against using this anecdote as *carte blanche* for acquiring monastic land.²⁵

Interestingly, concrete comparisons of the advantages and disadvantages of monastic landowning, as opposed to receiving regular incomes, appear only in collections after the first phase of the codification of the *apophthegmata patrum* around the year 500. The first of these tales appears in the *Spiritual Meadow* of John Moschos, which was written in the early 7th century.²⁶ It relates the story of a monastic community near Nisibis which, under its well-regarded abbot, produced much barley and shared it with other monastic communities. An official who stayed at the monastery while returning from a diplomatic mission from Persia was so edified by his experience there that he endowed it with annual income of 30 pounds of gold. While the monks greatly rejoiced at this windfall, after receiving this annuity their agricultural production completely ceased: though they continued to sow barley, they reaped nothing. At the advice of the abbot, they gave up the annuity and the rich harvest of barley immediately returned.

As so often the case with these *apophthegmata*, there is no obvious, unassailable interpretation of the text, but a straightforward reading would suggest that

23 E.g. a *magistros* coming to Abbot Arsenios to share his inheritance, which the abbot refused: *Apophthegmata patrum, Systematic Collection* v1.2, 1:314, 316; a rich man coming to Sketis to give it money, who was told to distribute it among the poor instead: *Apophthegmata patrum, Systematic Collection* v1.23, 1:328, 330.

24 *Apophthegmata patrum, Alphabetical Collection*, Gelasius 5, ed. and trans. John Wortley, *Give Me a Word: The Alphabetical Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, (Popular Patristics Series) 52 (Yonkers, New York, 2014), p. 87.

25 Krausmüller, "Take No Care for the Morrow!," 55–56.

26 John Moschos, *Pratum spirituale (Supplementary Tales)*, in Elpidio Mioni, "Il Pratum Spir-

God would only allow the monks to receive what they needed—either in the form of barley or an annual payment. Though tale does not appear to endorse one form of economic support over another, practicing both forms of economic exploitation was not desirable.

A more clear verdict about the relative merits of each form of funding a monastery is related in a story about Abbot Bessarion which is transmitted in the *Evergetinos* / *Synagoge*.²⁷ In fact, it is a story within a story, another common feature of the *apophthegmata*. To briefly summarize it: Abbot Bessarion was informed that a lay helper had died and left his estate to a community of 300 nuns. Abbot Bessarion replied that this was no good at all, as he had once done something similar himself when he had first become a monk, at which time he had given away all of his possessions, except for an estate to support a community of nuns in Alexandria. When he then heard that the Praetorian Prefect of Egypt was interested in buying the estate, he asked an elder what he should do. The elder replied it was better to sell the estate at a low price and to give the money to the nuns, rather than having them retain control of the estate. Neglecting the elder's advice, Bessarion decided to give the estate, which included slaves and yokes of oxen, to the nuns, but he was then visited by a vision in which a nun chastised him for his action, and that by doing so he had even risked his own salvation. He thereupon corrected his mistake by selling the estate to the prefect, freeing the slaves and depositing the money at the altar.

3 The First Phase of Sovereign Annuity Endowments on Mount Athos (10th to 11th Centuries)

These anecdotes regarding land and incomes in monastic literature, when set alongside the evidence of annuity endowments from Late Antiquity, make clear that monastic landholding was by no means the dominant or indeed preferable means for financing ascetic communities. The Athonite monks and their benefactors would have been aware of these precedents when the first

ituale di Giovanni Mosco: gli episodi inedita del Cod. Mariano greco 11.21," *OCP* 17 (1951), at 83 (no. 232, Mioni 1); English translation in *The Spiritual Meadow*, trans. John Wortley, (Cistercian Studies Series) 139 (Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1992), p. 216.

27 *Eugertinos or Synagoge* XLIX.B.1–19, ed. Matthaios Langes, *Εὐεργετινός ἤτοι Συναγωγή*, 7th ed., 4 vols. (Athens, 1985), 3:643–646; English translation in *The Evergetinos: A Complete Text*, trans. Archbishop Chrysostomos and Hieromonk Patapios, 4 vols (Etna, California, 2008): 3:404–409. The story is attributed to Palladios, but I have not been able to find the tale in his *Lausaic History*.

great communal monasteries arose in the 10th century.²⁸ By this period imperial support for monasticism had reached substantial proportions, so that it seems to have extended to the general obligation of the state to support monks in the most prestigious monastic centers. Thus, it is during the first half of the 10th century, sometime during the reign of Romanos I Lekapenos (r. 920–948), that we find a very generalized form of the annuity endowment: the imperial obligation to provide an annual stipend to the mountain monastic centers of Bithynian Olympos, Kyminas, Athos, Barachaios, Latros and Chryse Petra, at a rate of one gold coin per monk annually.²⁹

Even before the rise of the Great Lavra, therefore, this annual payment from the imperial treasury must have played an important role in the financing of the Athonite monastic communities. Clearly, however, monastics on Athos as well as the surrounding region were acquiring landed property, much of it hitherto uncultivated ‘clasmatic’ land, already in the 9th and 10th centuries.³⁰ The Byzantine state profited from this process, as both monks and peasants brought clasmatic (*klasma*) land that had escheated to the fiscal administration due to the owner disappearing—presumably as a result of the considerable economic disruption from the 6th to the 8th centuries due to the incursions of Slavic tribes into the region—back under cultivation.³¹

Thus, both landowning and support via annuity endowments were being used for the financing of monastic communities on the Holy Mountain before the arrival of Athanasios of Athos on the Holy Mountain and his establishment, together with the successful general and then emperor, Nikephoros II Phokas (r. 963–969), of the Great Lavra. Athanasios shared with Nikephoros Phokas the belief that excessive monastic wealth was spiritually pernicious.³² We know that Nikephoros had previously supported monasteries on Mount Kyminas in Bithynia, where Athanasios had received his monastic training, as well as on Mount Olympos, as described by Athanasios in his *typon*: “Driven by this holy zeal, he incessantly established ascetic dwellings on Mount Kyminas and settled monks in them. He generously provided for their needs, in part from his

28 On which topic see the contribution of Michel Kaplan in this volume.

29 Franz Dölger and Andreas Müller, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565–1453. 1. Teil, 2. Halbbd.: Regesten von 867–1025*, 2nd ed. (Munich, 2003), no. 648e.

30 Alan Harvey, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire, 900–1200* (Cambridge, 1989); Michel Kaplan, “The Monasteries of Athos and Chalkidiki (8th–11th Centuries): A Pioneering Front?,” *Medieval Worlds* 9 (2019), 63–81.

31 For *klasma* or clasmatic lands, see Mark Bartusis, “Klasma,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan et al., 3 vols (Oxford, 1991): 2:1132.

32 On the biography of Athanasios the Athonite, see *PmbZ*, no. 20670; for Nikephoros II Phokas, *PmbZ*, no. 25535.

own fortune, and in part by interceding with the emperors at the time, he managed to offer yearly subsidies to them, and most eagerly honored them with the creation and granting of annuities (*solemnia*). Moreover, he furnished these very same benefactions also to the monks of Mount Olympus.³³ It is noteworthy that in this passage Athanasios describes Nikephoros' patronage activity only in the creation and granting of annuities: their endowment with land is rather conspicuously not mentioned.

It is highly plausible that this aversion to monastic landholding was pioneered on Mount Kyminas, and in particular the *lavra* there founded by Michael Maleīnos, the uncle of Nikephoros and the spiritual father of Athanasios.³⁴ Michael stemmed from a powerful aristocratic family that initially opposed his becoming a monk, before eventually reconciling with him. Even though he had already been a monk for many years, at the death of his father he acquired considerable wealth. Since his mother decided to become a nun, he and his brother had inherited a vast estate consisting of slaves, movable property (especially livestock) and real estate: "Then our holy father Michael, after receiving his due from the family estate, honored his slaves with freedom and additional bequests, granted all his movable property to the poor—a wonderful thing to see, herds of animals of every type, a countless multitude, lavishly distributed by him to the hands of the poor and to the safe storehouses of blessedness there, and from all the immovable property he sold to his brother Constantine, and, taking half of the proceeds, he gave this to his spiritual father, so that it could be given by him to the poor in need and to the monks of the mountain, and for the expansion of the reverend and holy monastery there."³⁵

33 Athanasios the Athonite, *Hypotyposis*, ed. Philipp Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte der Athosklöster* (Leipzig, 1894), p. 102, lines 19–27: τοῦτ' οὖν τῷ θεῷ ζήλῳ κινούμενος ἀσκητήρια συνεχῇ κατὰ τὸ τοῦ Κυμινᾶ ὄρος δειμάμενος μοναχοὺς ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐγκατῶκισε, καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀναγκαίων χρεῖαν ἀφθόνως ἐπεχορήγησε, πῇ μὲν οἴκοθεν, διὰ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ περιουσίας, πῇ δὲ διὰ τῆς πρὸς τοὺς κατὰ καιροὺς βασιλεύοντας μεσιτείας αὐτοῦ συνεπίσχυσέ τε καὶ συνεκρότησε, ῥόγας ἐπετείους παρεχόμενος αὐτοῖς, σολεμνίων ὀρθώσεσσι τε καὶ δόσεσιν αὐτοὺς προθυμότερα δεξιούμενος· αὐταῖς δὲ ταύταις ταῖς εὐποιΐαις καὶ πρὸς τοὺς μοναχοὺς τοῦ Ὀλύμπιακοῦ ὄρους μετὰ δαψιλείας ἐχρήσατο. Cf. Krausmüller, "Take No Care for the Morrow!," 54.

34 Michael Maleīnos, see *PmbZ*, no. 25124; in addition to the literature cited there, there are two newer noteworthy studies of this saint: Sophie Métivier, "Michel Maléinos, un saint des Phocas?," *Ὁ δὲ δῶρὸν εἰμι τὰς γραφὰς βλέπων νόει: Mélanges Jean-Claude Cheynet*, eds. Béatrice Caseau, Vivien Prigent and Alessio Sopracasa, (TM) 21/1 (Paris, 2017), pp. 451–458; Sophie Métivier, "La notice synaxariale de saint Michel Maléinos, un abrégé inédit," eds. Michel Stavrou, André Binggeli and Vincent Déroche, *Mélanges Bernard Flusin*, (TM) 23/1 (Paris, 2019), pp. 599–612.

35 Basil Maleīnos, *Life of Michael Maleīnos* (BHG 1295), § 11, ed. Louis Petit, *Vie et office de saint Michel Malénote, suivis d'un traité ascétique de Basile Malénote. Texte grec* (Paris, 1903),

The saint could have endowed his foundation with estates, but decided against it, instead opting to sell his landed property and giving it one-half of the proceeds. Although a rejection of monastic landholding is not expressly stated in the passage above, it is noteworthy that the ownership of property by monasteries does not seem to fit with the form of monastic life practiced by Michael and his disciples. Founding monastic communities in this way was something that would be endorsed by Nikephoros Phokas after he became emperor in 963.

One of the great paradoxes of our image of Nikephoros Phokas in the sources is, as famously explored by Rosemary Morris, the fact that they present us with two faces: the one as a bloodthirsty warmonger and enemy of the church, the other as an ascetic and pious warrior and friend of monks.³⁶ This Janus-like status of the emperor extended to monastic policy as well. There is no doubt that Nikephoros was a zealous supporter of monasticism, at least of a particular sort. In addition to his patronage of monks on Mount Kyminas and Mount Olympos, Nikephoros is best known for his key role in helping Athanasios found the Great Lavra on Athos. It is certainly telling that the Great Lavra was initially supported via annuity endowments: its first *solemnion*, granted in a chrysobull issued before May of 964, amounted to 288 gold coins annually, which was intended for a community of 80 monks.³⁷ For the Holy Mountain as a whole, the annuity endowment was raised to 7 pounds of gold annually in the same year.³⁸ Also in the 964 Nikephoros supposedly issued a chrysobull to Lavra granting it three important relics: a fragment of the True Cross and the heads of Basil of Caesarea and Alexander of Pydna.³⁹

p. 15, line 29–p. 16, line 6: ἐντεύθεν ὁ θεοφόρος πατήρ ἡμῶν Μιχαὴλ τὰ ἐκ γονικοῦ κλήρου περιελθόντα παρειληφώς, τοὺς μὲν οἰκέτας ἐλευθερίᾳ τετίμηκε λεγάτα προσεπιδούς, τὰ δὲ κινητὰ πάντα διένειμε τοῖς πτωχοῖς, καὶ ἦν ἰδεῖν πρᾶγμα θαύματος ἄξιον, ἀγέλας βοσκημάτων καὶ παντοίων εἰδῶν ἅπειρον πλῆθος ἀφειδῶς ὑπ' ἐκείνου εἰς τὰς τῶν πενήτων χεῖρας διαδιδόμενα καὶ πρὸς τὰ ἄσυλα ταμεῖα τῆς ἐκεῖθεν μακαριότητος προπεμπόμενα, τῆς δὲ ἀκινήτου πάσης μερίδος τῷ ἀδελφῷ Κωνσταντίνῳ παραχωρήσας ἐκουσίως καὶ τὰ ἡμίση τῶν τιμημάτων λαβὼν τῷ πνευματικῷ πατρὶ προσεκόμισε, πρὸς τὸ ὑπ' ἐκείνου δοθῆναι πᾶσι τοῖς χρεῖαν ἔχουσι πένησί τε καὶ μοναχοῖς τοῦ ὄρους, οὐ μὴν ἄλλὰ καὶ πρὸς τὸ πλατυνθῆναι τὸ εὐαγὲς ἐκεῖνο καὶ ἱερὸν μοναστήριον.

36 Rosemary Morris, "The Two Faces of Nikephoros Phokas," *BMGS* 12 (1988), 83–115.

37 Dölger and Müller, *Regesten*, no. 699a [704].

38 Dölger and Müller, *Regesten*, no. 705.

39 Dölger and Müller, *Regesten*, no. 706. As noted there, there are not inconsiderable doubts regarding its authenticity on diplomatic grounds. In addition, Hans-Veit Beyer, "Der 'Heilige Berg' in der byzantinischen Literatur 1. Mit einem Beitrag von Katja Sturm-Schnabel zum 'locus amoenus' einer serbischen Herrscherurkunde," *JÖB* 1981 (30), 204, noted the use of the phrase "this Holy-named Mountain" (τῷ ἁγιωνύμῳ ὄρει) in this chrysobull; it is by several decades the first use of this designation for Mount Athos, and thus would also speak against the chrysobull being genuine.

In none of this surviving documentation are there indications that Nikephoros endowed this foundation directly with land. A partial exception was a chrysobull that has not survived, in which this emperor granted to the Great Lavra the Monastery of St Andrew of Peristerai (near Thessalonike) in *epidosis*, along with all its properties. In fact, his patronage strategy for the Great Lavra matches the financing of monasteries, churches and pious foundations laid out in his famous novel of 963/964. According to the extensive prologue of the novel, the excessive wealth that church and monastic institutions had acquired by his day contradicted the principle of Apostolic Poverty. Nikephoros lamented the behavior of those monks, “[t]he hours upon hours they hasten to acquire thousands of acres of land, lavish buildings, herds of horses, cattle, camels, and other beasts beyond counting, stretching the whole concern of their soul to embrace these things, with the result that monastic practices are in no way different from worldly life, bloated with care (trans. McGeer).”⁴⁰

In order to correct this state of affairs, the emperor forbade the founding of new monasteries, guesthouses or homes for the aged, instead directing prospective patrons to focus their energies on the restoration of ruined institutions. Moreover, the type of assistance was restricted: “It is our command that such persons attend to already established institutions in need of assistance without providing them with fields or any or properties or buildings (for what there is already is enough, what they happen to have had from the beginning); let [the benefactors] deem these worthy of the requisite care by selling the fields and properties which [the benefactors] own to the laymen of their choice and by providing the institutions with slaves, cattle, flocks of sheep, and any number of other animals (trans. McGeer).”⁴¹ In addition, endowing monasteries, guesthouses, old-age homes, metropolitanates, and bishoprics was for-

40 *Les nouvelles des empereurs Macédoniens concernant la terre et les stratiotes*, no. 8, ed. Nicolas Svoronos (Athens, 1994), pp. 151–161 (Text at pp. 157–161), at §1, p. 157, lines 13–17: γῆς πλέθρα μυρία, φιλοτίμους οἰκοδομάς, ἵππων ἀγέλας, βοῶν, καμήλων, ἄλλων κτηνῶν ἀριθμοῦ κρειττόνων, ὅσαι ὥραι κτᾶσθαι σπουδάζοντες, καὶ τὴν ὅλην μέριμναν τῆς ψυχῆς περὶ αὐτὰ κατατείνοντες, ὥστε κατ’ οὐδὲν τοῦ κοσμικοῦ βίου καὶ πολλαῖς φλεγμένοντος ταῖς φροντίσι τὰ μοναχικὰ ταυτὶ διαφέρειν (...); English translation in *The Land Legislation of the Macedonian Emperors*, trans. Eric McGeer, (Mediaeval Sources in Translation) 38 (Toronto, 2000), p. 92.

41 *Les nouvelles des empereurs Macédoniens*, no. 8, § 3, p. 160, lines 98–105: Ἐπιμελεῖσθαι δὲ τῶν προλαβόντων καὶ βοηθείας δεομένων κελεύομεν οὐκ ἀγροὺς παρέχοντας οὐδὲ τόπους δι᾽ ἑνὸς καὶ οἰκοδομάς ἱκανὰν—γὰρ τὰ φθάσαντα καὶ ἅπερ ἔχοντες τυγχάνουσιν ἐξ ἀρχῆς—ἀλλ’ ἡμελημένα ταῦτα καὶ ἀκαμῆ καὶ ἀνέργαστα δι’ ἀπορίαν κείμενα χρημάτων, ἐκεῖνοι τοὺς ἀγροὺς οὓς τῶν κοσμικῶν βούλονται, προνοίας αὐτὰ τῆς προσηκούσης καταξιοῦτωσαν οἰκέτας παρέχοντας, βόας, ποίμνια, ἄλλα ὅσα ἕτερα τῶν κτηνῶν; trans. McGeer, p. 95.

bidden.⁴² One important exception constituted so-called *kellia* and *lavrai* in deserted places: these could still be established under the new legislation.⁴³

Angeliki Laiou has noted that the way to found monasteries prescribed in the novel was followed almost to a t by Michael Maleīnos, suggesting “[t]he scion and eldest son of this great family had behaved in a way that looks almost like a model for his imperial nephew’s injunctions.”⁴⁴ Viewed in this way, Michael Maleīnos’ rigorist interpretation of Apostolic Poverty and the way monasteries should be financed would have a long life both on Mount Athos and for sovereign patronage more generally. Both through his legislation and his own benefactions, Nikephoros Phokas, articulating the monastic principles of his uncle and Athanasios, created a model of sovereign patronage that frowned upon endowing monasteries with land, and instead advocated supporting monastic communities with regular payments of money: annuity endowments.

More generally, whatever the attractivity of the ideals of Nikephoros Phokas and Michael Maleīnos regarding monastic landholding, over the long term they would have only a limited effect. The novel of Nikephoros Phokas on monasteries, churches and philanthropic houses does not seem to have been observed after his murder in 969. A supposed novel of Basil II, likely a forgery of the mid-11th century, repealed his legislation.⁴⁵ Of course, with the establishment of the Great Lavra Athanasios created what would become a fabulously wealthy monastery, even in his own lifetime, violating in spirit the attitude towards monastic wealth he had once shared with Nikephoros Phokas and Michael Maleīnos.⁴⁶ Given that Athanasios’ own attitude towards monastic landhold-

42 *Les nouvelles des empereurs Macédoniens*, no. 8, § 4, p. 160, lines 110–113: “Ὡστε ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν μηδενὶ ἐξέστω μὴ ἀγροὺς μὴ τόπους μοναστηρίοις ἢ γηροκομείοις ἢ ξενώσιν ὀποπωσοῦν παραπέμπειν, ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ μητροπόλεσιν ἢ ἐπισκοπείοις, οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδ’ ἐκείνοις λυσιστελεῖ.

43 *Les nouvelles des empereurs Macédoniens*, no. 8, § 4, p. 160, lines 115–119: Κελλία δὲ καὶ τὰς καλουμένας λαύρας ἐν ἐρήμοις οἰκοδομεῖν, μὴ πρὸς κτήσεις καὶ ἀγροὺς ἐτέρους ἐκτεινομένας ἀλλὰ τῇ περιοχῇ μόνῃ τῇ ἰδίᾳ ὀριζομένας, τοσούτω τοὺς βουλομένους οὐκ εἵργομεν, ὅσω καὶ δι’ ἐπαίνου μᾶλλον τὸ πρᾶγμα τίθεμεν.

44 Angeliki Laiou, “The General and the Saint: Michael Maleinos and Nikephoros Phokas,” in *ΕΥΨΥΧΙΑ. Mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler*, (Publications de la Sorbonne. Série Byzantina Sorbonensia) 16/1 (Paris, 1998), p. 411.

45 *Les nouvelles des empereurs Macédoniens*, no. 13, p. 189. The editor of the text (Svoronos) regarded it as a forgery. For a contrary opinion, see John Philip Thomas, “A Disputed Novel of Basil II,” *GRBS* 24 (1983), 273–283.

46 Athanasios and his views on monasticism certainly evolved over the course of his life, though to what degree is still open to debate. The most radical perspective on this evolution is the notion that Athanasios became ‘converted’ to the cenobitic ideals of Stoudite monasticism, as argued by Julien Leroy, “La conversion de saint Athanase l’Athonite à

ing was so complex, even contradictory, later monastic thinkers could cite him as both a supporter and an opponent of monasteries owning land, as was done in 16th-century Muscovy.⁴⁷

While we are relatively well-informed about Nikephoros Phokas' attitude to monastic landholding, we know far less about that of most of his imperial successors. In any case, the Lavra's annual imperial subvention was doubled to 488 gold coins a year by a chrysobull under the immediate successor of Nikephoros Phokas, John I Tzimiskes (r. 969–976).⁴⁸ The imperial policy of financing Athonite monasteries was, moreover, soon extended to other communities on the Holy Mountain in the following decades. Iviron was granted a yearly *solemnion* of one pound of gold during the reign of Constantine IX Monomachos (r. 1042–1055), with Vatopedi receiving a similar grant of 80 gold coins yearly during his reign as well.⁴⁹ By January of 1057 the annuity endowment for Athos had been raised to 10 pounds of gold, while Lavra itself received an additional 8 pounds of gold and 20 gold coins.⁵⁰ At around the same time, during the reign of Michael VI (r. 1056–1057), the *solemnion* of 80 gold coins annually for Vatopedi was confirmed.⁵¹ This represented the high point of the first phase of sovereign annuity endowments on Mount Athos.

In the following decades, and indeed during the entirety of Komnenian rule, probably both as a result of the declining fiscal means of the Byzantine state and rather lukewarm attitude of the Komnenoi towards Mount Athos, these annuities were either stabilized or reduced.⁵² A first move in this direction occurred during the reign of Isaak I Komnenos (r. 1057–1059), as the

l'idéal cénobitique et l'influence studite," in *Le Millénaire du Mont Athos (963–1963): Etudes et Mélanges; Actes du "Convegno internazionale di studio" à la "Fondazione Giorgio Cini" (3–6 septembre 1963) à Venise*, 2 vols (Venice, 1963–1964), 1101–120.

47 David Goldfrank, "The Role and Image of Athos in Muscovite Monastic Life of the Late 15th and Early 16th Centuries," in *Monastic Traditions: Selected Proceedings of the Fourth International Hilandar Conference (The Ohio State University, 14–15 August 1998)*, eds. Charles Gribble and Predrag Matejic (Bloomington, Indiana, 2003), p. 125. See also the "Introduction" by Zachary Chitwood in this volume, pp. 5–6.

48 Dölger and Müller, *Regesten*, no. 744.

49 Dölger, Franz and Peter Wirth, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565–1453. 2. Teil: Regesten von 1025–1204*, 2nd ed. (Munich, 1995), nos 885b, 928c; Vatopedi: Dölger and Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 928g.

50 Dölger and Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 932.

51 Dölger and Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 937b.

52 For the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081–1118) as a turning point in the relationship between the emperor and monasteries, especially of Mount Athos, see Rosemary Morris, *Monks and Laymen in Byzantium, 843–1118* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995), pp. 267–295. Even though the Komnenoi could and did act as generous patrons of monasteries, with the

solemnion of 80 gold coins for Vatopedi was reduced by half.⁵³ As the fiscal resources of the Byzantine state declined in the last decades of the 11th century, the annual subsidies paid to the Athonite monasteries were substantially curtailed. Thus, in July of 1079 Iviron saw its *solemnion* reduced from eight *litrai*, 16 *nomismata* to four *litrai*, 16 *nomismata*,⁵⁴ while in February of 1082 Vatopedi's annuity of 72 gold coins was reduced to tax remission for two properties of the monastery worth 19 gold coins annually.⁵⁵ Already by 1107/1108, the Lavra's annuity seems to have been reduced to only 100 gold coins, a pittance compared to the riches the monks had received on an annual basis a century before.⁵⁶

For this first phase of sovereign annuity endowments in the 10th and 11th centuries on Mount Athos, the moral hazard of monastic landowning—the fear of burdening monks with the administration and exploitation of landed property—seems to have contributed to the widespread use of sovereign annuity endowments. Such endowments were not limited to Athos in this period: emperors also endowed monasteries on other holy mountains, monasteries on islands like that of Nea Mone and even the Latin monastery of Monte Cassino with annual payments. Even though the Athonite monasteries would become landholders of considerable significance, especially for monasteries like Lavra, Iviron and Vatopedi, their initial assets must have consisted to a large extent of sovereign annuity endowments.

4 The Second Phase of Sovereign Annuity Endowments on Mount Athos (14th to 16th Centuries)

A second phase of annuity endowments on Athos began in the 14th century, and it differed in a number of important respects from the first phase. Rather than the Byzantine emperor, the sovereign annuity endowments for Athos in

Monastery of St John the Theologian on Patmos being a key example, they were not enthusiastic supporters of Athos: Michael Angold, *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni, 1081–1261* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 10, 281–283. For the almost complete absence of Komnenian patronage of Athos after Alexios I, see Rosa Benoit-Meggenis, *L'empereur et le moine: les relations du pouvoir impérial avec les monastères à Byzance (IXe–XIIIe siècle)*, (Travaux de la Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée) 73 (Lyon, 2017), p. 158.

53 Dölger and Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 944b.

54 Dölger and Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1044a [1040].

55 Dölger and Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1077a.

56 Dölger and Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1235a [1227].

this period increasingly came from other rulers of the Orthodox world.⁵⁷ While the notion that financing monasteries without landed endowments was spiritually meritorious still existed, and was perhaps enhanced by the rise of the Hesychast Movement, there were other considerations as well. Firstly, these late medieval sovereigns were often endowing monasteries well outside of their realms, sometimes more than a thousand kilometers away. Giving the monks a yearly sum of gold thus had a practical aspect to it: it was more practicable, at least initially, to grant Athonite monks such annuity endowments rather than lands within the territories over which these sovereigns ruled. Secondly, the journey of the monks to the court of their sovereign patron—something hardly mentioned in documents associated with sovereign annuity endowments from the first period—may have strengthened patronal relationships, and ensured that Athonite monastic communities remained tightly bound to their benefactors. Finally, the role of *memoria*—the commemoration of the sovereign and his family—played a prominent role in these late Byzantine annuity endowments. Such memorial stipulations were, surprisingly enough, almost completely unmentioned in the documentation for sovereign annuity endowments of earlier centuries—entries in the Georgian *Book of Commemorations* (*Agapes*) of Iviron constituting the major exception—though perhaps they were a tacit part of such agreements.

This second phase of sovereign annuities for Mount Athos in the Late Middle Ages was perhaps prompted by the collapse in imperial finances around the second quarter of the 14th century. By contrast, over the first few decades of this century a number of Athonite documents demonstrate that the fisc paid large annual rents (*oikonomika*), stemming from the collection of taxes, to certain monasteries. Thus, in November of 1300 Hilandar received an annual rent of 580 *hyperpyra*;⁵⁸ Esphigmenou's annual rent is attested as 500 *hyperpyra* in 1300 and 1318;⁵⁹ and Iviron received 675 *hyperpyra* in 1301 as well as 677 *hyperpyra* in 1318 and 1320.⁶⁰ The payment of these annuity endowments seems

57 For the broader context, see especially Nicholas Oikonomides, "Patronage in Palaiologan Mt Athos," in *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism. Papers from the Twenty-Eighth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, March, 1994*, eds. Anthony Bryer and Mary Cunningham, (Publications of the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies) 4 (Aldershot, 1996), pp. 99–111.

58 *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, Appendix II, ed. Mirjana Živojinović, Vassiliki Kravari and Christophe Giros, (ArchAth) 20 (Paris, 1998), pp. 289–297.

59 *Actes d'Esphigménou*, nos 8, 14, ed. Jacques Lefort, (ArchAth) 6 (Paris, 1973), pp. 66–72, 99–108.

60 *Actes d'Iviron*, 3, nos 70, 75, and 79, ed. Jacques Lefort et al., (ArchAth) 18 (Athens, 1994), pp. 148–176, 210–235, and 255–281.

to have dovetailed with Athonite expansion into the capital via the establishment of *metochia* in this period.⁶¹ This system of the state financing of Athonite monasteries seems, however, to have broken down from the 1320s onward, as we no longer possess tax assessments (*praktika*) that periodically confirmed the amount of the fiscal annuity.

Following the collapse of this system, an intensive period of sovereign annuity endowments on Mount Athos, stemming primarily from rulers other than the Byzantine emperor, emerged on the Holy Mountain. The role of sovereign annuity endowments is particularly noticeable in the foundation of Dionysiou Monastery by the dynasty of the Grand Komnenoi of Trebizond at the end of the 14th century. Details on its founding can be gleaned both from the grants to the monastery surviving in Dionysiou's archives as well as from the *vita* of its founding abbot, Dionysios.⁶² The enterprising abbot of this new monastery attracted the patronage of Alexios III Komnenos (r. 1349–1390) during a visit to his brother Theodosios, the metropolitan of Trebizond, in 1374. From the chrysobull issued in that same year and still preserved in the monastery's archives, Alexios granted Dionysios' establishment the sum of 100 *somia* of gold—a sum roughly equal to 1000–1500 *hyperpyra*—as well as an annuity of 1000 silver coins (*aspra*).⁶³

This sovereign annuity of the Grand Komnenoi for Dionysiou was to have a long history, lasting until their polity was conquered by the Ottomans in 1461. It was confirmed in 1416 in a privilege of Emperor Alexios IV (r. 1417–1429). This document also provides details as to how that the annuity was to be funded, something not mentioned in the initial chrysobull of 1374: the annuity was to be paid by a monastery in Pontos, the Christ Chaldos Monastery, for which pur-

61 On these Constantinopolitan *metochia* of Athonite monasteries, see the contribution of Nicholas Melvani in this volume.

62 For a discussion of the *vita* of Dionysios, see Antonio Rigo, "La Vita di Dionisio fondatore del monastero athonita di Dionysiou (BHG 559a) e alcuni testi connessi," ed. Santo Lucà, *Omaggio Enrica Follieri*, (Bollettino della Badia Greca di Grottaferrata, NS) 54 (Grottaferrata 2000), pp. 275–300; for biographical details on Dionysios and his brother Theodosios, who eventually became metropolitan of Trebizond, see Odysseas Lampsides, "Βιογραφικά τῶν ἀδελφῶν Διονυσίου, ιδρυτοῦ τῆς ἐν Ἀγίῳ Ὄρει μονῆς, καὶ Θεοδοσίου μητροπολίτου Τραπεζοῦντος [Biographical information of the brothers Dionysios, founder of the monastery on Mount Athos, and Theodosios, metropolitan of Trebizond]," *Ἀρχεῖον ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ καὶ κανονικοῦ δικαίου* 18 (1963), 101–124.

63 *Actes d'Dionysiou*, no. 4, ed. Nicholas Oikonomidès, (ArchAth) 4 (Paris, 1968), pp. 50–61; newer edition with German translation now in Rudolf S. Stefec, "Beiträge zur Urkundentätigkeit trapezuntinischer Herrscher in den Jahren 1204–1461," *Nea Rhome* 17 (2020), 339–347 (no. 4).

pose Dionysiou was to station an administrator, an *epitropos*, in Trebizond.⁶⁴ The annuity was confirmed a third and final time by Emperor John IV (1429–1459/60?), the penultimate ruler of the Black Sea kingdom.⁶⁵

Despite the patronage of the Grand Komnenoi for Dionysiou, their claim to the monastery did not remain uncontested. We can deduce this from an act of confirmation of the despot Andronikos Palaiologos of the year 1418, only two years after the Grand Komnenoi had confirmed their annual stipend under Alexios IV. In this document, one of several dealing with the grant of the abandoned village of Mariskin to Dionysiou, the despot called the community “Our very own ancestral monastery” (γονικὴ ἡμετέρα ἡ μονὴ αὐτῆ).⁶⁶

Interesting enough, the main form of financial support of the Palaiologoi for Dionysiou consisted of a sovereign annuity in kind: sixteen *modioi* of wheat, four *modioi* of vegetables, and three *kantaria* of cheese.⁶⁷ At some point, probably shortly before July 1425, the monks appear to have requested that their annuity be converted into a grant of land, a petition which the emperor John VIII Palaiologos (r. 1425–1428) duly granted.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, the text of this document does not survive, but its existence attests to the rare phenomenon of monks opting to change the type of financial support for their monastery.

To cite another example from the 14th century, the Serbian Grand Čelnik Radič (1377–1454) refounded Kastamonitou Monastery by means of an annuity endowment.⁶⁹ According to a charter issued in 1430–1431, Radič granted the monastery an annual subsidy of 20 pounds of silver for the rest of his life. A special mission of monks would arrive at his residence around 23 April each year to receive this money. After his death, the income would be collected from seven villages which Radič owned, and the monastery would also acquire half his shares in the silver mines of Rudnik and Kamenica.⁷⁰ A later document con-

64 *Actes d'Dionysiou*, no. 16, pp. 97–101; newer edition with German translation in Stefec, “Beiträge,” pp. 348–352 (no. 5).

65 *Actes d'Dionysiou*, no. 27, pp. 155–157; newer edition with German translation in Stefec, “Beiträge,” pp. 352–355 (no. 6).

66 *Actes d'Dionysiou*, no. 17, p. 106, line 6.

67 *Actes d'Dionysiou*, no. 5, pp. 62–63.

68 Franz Dölger and Peter Wirth, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565–1453. 5. Teil, 5: Regesten von 1341–1453* (Munich, 1965), no. 3430: more detailed discussion of the lost *prostagma* in *Actes d'Dionysiou*, p. 127.

69 On this person in Ottoman documents, see Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, “The Worrisome Wealth of the Čelnik Radič,” in eadem, *Studies in Pre-Ottoman Turkey and the Ottomans* (Aldershot, 2007), pp. 383–397 (no. xxv).

70 *Medieval Slavic Acts from Mount Athos 1230–1734*, Kastamonitou. Serbian act no. 3, ed. Cyril Pavlikianov, (Universitetska biblioteka) 516, (Sofia, 2018), pp. 104–106.

firming Radič's role as the monastery's new founder from 1433 shows that in the meantime Radič had donated villages to the monastery, but still continued to give 20 pounds of silver a year to Kastamonitou, on the Feast Day of St George. Moreover, he had also created an annuity endowment of two pounds of silver for the monastery's hospital. Radič stipulated in his second document that he would cease paying the 20 pounds of silver annually if he became a monk at Kastamonitou, but that the two pounds of silver could still be collected for the hospital.⁷¹

The documentation surrounding Radič's annuity endowments for Kastamonitou demonstrate a unique feature of these foundations which sharply separated them from more traditional grants of land: the deputation of monks coming to the founder on particular days, in this case the Feast Day of St George. Later sovereign annuity endowments even included a separate sum for the delegation of monks. The annual ritual of monks coming to the court of their benefactor to receive the promised money from his own hands necessitated a close, long-term relationship between grantor and grantee, unlike in a one-time endowment of land.

The Grand Čelnik Radič was not the only Serbian potentate to refound an Athonite monastery via a generous annuity endowment in this period: this applies, for instance, to the Branković family's patronage of Ephismenou Monastery, beginning with George Branković's charter of 1429, which granted the monastery a yearly annuity of 50 pounds of silver from taxes of Novo Brdo during his lifetime, and he beseeched his heirs to confirm this privilege.⁷² Indeed, the continuing patronal relationship of the Branković family with Esphigmenou demonstrates the perils of annuity endowments: in the summer of 1499 the monastery's abbot, Gerasimos (Gerasim), sought out John Branković and his mother Angelina. John was then informed of the existence of the charter and the promise of annual support that his grandfather had made for the monastery. In agreeing to finance the monastery, John would give as much as he could, and, if Providence saw fit to make him ruler of Serbia, would even render the full annual amount that his predecessor had promised.⁷³ John's ambitions to restore Serbian power, however, came to nought, and his death three years later in the fall of 1502 likely spelled the end of this sovereign annuity endowment.

71 *Medieval Slavic Acts*, Kastamonitou. Serbian act no. 4, pp. 106–111.

72 *Esphigemou Charter*, ed. Pavle Ivić, Sima M. Ćirković and Vojislav J. Đurić, *Esfigmenska povelja despota Đurđa* [The Esphigmenou charter of Despot Djurađ] (Belgrade, 1999), p. 72 (Slavonic text), p. 73 (English translation).

73 *Actes d'Esphigménou*, no. XXIV, ed. Louis Petit and Wilhelm Regel, (*Actes de l'Athos*) 3, (St Petersburg, 1906), pp. 45–46.

Despite the collapse of despotic support for Esphigmenou, the Branković family was among the foremost Athonite patrons in this period. John's mother, the *depostica* Angelina, along with her other son George, had also promised an annual endowment of 500 gold coins annually to the Monastery of St Paul in a charter dated 11 November 1495.⁷⁴ Vatopedi was likewise the object of their beneficence, since George Branković had confirmed an act of Stephen Lazarević granting the monastery a village and a yearly subsidy of 60 pounds (*litrai*) of silver.⁷⁵

The most important patrons of Athonite monasticism after the collapse of Serbian power over the course of the 15th century were the princes (*voivodes*) of the Danubian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia.⁷⁶ At least in the early phase of their Athonite patronage, these sovereigns made extensive use of annuity endowments for Mount Athos. Although annuity endowments are not explicitly mentioned during the first bout of patronal activity by the voivodes of Wallachia at the end of the 14th century, namely during the (re-)foundation of Koutloumousiou,⁷⁷ annuity endowments quickly became the preferred means of these rulers for financing Athonite monasticism. Thus, even Koutloumousiou became the target of an annuity endowment, when in 1492 Vlad the Monk endowed it with 1000 aspers annually, along with a further 100 aspers to the monks coming to receive the payment.⁷⁸

In fact, these annuity endowments of the voivodes are different from those otherwise studied in this article, in that a great many of them grant a specific sum for the monks travelling to the court of the sovereign to receive the annuity.⁷⁹ Memorial stipulations, which played so prominent a feature in the sovereign annuity endowment of the Grand Komnenoi for Dionysiou,

74 *Medieval Slavic Acts*, St. Paul, no. 14, pp. 200–203.

75 *Medieval Slavic Acts*, Serbian act nos 3 and 4, pp. 274–277, 277–280.

76 On which see the contribution of Mihai Grigore in this volume.

77 On the foundation of Koutloumousiou, see Zachary Chitwood and Mihai-D. Grigore, “Byzantinisches Stiftungswesen ohne byzantinischen Staat: die Entwicklung der byzantinisch-orthodoxen Stiftungskultur von 1204 bis zu den Fürsten der Walachei im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert,” in *Byzanz und seine europäischen Nachbarn Politische Interdependenzen und kulturelle Missverständnisse*, eds. Ludger Körntgen et al., (Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident) 17 (Mainz, 2020), pp. 91–102.

78 Petronel Zahariuc, “Documents roumains d’avant 1500 dans les archives des monastères du Mont Athos,” in *Lire les Archives de l’Athos*, eds. Olivier Delouis and Kostis Smyrlis, (TM) 23/2 (Paris, 2019), p. 617 (Koutloumousiou, no. 5).

79 Zahariuc, “Documents roumains,” p. 622 (Chilandar, no. 2); p. 622 (Chilandar, no. 4); p. 623 (Chilandar, no. 6); p. 623 (Chilandar, no. 7); p. 624 (Docheiariou, no. 2); pp. 624–625 (Saint Panteleimon, no. 2); p. 625 (Philotheou, no. 1); p. 625 (Kaproule, no. 1).

are also frequently mentioned, and occasionally even a list of diptychs, listing the names of the 'founders' from the princely family, were included with the grant.⁸⁰

5 Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated that sovereign annuity endowments were an important mechanism for financing Athonite monasteries throughout the medieval period. Though this phenomenon is best attested for the Eastern Christian world on Athos, the roots of annuity endowments are older than the first flowering of Athonite monasticism in the 9th century. Monasteries were financed with annuity endowments already during Late Antiquity, and ambivalence towards monastic land ownership is already attested in that period as well, as for instance in the *Apophthegmata patrum*. The importance of sovereign annuity endowments for the financing of monastic life on medieval Mount Athos should cause us to reevaluate the composition of the Holy Mountain's economy. Land ownership was of course in the end the main form of monastic wealth on Athos, but it was perhaps, at least to some degree, facilitated by the annual influx of money stemming from annuity endowments.⁸¹

Much remains unclear regarding the phenomenon of sovereign annuity endowments in the Byzantine world: why were they so favored by Orthodox sovereigns other than the Byzantine emperor? Why were they particularly popular at certain times, namely during the two phases outlined in this paper? How widespread were such foundations outside of the Athonite context?

Especially unclear is the link between sovereign annuity endowments and the Hesychast Movement. While a penchant for monastic poverty is discernible in the first phase of sovereign annuity endowments in the form of monasticism propagated by Nikephoros II Phokas and Michael Maleinos, a clear disdain for monastic landholding is not easily found in Hesychast writings in the late medieval period. While certain monasteries with strongly Hesychast tendencies like Dionysiou seem to have had a particularly pronounced preference for annuity endowments, ambivalence regarding monastic landholding can mainly be deduced by the volume of annuity endowments, rather than any explicit statements in this direction.

80 Zahariuc, "Documents roumains," pp. 624–625 (Saint Panteleimon, no. 2); p. 625 (Philotheou, no. 1).

81 This is demonstrated in a detail not possible for other monasteries by the contribution of Apolon Tabuashvili and Vladimer Kekelia for Iviron in this volume.

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PART 3

*Iberian Efflorescence: Three Case Studies
from the Golden Age of Iviron Monastery*



Liturgical Commemoration and Its Material Value in the Georgian *Book of Commemorations* (*Agapes*) of Iviron Monastery

Tinatin Chronz

1 Introduction

Iviron, the Ἱερά Μονὴ Ἰβήρων, as its name, still used today, indicates, was once the monastery of the Iberians, the Georgians, on Mount Athos. It was founded in 979/980 by Tornike Chordvani (died 985, *PmbZ*, no. 22926), a nobleman from the southern part (region) of Georgia, called Tao, and a successful general and *synkellos* of the Byzantine emperor Basil II (*PmbZ*, no. 20838). His foundation very soon became one of the great centers of Georgian Orthodox culture. To the present day the library of Iviron preserves many Georgian manuscripts, valuable witnesses to the Byzantine liturgy of the Georgians at home and abroad.¹

The historical development of Iviron, with all its crises, times of poverty and prosperity can be traced not only through archival documents preserved on Athos, but also on the basis of one specific commemorative collection, the so-called *Book of Commemorations* (*Agapes*) of Iviron. This book is the starting point for the present article.

2 The Meaning of “Agape, Agapes”

The term *agape*, Greek ἀγάπη, ἀγάπαι, was used to describe the custom of a communal meal, often translated as a “love feast,” which was held not least of all for charitable purposes among Christians in the early Church. The point at

¹ The Georgian manuscripts of Iviron can now be studied thanks to the outstanding new catalogue: Jost Gippert et al., *Catalogue of the Georgian Manuscripts: Holy Monastery of Iviron* (Mount Athos, 2022). On the significance of Iviron as a spiritual and literary centre for Georgians outside the country, with an updated bibliography cf. Tamar Otkhmezuri (ed.), *Medieval Georgian Literary Culture and Book Production in the Christian Middle East and Byzantium*, (Jerusalem: theologisches Forum) 42 (Münster, 2022), 179–284.

issue is the age of the agape and its relationship to the Eucharistic Liturgy.² In our Georgian document, the term agape refers to a commemoration which usually consisted, on the one hand, of one or more prayers during worship, especially the Eucharist, and on the other hand, of a meal where wine was served to the monks to “comfort” them. Thus, the Georgian *Book of Commemorations* is an annotated list of the calendrically-ordered agapes for founders, donors, and benefactors of the monastery. In Greek it corresponds roughly to a *brebion* (βρέβιον)³ or a *parrhesia* (παρρησία), the latter according to the (recent) information of Father Theologos Iverites. That said, the comparison is imperfect, because the terms *brebion* and *parrhesia* are attested much later (from the Late Middle Ages onward) and are simply lists of names, lacking both the calendrical order of the entries and the more extensive information on donations and memorials of the *Book of Commemorations*.

Since the book is often referred to in modern scientific literature as “the Synodikon of Iviron Monastery,” it must be noted here that it is not the “Synodikon of Orthodoxy,” which is customarily read on the first Sunday of Great Lent in Orthodox churches.

3 About the Manuscript

The *Book of Commemorations* (*Agapes*) of Iviron Monastery is preserved in the Ms A-558, kept today in the Georgian National Center of Manuscripts in Tbilisi, was written in AD1074 and represents a *codex unicus*. In Georgian, the term is borrowed from the Greek and is called აღაპნი (*ayapni*), this being the plural form of აღაპი (*ayapi*). The title of this work reads: (183^r): სახელითა მამისაჲთა და ძისაჲთა და სულისა წმიდისაჲთა. ესე არიან აღაპნი მონასტრისა ჩუენისანი, ვინაჲთგან აღშენებულ არს ვიდრე აქამოდღ (“In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. These are the agapes of our monastery from its construction until today.”).

Several books of agapes are known in Georgian, e.g. the agapes of the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem and that of St Catherine’s Monastery

2 Clemens Leonhard and Benedikt Eckhardt, “Mahl v (Kultmahl),” in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, 13 (2010), coll. 1067–1105; Eduard Freiherr von der Goltz, *Tischgebete und Abendmahlsgebete in der Altchristlichen und in der griechischen Kirche* (Leipzig, 1905), pp. 13–18.

3 On βρέβιον see Giuseppe De Gregorio, “Una lista di commemorazioni di defunti dalla Costantinopoli della prima età Paleologa. Note storiche e prosopografiche sul Vat. Ross. 169,” *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoelenici* 38 (2001), esp. 122–124, notes 45–46.

on Sinai,⁴ but the manuscript of Iviron is the oldest example. It goes back to the year 1074, but was expanded with new commemorations during the following centuries. The last annotations in it are from the 18th century.

As an important document of the history of Iviron Monastery, as well as of Georgian language and paleography, and because it was preserved on Georgian soil, the *Book of Commemorations* underwent several editions. The first one was made by Alexander Khakhanashvili in 1901, whereby he edited the whole manuscript; in the late 1920s the historian Niko Berdzenishvili started to study the *Book of Commemorations*, but his work was published only posthumously in 2007 on the basis of materials he had left behind. Finally, in 1998 Elene Metreveli made a new edition of this valuable document with a detailed commentary based largely on Berdzenishvili's studies.⁵

Because of its diverse content, the manuscript NCM A-558 is sometimes called the "Athos Collection." In addition to the agapes, the codex today contains the Vita of the Georgian Athonite monks of the founding generation John (*PmbZ*, no. 22942) and Euthymios (*PmbZ*, no. 21960), as well as the Vita of Ilarion the Georgian, bishop of David Gareja (c. 822–875), hymns to these three saints and the *Acta Ioannis* of (Pseudo-) Prochoros.⁶

The manuscript has a complex history: in its present form it was first completed in 1074. In the 12th century it was reworked and expanded: several layers of parchment as well as single folios of parchment and paper were added over time, most recently in the 16th–18th centuries. The initiator of this collection was Michael Dagalisoneli. From him also comes its oldest redaction, composed in 1074. The original content of his book consisted of the agapes themselves, the Vita of John and Euthymios, and two akolouthiai for Euthymios to be sung on the 13 May, his feast day. Elene Metreveli might have been right in speculating that the original purpose of this book was to establish the cult of St Euthymios and to popularize his memory.⁷

4 Nikolay Marr, Синодик Крестного монастыря в Иерусалиме [The Synodikon of the Cross Monastery in Jerusalem] (Saint Petersburg, 1914); Darejan Kldiashvili, ქართული სამონასტრო სულთა მატიანები: სინას წმ. ეკატერინეს მონასტრის ქართველთა ეკლესიის სულთა მატიანე [Georgian Monastic Synodika: vol. 1: Synodikon of the Georgian Church of St Catherine's Monastery on Sinai] (Tbilisi, 2008).

5 Alexander Khakhanashvili, ათონის ივერიის მონასტრის 1074 წ. ხელნაწერი აღაპებით [The Manuscript of Iviron Monastery on Athos of 1074 with Agapes] (Tbilisi, 1901); Niko Berdzenishvili, ათონის ივერთა მონასტრის აღაპები [The Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos] (Tbilisi, 2007); Elene Metreveli, ათონის ქართველთა მონასტრის სააღაპე წიგნი [The Book of Agapes of the Athonite Monastery of the Georgians] (Tbilisi, 1998).

6 Metreveli, *Book of Agapes*, pp. 13–19.

7 Metreveli, *Book of Agapes*, pp. 20–21.

It can be assumed that before the creation of this *Book of Commemorations*, the commemorations were entered as marginal notes in one or more liturgical books arranged according to the calendar, such as in a synaxarion or a menaion. This is the case with the agapes of the Georgian Monastery of the Holy Cross near Jerusalem. The first editor of the *Book of Commemorations* of Iviron, Michael Dagalisoneli, arranged the commemorations in calendrical order and wrote them down together. Only 12 agapes from his pen have survived, out of a total of around 50.⁸ These 12 agapes, except the very first one for John (Tornike) Synkellos, were to be celebrated between 1 December and 13 February.

In the first half of the 12th century⁹ the second editor, John Taplaisdze, revised and expanded this book, also according to this calendar principle. From his colophon we learn that already in his time, besides Dagalisoneli's *Book of Commemorations*, "there were here and there scattered written agapes, and one had to look for them." By the order of John Kalakala, the abbot of Iviron, John Taplaisdze, while serving as ekklesiarchis (*dekanosi*), wrote them (the agapes) down "in an order as it was before. Neither was anything added, nor was anything omitted except errant words. Everything else is as it was originally written, with anaphora and everything that is there and as it was determined ...".¹⁰ In doing so, John Taplaisdze left a lot of space between the agapes so that the book could be enriched with further commemorations. The growing number of benefactors led, however, to a lack of space. Later entries were first added wherever there happened to be space, so that the calendrical order was broken. Eventually, they were added at the end of the book without respecting the original calendrical order.

4 The Agapes (აღაპები)

The commemorations of the benefactors reveal well-considered gradations, that is more effort for one commemoration and less for another, or more for

8 Metreveli, *Book of Agapes*, p. 58: of the original 12 folia of the Dagalisoneli redaction of the *Book of Commemoration (Agapes)*, only five folia with 22 agapes have survived. According to Metreveli's estimate, the remaining seven folios contained around 30 agapes.

9 Korneli Kekelidze, "ათონის ლიტერატურული სკოლის ისტორიიდან, ეტიუდები ძველი ქართული ლიტერატურის ისტორიიდან" [From the History of the Athonite literary school], in: *Studies in the History of Old Georgian Literature*, 2 (Tbilisi, 1945), p. 232, supposed that Ioane Taplaisdze's agapes were written between 1112 and 1118.

10 Metreveli, *Book of Agapes*, pp. 65–69. John Talaisdze's colophon closes the *Book of Commemorations (Agapes)* and is published as no. 166 in *ibid.* p. 191.

that one and less for this one. Four different categories in the agapes can be distinguished. For these, the following designations essentially occur:

- (1) The “agape for John Synkellos, the founder of this glorious lavra”, meaning Tornike Eristavi, known as the monk John (*PmbZ*, no. 22926). He was the founder of Iviron;
- (2) Agapes “as for Synkellos” or “as for the founders”;
- (3) Agapes “as for other donors.” This means: neither *synkelloi*, nor founders, nor benefactors associated with them. In the agapes, the expression “as for other donors,” “as for other donors and benefactors” is used for this category;
- (4) Agapes without any special reference to the manner of commemoration.

4.1 *The Agape for John Synkellos (აღაპი იოანე სჳნკელოზისა)*

The agape for John Synkellos is the very first in the book and at the same time the most honorable of all. It also serves as a model for other agapes and the expression “as for Synkellos” is used as a kind of *terminus technicus* in the book for high-ranking agapes. The text of this agape, here in English translation, reads as follows:¹¹

On the 15 December there is an agape for John Synkellos, the founder of this glorious lavra.

For “Lord, I have cried to” (Ps 140) hymns (დასდებელნი, τροπάρια) of the Saint and as stichera troparia of the deceased are to be sung. And at supper the brothers are to drink three *krasovolia* (cups of wine) each at the table. And when the evening bell is rung, they pray: “He, that dwells” (cf. Ps 90:1) and “God is with us” (ჩუენთანარსი, μεθ’ ἡμῶν, Isaiah’s Canticle) and end the hour of compline (ჟამი სერობისა, ἀπόδειπνον).

And they begin the hexapsalmos (Ps 3, 37, 62, 87, 102, 142) and say “Alleluia” and the “Remember, o Lord” and “Blessed are” (Ps 118). And the deacons say intercessions, the priests say the prayers. The “Blessed are” are followed by the *kathisma* (წარდგომად, κάθισμα) of the deceased and the “Have mercy upon me, o God” (cf. Ps 50) and the canon of the deceased. After the third ode again the *kathisma* of the deceased, after the sixth ode an *hypakoe* (იბაკოვ, ὑπακοή) of the deceased and three more; an *exapostellarion* (გამოავლინე, cf. Ps 42,3) of the deceased, lauds (აქებდითი, αἵνοι), “Glory to God in the highest” (დიდება მაღალთაჲ,

11 For a better understanding of the translation, some Georgian terms with their Greek equivalents are added in brackets. The psalms are numbered according to the Septuagint.

Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις), stichera of deceased, “Holy God”, (troparia) of the lité (ლოტიანისად), of the deceased, intercessions of peace (კუერეჟსი ზეგარდამოდ, Ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀνοθῆν εἰρήνης ...), 40 *Kyrie eleisons* and they complete the hour.

During the matins: after “God the Lord” (Ps 117,27) (hymn) of the Saint and three *kanones*: one of the Saint, a *parakletikos kanon* and one of the deceased. After the third ode the *kathisma* of the saint, after the sixth ode an *hypakoe* of the deceased. And after intercessions of peace, again 40 *Kyrie eleisons*.

At noon, as many presbyters as there are should each celebrate a Eucharist, inside (probably in the monastery) and in the hermitages (*hesychasteria*). And in the church while praying the intercessions of peace they say 40 *Kyrie eleisons*. And at lunch, the brothers are to be comforted with what God gives them. And the brothers are to receive five *krasovolia* each to drink.

One must know that if there is a commemoration of one of the brothers, three *krasovolia* are to be distributed for each one to drink in the evening.

As can be seen, the agape for John Synkellos took place in the church and in the refectory. His commemoration in the church was very extensive. Besides the celebration of the eucharist, the liturgy of the hour is also mentioned. The first hour, where John is commemorated, is the hesperinos, i.e. vespers, as troparia for “Lord, I have cried to” (უფალო ღაღადყავსა, Κύριε ἐκέκραξα), also called *kekragaria*, are mentioned. Hesperinos usually marks the beginning of the liturgical day, which in this case is 15 December. As usual, the evening meal takes place after vespers, when the brothers receive three cups of wine each to drink. The office after the meal is compline, or apodeipnon (lit. “after supper”), the important parts of which are mentioned in the agape: Psalm 90:1, i.e. the last of the six psalms of compline (Ps 4, 6, 12, 24, 30 and 90), and the Isaiah Canticle, created from Is 8:9–10, 12–14, 17–18; 9:1–5. The office followed after compline does not have a title, but one can easily recognize a pannychis, “a daily vigil structured around a hymnographic canon”,¹² and not a real all-night vigil as the name actually implies. Pannychis is the second liturgical unit of the apodeipnon, which Stefano Parenti describes as “an extremely complex office and one still little studied.”¹³ The hymnographic kanon mentioned in the pan-

12 Jeffrey C. Anderson and Stefano Parenti, *A Byzantine Monastic Office*, 1105 A.D. Houghton Library, MS gr. 3 (Washington, D.C., 2016), p. 331.

13 Anderson and Parenti, *A Byzantine Monastic Office*, p. 329.

nychis is not that of the day, but that of the deceased, i.e. a text that is common for this group of people. So, what we have here is a pannychis for the deceased.¹⁴

A kanon of the deceased is also sung in the matins, or orthros, along with two others, one of the saint of the particular day, and one of supplication from the Great Oktoechos, i.e. Parakletike. According to the Great Synaxarion of George the Hagiorite, which was then used in Iviron, on 15 December St Eleutherios and St Susanna were celebrated.¹⁵

The highest rank of agape and the special honor reserved for the founder of Iviron are also indicated by the fact that “as many priests as there are” have to celebrate the Eucharist, probably not in concelebration but in all churches and chapels “inside” the monastery as well as outside “in the hermitages.”

The agape for John Synkellos also includes his commemoration in the refectory: five *krasovolia* (cups of wine) are mentioned, which were to be poured out for the brothers. In the evening, as the note at the end of the first agape says, three *krasovolia* were to be distributed for each one if there is an agape for one of the brothers.

In summary: John Synkellos, the founder and builder of Iviron, was commemorated both in the services and in the refectory. His liturgical commemoration took place not only in the Eucharist, but in the liturgy of hours as well, in the hesperinos, the apodeipnon, the pannychis and the orthros. The character of the liturgies is expressed in the hymnography, a feature typical of the Christian East: kanones and stichera of the deceased are to be performed. In the refectory his commemoration includes three cups of wine in the evening and five at lunch.

4.2 *The Agape “as for Synkellos”, ვითარცა სწგუელოზისა, or “as for the Builders,” ვითარცა მაშენებელთათჳს*

a) The expression “as for Synkellos” occurs in the *Book of Commemorations* only in the oldest layer, i.e. in Dagalisoneli’s redaction. Instead of this expression a different one appears in Taplaisdze’s redaction: “as for the builders,” which is used synonymously with “as for Synkellos”.

The phrase “as for Synkellos” was only applied for Georgians, mostly for noblemen from the southern part of Georgia, the members of Chordvaneli (or

14 On pannychis for the deceased, see Miguel Arranz, “Les prières presbytérales de la “Pannychis” de l’ancien Euchologe byzantin et la “Pannikhida” des défunts,” in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 40 (1974), 314–343; 41 (1975), 119–139.

15 George the Hagiorite, დიდი სწგაქსარი [The Great Synaxarion], ed. Manana Dolakidze and Dali Chitunashvili (Tbilisi, 2017), p. 97.

Chorchaneli, PmbZ #21349) family and their relatives.¹⁶ Besides John (Tornike) Synkellos (no. 1) these were: John, the first abbot of Iviron (979/980–1005, agape no. 84, *PmbZ*, no. 22942) and his son Euthymios (1005–1019, no. 71, *PmbZ*, no. 21960), who were among the founding fathers of Iviron; the monk John Varazvache (*PmbZ*, no. 23544) and Abuharb, both Tornike's brothers; another Tornike (*PmbZ*, no. 28365), the son of John Varazvache (for these three persons agape no. 16 was written),¹⁷ but also George 'the Translator' (agape no. 87, *PmbZ*, no. 22259), known better as Giorgi Mtazmindeli, i.e. the Hagiorite; Arsen, formerly Parsman (agape no. 50, *PBW*, no. Arsenios 102), George's disciple and abbot of Iviron after George the Hagiorite left Iviron for the Black Mountain, and others. Although George the Hagiorite was not a member of the Chordvaneli family, he deserved the highest honor among the agapes for the great work he had performed for Georgian culture in Georgia and outside of its borders as a translator, liturgist, spiritual teacher (father), and churchman.

The term "as for Synkellos" or "as for founders" is not always explicitly and fully described in the agapes, as e.g. in the agape no. 19 for the nun Mariam (Mary), sister of Parsman Chordvaneli.¹⁸ She was George the Hagiorite's disciple and lived in a monastery in Constantinople. According to George the Hagiorite's *Vita*, when he died during his stay in Constantinople, she appeared at the Georgian *metochion* to weep for him.¹⁹ In the agape for her it is said that "the whole order of prayer described above is to be performed. And at noon four *krasovolia* shall be poured out for each" (agape no. 19). The agapes with a liturgical order "described above" are nos 16 and 17. The latter one (for a certain Constantine, Bagrat, and Michael) states, that "the same *akolouthia* shall take place, all as is written for the Synkellos. And at noon the brothers should drink four (*krasovolia*) each." In the agape no. 16 mentioned above we read: "The whole order of prayer and the celebration of the Eucharist should be car-

16 Elene Metreveli, ნარკვევები ათონის კულტურულ-საგანმანათლებლო კერის ისტორიიდან [Studies in the History of Cultural and Educational Seat of Athos] (Tbilisi, 1996), p. 52; Metreveli, *Book of Agapes*, p. 200.

17 For the identification of Chordvaneli family members, see Metreveli, *Book of Agapes*, pp. 200–203.

18 According to a Greek document from Iviron (in *Actes d'Iviron*, 1, no. 26, ed. Jacques Lefort et al., [ArchAth] 14 [Paris, 1985], pp. 240–243, at p. 240), Mariam was the daughter of Stephanos Sthlabota (σὺν Σθλάβοτα). However, the Georgian marginal note next to it calls her Mariam, sister of Chordvaneli. Elene Metreveli, *Studies*, pp. 50–51, identifies this Chordvaneli as Parsman Chorchaneli/Chordvaneli, later the monk Arsen and an abbot of Iviron (agape no. 50).

19 *Vita of George the Hagiorite*, ქართული ჰაგიოგრაფიული ძეგლები [Georgian Hagiographic Monuments] (Tbilisi, 2008): 3:630.

ried out as this is written for the Synkellos. And at noon four (*krasovolia*) are to be poured out for each.”

As for endowments made for the monastery by those individuals, for whom the agapes “as for Synkellos” was established, almost no concrete information is given. This is also true for the nun Mariam. However, the Greek Ivireon Document no. 26 contains the following information: together with her nieces Anna and the nun Agatha Mariam had sold some fields worth 40 *nomismata* to Abbot Symeon for 20 *nomismata*. In exchange for this reduced price, the monks were to commemorate them and their parents.²⁰

The agapes “as for Synkellos” discussed above show that the liturgical order in the church was identical for all persons and therefore not described in more detail. In the refectory, on the other hand, the number of *krasovolia* varied between four and five at noon. The details of the wine were only given in those cases where the ordinary quantity was changed: three cups of wine in the evening and five at noon.

b) The agape “as for builders” includes the same elements as those “for Synkellos”, as the agape for John Bukaisdze, the abbot of Ivireon (1085–1104)²¹ (no. 43), shows. Its text in English translation reads as follows:

On the 29 January, the translation of the relicts of St Ignatios, we have established an agape for John Bukaisdze. He gave 24 gold coins to the church for use and again offered his golden cross to the palace and got 50 *nomismata* for it. And another one for 144 *nomismata*. And he has set up a good defensive tower in the monastery, and he has done many good works, both spiritual and physical, many buildings inside and outside he has erected. For this an agape shall be celebrated for him, as it is written for the builders: with prayer, pannychis, anaphora, and with all comfort for the brothers. And three (cups of wine) shall be poured out in the evening, and five at noon. And if anyone does not perform this with all zeal, he shall answer to God.

It is clear from the text that an agape “as for builders” consisted of the same liturgical elements as that “for Synkellos”, namely a prayer, most likely the liturgy of the Hours, i.e. vespers, a pannychis, the name not specifically mentioned in the agape for John Synkellos (no. 1), and the Anaphora. Unlike in

20 *Actes d'Ivireon*, I, no. 26, pp. 240–243.

21 Metreveli, *Book of Agapes*, pp. 118–119.

agape no. 1, the term Eucharist does not appear here. The mentioned anaphora does not mean the liturgy of the faithful, as in the *Book of Commemorations* it often occurs alongside with the term Eucharist. Georgios Keselopoulos has shown that in liturgical manuscripts the terms *proskomidie*, *prosphora* and *anaphora* can be used in one and the same meaning, or they are linked by the common denominator: sacrifice.²² Stefano Parenti points out that in the Italo-Greek liturgical and literary sources the term *anaphora* is equated in the sense of the bread to be offered, that is, with *prosphoron*, e.g. in the euchologion manuscript of the Bodleian Library Auctarium E.5.13²³ as well as in the Liturgy of Preparation, the act of preparing the bread called *prosphoron* and wine for the Eucharist, of St John Chrysostomos' Divine Liturgy in Codex Ottoboni gr. 344, 1177 AD, an Euchologion of the Great Church of Otranto (f. 139^r):

... ὅψιν τῆς ἀναφορᾶς ἀφαιρεῖ· εἶθ' οὕτως ὁμαλίζει αὐτὴν ἐκ τῶν ψυχίων, τῇ χειρὶ τῷ θεῷ δίσκῳ ταύτην προσφέρει, τοῦ σαρκώδους μὲν ἐπιφανομένου· λέγων δὲ περικοπήν ἐκ τῆς Ἡσαΐου προφητείας· κ.τ.λ.

... he takes away the upper side of the anaphora, then smooths this side from the particles (crumbs) and places it on the divine dyskos with his hand, showing the fleshy side, while speaking a pericope from Isaiah ...²⁴

So, the Anaphora in the agape for John Bukaisdze “as for builders” means that in the Liturgy of Preparation one particle is to be cut out in commemoration of John Bukaisdze. As for his commemoration in the refectory, three cups (*kraso-*

22 Georgios Keselopoulos, *Η Πρόθεση. Μελέτη λειτουργική, ιστορική-θεολογική* (8ος—15ος αιώνας) [The Prothesis. A liturgical and historical-theological study, 8th–15th centuries] (Leukosia, 2018), pp. 422–424. For the ‘disconcerting habit’ of Late Antique, Byzantine and Medieval Greek writers to use the term ‘anaphora’ for many things, cf. Robert F. Taft, “The Anaphora as Eucharistic Prayer,” *Bollettino della Badia Greca di Grottaferrata* III s. 9 (2012), 247–275.

23 Stefano Parenti, *L'anaphora di Crisostomo. Testo e contesti*, (Jerusalem: theologisches Forum) 36 (Münster, 2020), pp. 73–78, esp. p. 76.

24 Valerio Polidori, *L'Eucologio della Grande Chiesa di Otranto. Cod. Ottoboni gr. 344* (AD 1177) (s.l., 2018), p. 91. Keselopoulos, *Πρόθεση*, p. 438. In codex Vat. gr. 2005, AD 1194/95, an euchologion of the St Elias Monastery in Carbone, Lukania, the particles of bread cut out for the Eucharist are called *anaphora*, cf. Keselopoulos, *Πρόθεση*, pp. 436–437. And again, in the text of St James Liturgy in the scroll Vat. gr. 2282 (9th–10th century), *proskomide* is used to designate the prayer of the Anaphora (the Liturgy of the Faithful), cf. *La liturgie de saint Jacques; édition critique du texte grec avec traduction latine*, ed. B.-Ch. Mercier, (Patrologia Orientalis) 26/2 (Paris, 1946), p. 184: Ἀρχὴ τῆς προσκομιδῆς τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰακώβου τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ κλητοῦ ἀποστόλου καὶ δικαίου.

volia) of wine are to be poured out in the evening, and five at noon, as it is prescribed in the agape for John Synkellos.

5 People for Whom an Agape “as for Builders” Was Established

All individuals for whom an agape was celebrated were high-ranking elites, mostly of Georgian origin, including:

- Anthony, formerly Liparit, a Georgian general and political figure of the 11th century (agape no. 34)
- Gregory Abuserisdze, Eristav of Eristavi, ruler of Artanuji in Tao-Klarjeti (Georgian historical province, now in Turkey, agape no. 40),
- George Magistros, probably of Chorchanely family,²⁵ three agapes (nos 56, 73, 96),
- Sumbat Kuropalates and his wife Maria (in the period 1085–1104), who also have got three agapes (nos 60, 120, 121) to be celebrated for them in Ivron; Sumbat belonged to the Georgian noble family of the Bakurianoi. Shortly before his death in December 1092 he became a monk with the name Sabas, his wife Kale became a nun with the name Maria,
- George (Giorgi) Oltisari, abbot of Ivron in 1065–1077 and his brother Michael (agape no. 61);
- Queen Mariam, the mother of King Bagrat IV Kuropalates, King of Georgia (r. 1027–1072, agape no. 100);
- Samuel, Archbishop of Kutaisi (agape no. 101) and others.

As for the agape for King Bagrat himself (no. 90), there is no such expression “as for builders” or “as for Synkellos” in it. This does not mean, however, that his commemoration was not of a high level. It is stated that the agape “is carried out with prayer and Eucharist and with full consolation for the brothers, so that they may remember him forever.” In the margin is written “Anaphora.” As already seen above, the term prayer stands for the liturgy of the Hours, so that the liturgical elements mentioned reveal to us that his memory was to be celebrated in the manner of an agape “as for builders.”

Among the rulers from Byzantium, only one agape is to be performed explicitly “as for builders,” namely the agape for “our Empress Mary, former Martha, and for her son Constantine Porphyrogennetos” (agape no. 133), Mary of Alania is therefore meant. The agape is to be celebrated “as it is written for the

25 According to Jacques Lefort (*Actes d'Ivion*, 1, p. 25), George Magistros must have been a Georgian as he made a massive endowment to Ivron and also was buried there.

mother of her father: with Anaphora and all comfort for the brothers.” This means, that the agape for Mary of Alania was to be celebrated in the same way as for her grandmother, the queen Mariam mentioned above (agape no. 100). The agape for the latter states that it was to be celebrated “as for builders and our kings.”

For the Byzantine emperor Constantine IX Monomachos there are two agapes in the book, both on high feasts of the Lord, on Epiphany, 6 January (no. 27), and on the Feast of the Ascension. However, since Ascension is a movable feast, the second agape was established on the Feast of the Transfiguration of Christ, 6 August (no. 99). Instead of the expression “as for builders”, the agape on 6 January refers to the preceding commemoration, according to which “the whole order of prayer” was to be carried out. Since this expression is only used in the agapes “as for Synkellos” and “as for builders,” it can be assumed in the case of the emperor Constantine that an agape “as for builders” was also celebrated for this Byzantine ruler.

As for the “consolation of the brothers” in the refectory, the usual quantity of five *krasovolia* in the agape “as for Synkellos” remains. The only exception is the agape for Mary, the wife of Sumbat Kuropalates (no. 120), where the number of *krasovolia* is subsequently increased: from three to six in the evening and from three to five at noon. This quantity, five at noon, corresponds to the usual quantity of wine in the agape for John Synkellos and for the brothers of the monastery who receive such an agape.

6 Endowments for Iviron from Persons with an Agape “as for Builders”

While in the agapes “as for synkellos” almost no concrete information is given on the donations made by the persons to be commemorated, we find references to such endowments in most agapes “as for builders.” The following benefactions of the donors are mentioned:

- Anthony, formerly Liparit, gave one hundred *nomismata* for the Church of the Holy Mother of God, the main church of the monastery, and another 56 *nomismata* for the whole brotherhood;
- Gregory, Eristav of Eristavi, received an agape “for his mercy and charity”;
- George Magistros bequeathed his property worth 40 *litra* (pounds of gold) to the monastery; including precious objects, brocade, silver vessels and mounts;
- Sumbat and his wife Maria donated one *litra histamena* and 500 *nomismata histamena*. After Sumbat’s death Maria gave to the monastery brocade, a

precious gold cloth, a silver σκουτέλλιον (agape no. 103), another one for the presbyters, one more *litra histamena*, another brocade garment, and, when all its lands were confiscated and the monastery was in need, she gave seven *litra nomismata chiata* (χιάττα). Besides all these treasures, Mary was also the benefactress of the village Rodeliv (Rhadolibos);

- George Oltisari had reclaimed the lands that were taken from the monastery long ago. He also erected a wall around the monastery and acquired a chrysobull in its favor;
- About the donation of Archbishop Samuel as little is said as about that of Gregory;
- Mary of Alania, formerly Martha, and her son Constantine paid five *litra* that the monastery owed to the fisc (σέκρετον);
- Queen Mariam, the mother of King Bagrat IV, acquired for the monastery an annuity (σολέμνιον) amounting to one *litra* from the Byzantine emperor Constantine IX Monomachos. From the agape for the emperor (no. 27), we also learn that, in addition to the *solemnion* he exempted the monastery from taxes. According to the agape for Petrik and his brother John (no. 15), this happened through the intercession of King Bagrat IV of Georgia when he was in Constantinople (1054–1056), and this fact is confirmed by George the Hagiorite's *Vita*;²⁶

The examples given show that an agape “as for builders” was intended for outstanding endowments, especially made by persons of Georgian origin.

7 The Agapes “as for Other Donors”

This or a similar formulation occurs in the *Book of Commemorations* twelve times, all written during the time of Abbot Paul (1170–1184).²⁷ Only one agape dates from the time of the second redactor of the manuscript, Taplaisdze, i.e. the agape for Mary, Sumbat's wife (no. 103), to be celebrated “as for other donors and benefactors.” Furthermore, it is noticeable that for the commemorations written down in the second half of the 12th century, the term *pannychis* is often used instead of the term agape in the same meaning.²⁸

People mentioned in the agapes “as for other donors” were both Georgians and foreigners, monks, abbots, simple pilgrims as well as influential men. The

26 Metreveli, *Book of Agapes*, pp. 233–234; *Vita of George the Hagiorite*, p. 506.

27 The agapes “as for other donors” are nos: 5, 46, 47, 57, 135, 146, 149, 150, 151, probably 152 (fragmentary, since it is erased), 154, 156.

28 These agapes are nos: 6, 9, 14, 21, 54, 57, 80, 104, 132, 135, 144, 156.

form of agape “as for other donors” in the church and in the refectory varies greatly and probably depended on the amount of the donation. Thus, we find commemorations that are somewhat similar to those “as for builders,” more exactly in the agape for the Bishop of Kutaisi Paul, here called “pannychis” (no. 156). In English translation it reads:

On 15 January, (the feast) of St Paul of Thebes, we designated a *pannychis* as for other donors for Paul from Kutaisi for his very many benefactions. For he gave us 40 *nomismata perpera* by the hand of Father Paul (i.e. the abbot of Iviron) in the 1st indiction (i.e. AD 1186). For this we have established the following prayer for him: commemoration during vespers, 40 *Kyrie eleisons*, during the prayer after the compline chants and 40 *Kyrie eleisons*; during matins [and] 40 *Kyrie eleisons*; during the Liturgy: a particle (for him) is to be cut out (from the Prosphoron), 40 *Kyrie eleisons*, and seeds (i.e. *kollyba*)²⁹ and refectory and prayer. Whoever should disregard this, may he answer to God.

The aforementioned Paul seems to have been an archbishop of Kutaisi.³⁰ In the text of the agape / *pannychis* the same elements can be discerned as in the agapes “as for Synkellos” or “as for builders.” These are: 40 *Kyrie eleisons* at every service, the singing of the canon after the Compline, i.e. in the service called *pannychis*, and the commemoration in the Prothesis rite with a particle (*meridion*) cut out (of the eucharistic bread) in his memory as well as in the Eucharist itself. In the agape for the nurse Okropiri, i.e. Chrysostomos, Kharazi (nos 132 + 146), the text says that his commemoration was to be carried out with all diligence “as for other donors, with *kollyba*, *krasovolia*, Eucharist.” This terse formulation probably shows the usual measure of agape “as for other donors”: in the church the commemoration in the Eucharist, in the refectory the commemoration with *kollyba* and wine. It is noticeable that in the agapes “as for other donors,” in the details about how the commemoration was to be carried out, *kollyba*, a dish based on boiled wheat, is always mentioned.

The relationship, indeed the dependence, of the effort to be expended in a commemoration on the extent of the endowment made is evident in agape no. 150 for a certain Vardan, his wife Mary and their son George: “They gave the

29 “Seeds” here mean that *kollyba*, a dish based on boiled wheat that is used liturgically for commemorations of the dead, was to be prepared. Nowadays *kollyba* is blessed during the funeral service as well as during the memorial service called Mnemosynon.

30 Metreveli, Book of Agapes, p. 263.

church 71 *perpera*, one of which as brocade and three pile carpets. And for this (the agape) they shall be celebrated with all diligence as for the donors who have given 8 *nomismata*.”

The following endowments are mentioned in the agapes “as for other donors”:

- the scholar Symeon Kherkeli (no. 5) copied books and donated them to the main church of the monastery. These were: a Great Metaphrastes, a Psalterion and two Menaia, one for March and another for April;
- Isaiah the Syrian (no. 46) gave *nomismata* for the water channel;
- John, a former Rus (no. 47), donated for the church five books: two Festal Menaia, one Dionysius Areopagite, one *Lausiac History* (of Palladios) and one of Theodore;
- George from Zikhisjvari (nos 135 + 139) bought wheat and a piece of uncultivated land, cultivated it and thus gave it to the monastery together with a mule. The following liturgical books also come from him: a Parakletike, a Triodion and a Festal Menaion;
- The nurse Okropiri, i.e. Chrysostomos, Charazi (no. 146) donated to the church 600 *histamena*, 1000 *hyperpera*, and olive trees. These olive trees were dedicated exclusively to the hospital.
- A “Georgian George” (nos 80 + 154), probably Giorgi Mtazmindeli, gave 26 *hyperpyra*.³¹

This overview shows how varied the donations to the monastery were in value and objects. However, for the creation of an agape “as for other donors,” it seemed important that the endowments were worth no less than 8 *nomismata*.

8 Agapes without Any Reference to the Way of Commemoration

In the *Book of Commemoration* (*Agapes*) there are also entries which unfortunately do not give any further details about the extent of the commemoration. At most, the text says in these cases that the agape should be celebrated “with all diligence,” e.g. in the agape for Christopher, formerly Lalako (no. 72), or Constantine the *proedros* (no. 74). In the agape (no. 68) written by Taplaisdze for Constantine the *protospatharios* and *manglabites* (μαγγλαβίτης) from (or in) Andropolis, which was to be held on 8 May, the feast of John the Evangelist, the text simply says: “May God help him.”

31 Despite several contradictions, Metreveli, *Book of Agapes*, p. 229, believes him to be George the Hagiorite.

In contrast, even in these agapes the endowments were almost always carefully written down. Thus, in the agape for the great *oikonomos* Theodore (no. 4) it is said that “he built a *kellion* in Karyes at his own expense as a resting place for the brothers and gave a good horse for the church.”

An agape (no. 10) for a certain Sabas, formerly Monomachos, is held on his name day, 5 December: “For he died in service/ministry, and all that he possessed of goods the church used. For this an agape is to be held for him by the brothers.”

In the agape (no. 124) for Gerasimos and John it is said, that “each of them gave 20 *nomismata perpera* for the church. Remember them, brothers!”

9 Conclusion

The *Book of Commemorations (Agapes)* composed for Iviron Monastery on Mount Athos is a rich source with regard to the monastic, liturgical, and economic life of the Georgians on the Holy Mountain. In the arrangement of the commemorations for the benefactors of the monastery of Iviron, differences can doubtless be discerned. The agape for John Synkellos, the founder of Iviron, represented the highest form. The liturgical commemoration took place both in the celebration of the Hours and in the celebration of the Eucharist, the Divine Liturgy. At the table in the refectory, the largest quantity of wine was served: in total eight cups.

The second stage of the commemorations, designated “as for Synkellos” or “as for builders,” seems to have meant essentially the same liturgical program as was customary for John Synkellos himself. Minor deviations in the liturgy and refectory seem to have been permitted and were customary. The third level of *memoria*, “as for other donors,” differs from the previous categories in that liturgical commemoration is mostly reduced. For example, no pannychis was celebrated. Wine is not always served at the table in the refectory. However, *kollyba* (plur.) were always distributed. The fourth level of the agapes differed from the previous ones in that no liturgical indications are given at all. Instead, the charity of the benefactors is recorded and thus their importance for the monastery is perpetuated. These commemorations, so it was written, “should be performed with all diligence.”

These differences in liturgical commemoration depend, on the one hand, on the foundation itself (its value) and, on the other, on the social rank and lineage of the donors. The elevated form “as for Synkellos” is reserved only for the founding fathers of the monastery and their relatives, furthermore for rulers and nobles and finally for some important abbots of Iviron. With a few

exceptions, all these persons are Georgians. The agapes of the level “as for other donors” and those without any reference thus seem to be intended for everyone else: for Georgians, Greeks, Syrians, high officials and simple pilgrims.

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In Praise of a Businessman: The Hegumenate Account of Paul of Iviron (1170–1184)

Kostis Smyrlis

1 Introduction

No dilemma between wealth and poverty ever existed for those governing the great Byzantine monasteries. The ownership of large landed fortunes was intrinsic to these establishments, which had to provide for numerous dependents and maintain magnificent religious and residential buildings. Monastic leaders embraced the possession of wealth with little hesitation and strove to preserve and expand it. The Athonite monasteries are a case in point. The foundations of Lavra, Iviron, and Vatopedi, in particular, which were from the start wealthy, maintained their status for centuries thanks to the efforts of their leaders, as we can gather from these establishments' preserved documents. My paper focuses on a little-studied text that is among the most revealing with regard to monastic attitudes toward material possessions. The text is entry 165 of the so-called *Synodikon* or *Book of Commemorations* (*Agapes*) of Iviron, written in Georgian, concerning Paul, *hegoumenos* from 1170 to 1184.¹ This short text of about 500 words in its French translation contains a relatively detailed account of the projects undertaken in Paul's 14-year-long hegumenate, shedding light on matters that usually go unrecorded in monastic documents, our main source on Athonite monasteries.

Iviron under Paul may also serve as a case study of the significance of the great Athonite houses for Macedonia and the empire at large. Besides studying this text and what it tells us about Iviron and its monks in the later 12th century, I shall also try to place the information on Paul's enterprises within this wider framework. The existence and activities of the Athonite monasteries, and of all great monasteries in Byzantium, cannot be understood without

1 On the *Book of Commemorations* of Iviron, see *Actes d'Iviron*, 2, ed. Jacques Lefort et al., (ArchAth) 16 (Paris, 1990), pp. 12–17. Many of its entries are translated *ibid.*, pp. 3–11 (translation of entry 165 *ibid.*, pp. 10–11). On the history of the unique manuscript that preserves the text of the *Book of Commemorations*, see the contribution of Tinatin Chronz in this volume, pp. 138–140.

considering their role as providers of services to the emperor. While the survival and growth of the monasteries depended on the monks' efforts and their relations with lay society, such establishments only acquired and maintained their status if they enjoyed the emperor's support.

2 Monastic Texts and Ideas

As noted, entry 165 is an account of the hegumenate of Paul, listing his achievements from the time he took office to the time he stepped down. The entry was composed by the monks of the monastery, the authors of the entire *Book of Commemorations*; they begin the entry by stating that they had elected Paul *hegoumenos*. The *Book of Commemorations* includes another entry that is also related to Paul: entry 158, which is an inventory of the objects surrendered by the monks to his successor in 1184. Neither of these entries is a regular commemoration entry. Before discussing what they tell us about Paul of Iviron and the Athonites' role in Macedonia in the later 12th century, it is necessary to try to understand their nature and their inclusion in the *Book of Commemorations*. We need to consider a number of other texts produced for or within Byzantine monasteries, namely books of commemorations, texts of monastic accountability and hegumenate accounts.

Monks kept books of commemorations (*diptycha*, *brebia*) where they inscribed the names of individuals, normally because they were the benefactors of the monastery. According to the influential *typikon* of the Evergetis, dating from the second half of the 11th century, the monks ought to commemorate those who had done something worthy of remembrance and had asked to be commemorated annually as well as the deceased members of the monastic community.² Although frequently mentioned in contemporary texts, Byzantine books of commemorations are poorly known except for the *Book of Commemorations* of Iviron, perhaps the only one to have survived in its original form. The *Book of Commemorations* lists the individuals who were deemed worthy of being commemorated by the monks on the day of their death, indicating their benefactions: donations of money or precious objects, financing of constructions and help with the monastery's dealings with the state. In a sense, the *Book of Commemorations* was an accounting book like the ones discussed

2 Paul Gautier, "Le typikon de la Théotokos Évergétis," *REB* 40 (1982), 77. On commemorations in monasteries see also Kostis Smyrlis, *La fortune des grands monastères byzantins, fin du xe-milieu du xive siècle* (Paris, 2006), pp. 133–134.

below, a ledger recording 'revenues' (the contributions to the monastery) and 'expenses' (the commemorations by the monks).

The chapter of the *typikon* of the Evergetis regarding commemorations suggests that its *diptycha* may have resembled the *Book of Commemorations* of Iviron, as they must have indicated at least the day of death of each individual and perhaps their benefactions in the case of patrons.³ Parallel to this type of books of commemorations, there seem to have existed others that did not indicate the date of death (or the benefactions). The *typikon* for the monastery of Pantokrator in Constantinople (1136), in particular, asks the monks to inscribe in the *diptycha* a number of people who were to be commemorated daily, weekly or on specific religious feasts, without any reference to their day of death.⁴ Certain known Athonite books of commemoration dating from the 15th to the 18th centuries also consist of simple lists of people to be commemorated (daily or regularly), without indication of their day of death or benefactions.⁵ Nevertheless, in 1348 the Athonite monastery of Xenophon clearly possessed both kinds of books of commemoration, one for those whose names were to be mentioned in all services (daily) and one for those whose memory ought to be celebrated annually (on the day of their death); the name of the same person might be inscribed in both books.⁶ It is likely that the practice seen in Xenophon was widespread.

Monastic officials were responsible for their management of the monastery's possessions and various texts were produced to that effect. During the regular operation of a monastery, various officials, such as the steward (*oikonomos*), the treasurer (*docheiarios*), and the cellarer (*kellarios*) produced statements or ledgers recording the everyday management of cash and provisions within the establishment. The keeping of books and documents was also documented. Stewards of faraway properties (*metochiarioi*, *pronoetai*) produced statements regarding their management of the estates' revenues in cash and kind.⁷ When

3 The *typikon* of Kecharitomene (1110–1116) also institutes commemorations to be held annually on the day of each person's death; Paul Gautier, "Le typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôménè," *REB* 43 (1985), 119.

4 Paul Gautier, "Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator," *REB* 32 (1974), 41–47.

5 See the books of commemorations of Zographou (presented in Georgi Parpulov, "Two 'Royal Beadrolls' at the Monastery of Zograf (MSS 228 and 234)," [in Bulgarian] eds. Dimitar Peev et al., *Zographou Sympraktika. The Archives and Library of the Monastery of Zograf: Studies and Prospects* [Sofia, 2019], pp. 113–119), which date from the Ottoman period but reproduce earlier texts. The old *brebion* of Lavra, in use in the 15th century, seems to have been of the same kind: Hans-Veit Beyer, "Michael Sphrantzes im Totengedenkbuch des Lavraklosters und als Verfasser eines Gedichtes auf Mariä Verkündigung," *JÖB* 40 (1990), 295–302.

6 *Actes de Xénophon*, ed. Denise Papachryssanthou, (ArchAth) 15 (Paris, 1986), lines 22–24.

7 On the various monastic statements or ledgers, see Smyrlis, *Fortune*, pp. 99–100, 103, 236–238;

a new *hegoumenos* took office, an inventory (*apographe, katastichon, brebaion*) of the monastery's movable objects, cash and debts was made by, or in the presence of, other monks. Such inventories were also produced when a new steward of a dependent monastery (*metochion*) took office. Lists of objects were also made for officials entrusted with the management of the monastery's assets, like the *eklesiarches*. Some inventories prepared at the assumption of office by new *hegoumenoi* and stewards of *metochia* have survived. As noted, *Book of Commemorations* no. 158, written when *hegoumenos* Paul left his office in April 1184, is such an inventory.⁸ These are impersonal texts of a legal character. Their aim was to keep track of the monasteries' assets and make sure they were not usurped or alienated by the official in charge of them.

Hegoumenoi also left accounts of their tenures included in their foundation charters or monastic rules (*typika*) or within their wills. The *typika* are complex and idiosyncratic texts, reflecting the particularities of each monastery and the personality of the author, who was usually the founder.⁹ Many of these founders were monks who also served as the *hegoumenoi* of their establishments; their rules were sometimes presented as their testaments or were included in them. The main body of a *typikon* provides rules on church services, the monks' daily regime, the administration of the monastery and its properties, instructions on commemorations and charitable distributions. Often a list of the movable and immovable properties was also included. Most relevant to the topic of this paper, however, are the introductions to the *typika*, which

Jacques Lefort, "La gestion des archives dans les monastères de l'Athos au Moyen Âge," eds. Olivier Delouis and Kostis Smyrlis, *Lire les Archives de l'Athos*, TM 23/2 (Paris, 2019), p. 6.

8 *Hegoumenoi: Actes de Saint-Pantéléémôn*, no. 7, ed. Paul Lemerle, Sima Ćirković and Paul Lemerle, (ArchAth) 12 (Paris, 1982), pp. 65–76 (Xylourgou, Athos, 1142); Louis Petit, "Le monastère de Notre-Dame de Pitié," *IRAIK* 6 (1900), 1–153, at 114–125 (Eleousa, Macedonia, 1164); *Actes d'Iviron*, 2, no. 158, ed. Lefort et al., p. 10 (Iviron, Athos, 1184).—Stewards: *Actes de Vatopédi*, 3, no. 175, ed. Jacques Lefort et al., (ArchAth) 23 (Paris, 2019), pp. 136–142 (Spelaio-tissa, Melnik, 1395); see also *Actes de Vatopédi*, 2, no. 120, ed. Jacques Lefort et al., (ArchAth) 22 (Paris, 2006), pp. 299–304. On the inventories registering the objects entrusted to the *eklesiarches*: Smyrlis, *Fortune*, p. 103.

9 On *typika* in general see Catia Galatariotou, "Byzantine Ktetorika Typika: A Comparative Study," *REB* 45 (1987), 77–138; Michael Angold, "Were Byzantine Monastic Typika Literature?," in *The Making of Byzantine History: Studies Dedicated to Donald M. Nicol*, eds. Roderick Beaton and Charlotte Roueché (Aldershot, 1993), pp. 46–70; Martin Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz*, (Wiener byzantinistische Studien) 22 (Vienna, 1999), pp. 183–197. The surviving *typika* are translated and commented upon in *BMFD*.—On the autobiographical elements found in *typika* and wills of *hegoumenoi*, see Angold, "Were Byzantine Monastic Typika Literature?," pp. 54–55; Michael Angold, "The Autobiographical Impulse in Byzantium," *DOP* (1998), 240–246; Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz*, ch. 6, pp. 198–201 and *passim*.

provide an account of the founder's life and the monastery's establishment. These passages recount the material challenges the founder had faced and his achievements, in particular the buildings he had constructed, the properties he had acquired and the support he gained from the emperor and rich donors.¹⁰ Besides monastic founders, other *hegoumenoi* also wrote wills towards the end of their lives in which they gave more or less extensive accounts of their hegumenates. Three such testaments survive from the 12th century, one in Docheiariou on Athos and two in the archives of the monastery of Patmos.¹¹ Although these wills contain few if any autobiographical elements before the authors' assumption of office, they include accounts of the difficulties encountered by the authors and their achievements as *hegoumenoi* and in this they resemble the introductions to *typika*. The wills in question recount the superiors' constructions and acquisitions, their obtaining of imperial documents awarding guaranties for the monastery's properties, fiscal concessions and grants and, in general, their efforts to preserve and expand the prosperity of the monastery. These wills also contain practical instructions, including the naming of a successor, as well as short passages on behavior and discipline.¹² In short, like the *typika* introductions, these wills are almost exclusively concerned with the material affairs of the monastery.

We may now consider the nature and place of the entries of the *Book of Commemorations* concerning Paul. As noted, both entry 158, the inventory written for Paul's successor, and entry 165, dedicated to Paul's hegumenate, are outliers in the *Book of Commemorations*. Entry 158, which is a standard inventory of objects, is unexpectedly included in a memorial book. The case of entry 165 is more complicated. Although it recounts an individual's benefactions to Iviron, it does not institute a commemoration: there is no date on which to commemorate Paul nor does it start with the preposition 'for' followed by his name, as is done with all other individuals listed in the *Book of Commemorations*, including five earlier *hegoumenoi* of Iviron. It is in fact likely that Paul was still alive when

10 See in particular the *typika* of Athanasios of Athos (Athanasios of Athos, *Typikon*, ed. Philipp Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte der Athosklöster* [Leipzig, 1894], pp. 104–107), the Evergetis (Gautier, "Le typikon de la Théotokos Évergétis," 15–17), Christodoulos of Patmos (Christodoulos of Patmos, *Diatyposis*, MM 6:62–67) and Machairas (Neilos, *Typike diataxis*, ed. Ioannes Tsiknopoullos, *Κυπριακά Τυπικά* [Cypriot *typika*] [Nicosia, 1969], pp. 10–17).

11 *Actes de Docheiariou*, no. 6, ed. Nicolas Oikonomidès, (ArchAth) 13 (Paris, 1984), pp. 91–97 (after 1118); Sabbas and Theoktistos of Patmos: MM 6:241–246 (1119–1127/8), 106–110 (1157). The 1272 will of Germanos of Patmos closely resembles these wills (MM 6:229–233).

12 The will of Sabas of Patmos also includes an inventory of the objects, mostly books, he bequeathed to the monastery.

this text was written. Moreover, as has been noted, Paul's entry is the longest of the *Book of Commemorations* and quite different from all the other entries in terms of detail. This is especially notable when compared with the entries for the five other *hegoumenoi* of Iviron (*Book of Commemorations* nos 61, 43, 22, 100, 138), which are concise, listing up to three benefactions to the monastery, cash donations in particular. In fact, in terms of content *Book of Commemorations* no. 165 resembles the hegumenate accounts found in the *typika* introductions and the wills of Docheiariou and Patmos. There is an important difference, however. The author is not the *hegoumenos* himself, but the monastic community that is expressing its gratitude to Paul, the benefactor of Iviron, as it does with almost all other entries of the *Book of Commemorations*. Entry 165 is perhaps a draft of a commemoration entry, to be finalized after the death of Paul and the addition of a date of commemoration. Its exceptional length, however, suggests that it was also meant to be a hegumenate account of the kind found in wills of *hegoumenoi*, of which the Georgian monks were certainly aware.

Was this done in order to preserve the memory of a particularly successful hegumenate, something like producing a history of the monastery? Or was it an attempt by the monks closest to Paul to consolidate their position vis-à-vis other groups within the monastery? In any case, it is striking that in both the hegumenate accounts found in *typika* and wills and in *Book of Commemorations* no. 165 the overwhelming emphasis is on property matters. In entry 165, in fact, there is not a word on spiritual issues or the internal affairs of the monastic community. This does not come as a surprise. What was expected from monastic leaders in Byzantium was above all to effectively manage the monastery's wealth.¹³

3 The Achievements of Paul

Let us now turn to the achievements of Paul as *hegoumenos* of Iviron from 1170 to 1184. We know them from entry 165 as well as from a few more entries of the *Book of Commemorations* recording benefactors and mentioning projects that took place during his hegumenate. Additional information comes from the inventory of the monastery's movables prepared when he handed over office in 1184 (*Book of Commemorations* no. 158).¹⁴ Paul's hegumenate began at

13 On this see Michael Angold, *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni, 1081–1261* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 349–350; Smyrlis, *Fortune*, pp. 191–192. See also for the later period *Actes de Lavra*, 4, ed. Paul Lemerle et al., (ArchAth) 11 (Paris, 1982), pp. 15, 22.

14 The projects accomplished under Paul are also discussed in *Actes d'Iviron*, 2, pp. 37–40.

a difficult moment for the monastery. A large part of its villages and estates in eastern Macedonia, “all properties from Rhadolibos to St Nicholas (Hierissos),” had been confiscated because of a debt of 500 gold coins. This debt no doubt concerned unpaid taxes of perhaps three years.¹⁵ Paul found the money, went to Constantinople, where he spent eight months and obtained the restitution of the confiscated properties thanks to a decision of the imperial court. This probably happened in the first year of his hegumenate.

Paul’s major talent was his ability to cultivate relations with the aristocracy of Georgia and Byzantium, thanks to which he secured a seemingly endless flow of funds for his numerous projects. *Book of Commemorations* no. 165 concludes by stressing that Paul carried out his undertakings primarily by using the money donated by patrons and less so the revenues from the monastery’s properties: “Do not think that he covered all these expenses thanks to the monastery’s revenues. God and the Virgin know how much he besought, strove, begged, and solicited in order to find this money. The brothers should know this well.”

The entry singles out two families whose friendship Paul was able to secure. The first was *protosebastos* Alexios Komnenos and his wife Maria Doukaina. Alexios was nephew of Emperor Manuel I and one of the highest-ranking individuals of the empire. The other family was that of the brothers John and Gregory Khobouli from Georgia, who must have been very wealthy. Other entries of the *Book of Commemorations* (nos 39, 145) mention the projects funded by these brothers, noting that their total cash donations amounted to 1800 gold coins.

Paul was clearly an energetic *hegoumenos* working restlessly for the monastery. About 25 distinct projects are known to have taken place in his 14-year-long hegumenate. Inside the monastery, three churches, including the *katholikon*, were renovated and embellished with paintings and precious fabrics. The monastery’s fortifications were raised, an aqueduct and a hospital were built. Dilapidated cells were restored and many were built anew after a devastating fire. Probably in Iviron’s immediate vicinity, a mill was constructed and gardens and vineyards planted.¹⁶ While many of these projects were essential for the monks’ existence as they supplied water and foodstuffs and provided housing,

15 Three years of non-payment of rent or tax is considered just cause for the ending of a lease or the confiscation of a property in certain *lyseis* of Alexios I (r. 1081–1118); Viktor Tiftixoglu and Spyros Troianos, “Unbekannte Kaiserurkunden und Basilikentestimonien aus dem Sinaiticus 1117,” *Fontes Minores* 9 (1993), 146.—On Radolibos: Peter Soustal, *Make-donien, südlicher Teil*, (TIB) 11; (Denkschriften der philosophisch-historischen Klasse) 535, 2 vols (Vienna 2022), 2:926–928; on Hierissos: 1:481–485.

16 These projects are known from *Book of Commemorations*, nos 33, 143–145, 153, 155, 165.

healthcare and security, the lavish decoration of the churches was not. These expensive works of embellishment, however, were not superfluous or wasteful. They fostered the role of Iviron as a prominent cult center and pilgrimage destination, which was essential for its continued patronage by wealthy laymen. The monks understood this and approved the funds and energy their *hegoumenos* dedicated to these projects.

Under Paul, Iviron expanded its possessions on Athos somewhat, acquiring two modest dependencies to the west of the monastery, Kaniska and Kalabrou, the first said to have been bought dearly, as well as some cells for the monks to stay in Karyes, the capital of Athos (nos 165, 33). The investments in the outlying properties of the monastery under Paul were substantial, concerning 14 different projects at eight locations, spread in all the areas in which the monastery held properties, namely Thessalonike and its vicinity, western and eastern Chalkidike, and the region of the Strymon Delta and Mount Pangaion. Paul created two *metochia* (Kalamokopion and Rhadolibos), restored another two (Bolbos and St Nicholas in Hierissos) and added buildings in Iviron's dependencies, a large stable at St Barbara, a double mill at Bolbos and rental houses at the *metochion* of Thessalonike (nos 165, 145).¹⁷ One of the most notable projects undertaken under Paul concerned the reestablishment of the estate of St Nicholas in Hierissos, which had been devastated by corsairs (no. 145). We are told that besides the reconstruction of the *metochion* of St Nicholas, the village too had to be rebuilt, which means that it had been destroyed and probably abandoned by its inhabitants. Iviron also built a tower so that the villagers would not be afraid to return to their homes. So, this was a project of bringing manpower back and restoring the exploitation of a significant estate of the monastery on coastal Chalkidike. Iviron was not alone in acting this way in the later 12th century.¹⁸

Among the most important pieces of information in *Book of Commemorations* no. 165 concern the churches built by Paul on the estates of Iviron. The erection of three churches is mentioned: one in Bolbos (western Chalkidike), another in Dobrobikeia, and another in Melitziane (Mount Pangaion region).¹⁹ The churches of Dobrobikeia and Melitziane, dedicated to St George and the

17 On Kalamokopion, Bolbos and St Barbara: Soustal, *Makedonien*, 1:154–155, 302–303, 256–257 (H. Barbara 2).

18 On piratical attacks in this period and the reaction of the Athonites see Kostis Smyrlis, "Estate Fortifications in Late Byzantine Macedonia: The Athonite Evidence," eds. Falko Daim and Jörg Drauschke, *Hinter den Mauern und auf dem offenen Land. Leben im Byzantinischen Reich*, (Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident) 3 (Mainz, 2016), p. 196, n. 51.

19 On Dobrobikeia and Melintziane: Soustal, *Makedonien*, 1:382; 2:727–728 (Melintziane).

Virgin respectively, are said to have been fully painted, while that of Bolbos apparently only had one painting depicting St Theodore. Churches were one of the standard features of *metochia* complexes created by the monks in order to administer their estates. The significance of these churches extended beyond the walls of the *metochion* and the small monastic community living there. The monks and priests of the *metochia* played a pastoral role within local societies.²⁰ However, the three churches built by Paul do not seem to have belonged to the administrative centers of the *metochia* in question and this is why this information is especially interesting. One of the churches, that of Bolbos, which was no doubt dedicated to St Theodore, is said to have been built not in the *metochion* but “in the village.” In fact, a document of Iviron dating from 1104 shows that the *metochion* of Bolbos already had a church dedicated to the Virgin.²¹ So, in *Book of Commemorations* no. 165, Paul is credited with building a church for the dependent peasants of Iviron living in the village of Bolbos. In the case of the estates of Dobrobikeia and Melitziane, both of which also included peasant settlements, there is no indication as to where the churches were built. Nevertheless, from the same document of 1104 we know that the *metochia* of these estates had churches in the early 12th century. The *metochion* of Dobrobikeia had a church dedicated to St Demetrios and that of Melitziane a church dedicated to St Nicholas, in both cases different saints from those of the churches built by Paul in the same places.²² This element, along with the fact that Paul is said to have built and not restored the churches and the contemporary case of Bolbos, suggest that in the villages of Melitziane and Dobrobikeia too Paul erected churches for the peasants.

Why did Paul spend money to erect and decorate churches in the villages and why was this considered an action worthy of praise by the monks? The information that monks were building churches in the villages of their peasants is practically unique. The closest known parallel appears to be the erection of a church outside the walls of Kosmosoteira in Thrace by its founder, the *sebastokrator* Isaac Komnenos, which was destined for the use of the monastery’s peasants. Isaac Komnenos, who disposed of vast resources, did this as a small appendix to the lavish monastic complex he created, to ensure that the villagers remained good, practicing Christians.²³ There are significant differences between the two cases. The village churches built by Paul of Iviron, who was

20 Angold, *Church and Society*, pp. 329–331.

21 *Actes d'Iviron*, 2, no. 52, pp. 240–241, lines 428–431.

22 *Actes d'Iviron*, 2, no. 52, p. 234, lines 228–229; p. 244, lines 550–552. Cf. Angold, *Church and Society*, p. 330.

23 Isaac Komnenos, *Typikon*, ch. 104, ed. Georgios K. Papazoglou, Τυπικόν Ισαακίου Αλεξίου

much poorer than Isaac Komnenos, appear within a list of projects that are presented as the wise use of hard-won funds and were important for the material welfare of the monastery. Indeed, these churches were almost certainly seen as money-making investments. The monks extracted revenue from the services performed in the churches, especially from baptisms, weddings, and funerals.²⁴ The competition for this source of income explains the disputes between monasteries and bishops in the 13th century concerning the rights over village churches.²⁵

One may think of a number of additional reasons that might have motivated Paul. Erecting churches in the villages might have been a way of consolidating the settlement and attaching the peasants more firmly to it, which was a concern of landowners throughout Byzantine history. Paul may have also thought of these projects as a way of strengthening Ivron's control over the villagers. It is plausible, moreover, that the peasants themselves requested the erection of a church in their settlement, a petition the monks were likely to have heeded if it concerned the stability of the settlement. It is equally plausible that this was something expected from the monks by the emperor or society at large, something necessary for political reasons. In any case, the establishment of churches at the *metochia* and in the villages rendered the monks spiritual leaders of the local communities, something which was taken into consideration by the emperors when dealing with great monasteries.

To return to the overall picture of Paul's activities, it is remarkable that despite the relative abundance of cash at his disposal not a single acquisition of property outside Athos is known from the 14 years of his hegumenate. This too requires explanation. It is possible that following the confiscation of the monastery's estates soon before 1170 this was seen as a time of consolidation and improvement of the existing properties. In fact, *Book of Commemorations* no. 165 twice refers to the difficulties of the times. This, however, does not seem to be sufficient to explain the total absence of acquisitions over a relatively long and rather prosperous period. One cannot help thinking of the restrictive

Κομνηνός [Typikon of Isaak Alexios Komnenos] (Komotini, 1994), pp. 138–139. Cf. Angold, *Church and Society*, pp. 329–330.

24 Angold, *Church and Society*, pp. 330–331.

25 Demetrios Chomatenos, *Ponemata*, no. 80, ed. Günter Prinzing, *Demetrii Chomateni ponemata diaphora*, (CFHB) 38; (Series Berolinensis) (Berlin—New York, 2002), pp. 266–273; Βυζαντινά ἔγγραφα τῆς Μονῆς Πάτμου [Byzantine documents of Patmos Monastery], 3, no. 6, ed. Maria Gerolymatou (Athens, 2016), pp. 173–182. In 1277, the monks of Hilandar were given permission by the emperor to use the church of their newly-acquired village of Kastrin as their *metochion*: *Actes de Chilandar*, 1, no. 10, ed. Mirjana Živojinović, Vassiliki Kravari and Christophe Giros, (ActAthos) 20 (Paris, 1998), pp. 135–138.

policies of the Komnenoi towards monasteries. The Komnenian period started with a measure in the late 11th century which resulted in massive confiscations of monastic properties; Iviron in particular lost half of its estates.²⁶ Imperial policy towards private landowners, especially churches and monasteries, remained restrictive during the 12th century. Under Manuel I, new prohibitions on land and peasant acquisition were introduced and fiscal officials regularly reviewed the rights of landowners, which often led to confiscations.²⁷ Indeed, the friendship of the *protosebastos* Alexios Komnenos and his wife, who are not credited with any donation by the *Book of Commemorations*, may have been seen primarily as a guarantee against such measures. This was a context that discouraged investment in land acquisition and may explain why the Georgian monks focused on ameliorating their existing properties.

To complete the list of Paul's achievements, we should have a glance at the inventory prepared when he handed over his office in 1184 (*Book of Commemorations* no. 158). This inventory further confirms Paul's image as an able administrator. He left, in particular, cellars full of provisions—1,500 *modioi* of wheat, a depot full of flour, wine for a year, 500 *metra* of oil—and a cash reserve of 636 *hypepryra*.

4 The Athonites between Constantinople and Macedonia

I would like to conclude by trying to place the hegumenate of Paul within the general context of the first two centuries of the history of the Holy Mountain. The creation and development of Athos resulted from the confluence of the pursuits of three distinct agents: the monks, society at large, and the emperor of Constantinople.²⁸ The monks were motivated by the ideology of retreat from the world and spiritual perfection. Nevertheless, their leaders, who were often aristocrats, maintained relations with the world, especially the elite and the emperor. In fact, the monasteries depended on the world. Individuals ranging

26 Kostis Smyrlis, "The Fiscal Revolution of Alexios I Komnenos: Timing, Scope and Motives," eds. Bernard Flusin and Jean-Claude Cheynet, *Autour du Premier humanisme byzantin et des Cinq études sur le XI^e siècle, quarante ans après Paul Lemerle*, (TM) 21/2 (Paris, 2017), pp. 594–601.

27 Nicolas Svoronos, "Les privilèges de l'Église à l'époque des Comnènes: un rescrit inédit de Manuel I^{er} Comnène," *TM* 1 (1965), 325–391; Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 285–286, 303–304.

28 The standard work on monasticism and the monasteries' relations with the world in the middle Byzantine period remains Rosemary Morris, *Monks and Laymen in Byzantium, 843–1118* (Cambridge, 1995), especially ch. 4.

from exalted aristocrats to Macedonian peasants contributed to their prosperity, by joining them and through their donations and support. Most critical was the backing of the wealthier and more powerful people who offered patronage and out of whose ranks came the educated and well-connected monks who led the monasteries. However, the most decisive factor in the development of Athos was the emperor's endorsement. Without imperial backing, Athos would have remained a collection of insignificant hermitages. From the start, Athos was an imperial project as much as anything else. A series of emperors promoted the foundation and prosperity of the great monasteries with donations of estates and peasants, annual subventions and tax privileges.

The emperors gave so much because the monks provided important services to the empire, as has been highlighted by several scholars, notably Nikos Svoronos, Rosemary Morris, and Rosa Benoit-Meggenis.²⁹ The services great monasteries provided were both ideological and practical, and concerned three main areas: the legitimization of the emperor, the backing of his claims over territory, and the defense and economic development of a region. Monasteries had emerged in the 9th and 10th centuries as an essential element of imperial ideology.³⁰ Emperors needed the great monasteries to accept their patronage and they needed the monks to pray for the good of society and the victory of the Byzantine armies. The prestige of the Athonite monasteries had been great from the beginning and this explains their privileged treatment by Constantinople. Monasteries, especially those of Athos, helped emperors reclaim or assert their authority over recently-recovered or contested territories. The turning of Athos in the mid-10th century into an important Holy Mountain comprising powerful monasteries that were led by influential figures of the caliber of St Athanasios of Athos was related to Constantinople's effort to secure its control over areas, Chalkidike and the Strymon region, which had been recovered only relatively recently, were inhabited by large numbers of Slavic

29 Nikos Svoronos, 'Η σημασία τῆς ἱδρύσεως τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὁρους γιὰ τὴν ἀνάπτυξη τοῦ ἐλλαδικοῦ χώρου [The importance of the foundation of Mount Athos for the development of Greek territory] (Karyes, 1987); Morris, *Monks and Laymen*, pp. 90–142; Rosa Benoit-Meggenis, *L'empereur et le moine: les relations du pouvoir impérial avec les monastères à Byzance (IXe–XIIIe siècle)*, (Travaux de la Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée) 73 (Lyon, 2017). Additional bibliography in Kostis Smyrlis, "Monasteries, Society, Economy, and the State in the Byzantine Empire," ed. Bernice M. Kaczynski, *The Oxford Handbook of Christian Monasticism* (Oxford, 2020), pp. 157–158.

30 Paul Magdalino, "Monasticism and Imperial Power in the 9th and 10th Centuries," eds. Olivier Delouis and Kostis Smyrlis, *Lire les Archives de l'Athos*, (TM) 23/2 (Paris, 2019), pp. 187–205.

speakers, and were then under Bulgarian threat.³¹ Soon after the Byzantines' reconquest of Chalkidike in the 9th century, the army created a string of small fortified towns (*kastra*) that served as the seats of a governor and a bishop as well as of military detachments.³² The original wave of foundations of the great Athonite monasteries, from the 960s to the early 11th century, came two to three generations after this initial attempt of the Byzantines to secure their rule over the areas in question. After a first intervention that was largely military and administrative, the establishment of the monasteries may be seen as a turn to a soft-power approach, which aimed at deepening the region's attachment to the empire. The Athonite monasteries were outstanding centers of religion and culture, and were given extensive possessions in Chalkidike and the Lower Strymon. The monks were in effect the extension of imperial power in the region and the proof of Constantinople's sovereignty. The durability of the monasteries made their dependencies a permanent network of loci of imperial presence in the Macedonian countryside, while the holy aura of the monks made them potent yet subtle agents of Constantinople.

The foundation of a number of powerful monasteries on Athos had a tremendous impact on the economy of the region.³³ The larger monasteries were not different in terms of size from most of the towns of the time, which comprised a few hundred inhabitants, while Athos as a whole, with a population that in the early 11th century must have been around 2,000, would have ranked among the more significant towns of Macedonia. All this settlement took place on a small mountainous peninsula that used to house a few hermits before the later 10th century. But the foundation of the great Athonite houses was more than a simple population boom. The monasteries were much more significant in economic terms than the towns: the monks controlled greater cash resources, while many of them were educated. Several monks were aristocrats and ex-civil servants who possessed superior administrative skills and were aware of the latest economic developments. The foundation of Athos thus meant a massive injection of cash and knowhow into a relatively backward region, which, nevertheless, had economic potential while also being strategically significant. The monasteries established estates, organized their man-

31 Svoronos, *Σημασία*, pp. 62–73.

32 Jacques Lefort, *Société rurale et histoire du paysage à Byzance* (Paris, 2006), pp. 64–69, 156, 158.

33 On what follows: Kostis Smyrlis, Guentcho Banev and Giorgos Konstantinidis, "Mount Athos and the Economy of Chalkidike, Tenth to Fifteenth Century," in *Η εξακτίνωση του Αγίου Όρους στον Ορθόδοξο Κόσμο: τα Μετόχια. Πρακτικά του 9ου Επιστημονικού Συνεδρίου* [The Radiance of the Holy Mountain in the Orthodox World: The *metochia*. Proceedings of the 9th Scientific Conference] (Thessaloniki, 2015), pp. 36–39.

agement, and acquired ships to transport produce. The Athonites stimulated the economy of the region, quickly increasing its agricultural output and contributing to demographic growth.

The evidence concerning Iviron under Paul underlines the significance of Athonite monks as imperial servants and as mediators between centers of power and wealth and the countryside of Macedonia. Iviron was from the beginning, and remained so under Paul, a great monastery led by an elite of Georgian noblemen who linked their monastery to the rulers and aristocracy of Constantinople and of distant Georgia. This particularity of Iviron was not unique on Athos, where there also existed an Amalfitan and a Russian monastery. Iviron was thus situated between Constantinople and Georgia, on the one hand, and Macedonia, on the other, where it possessed an extensive network of estates and villages. The monastery invested the cash surpluses from the exploitation of its properties as well as the monetary donations it received from aristocrats to create fabulous churches and splendid constructions in the monastery. Substantial funds were also directed into investments in the estates, which increased their productivity and tax value. By erecting defensive towers and reestablishing destroyed villages, the monks contributed to the continuity of settlement and exploitation. The Byzantine state profited in several ways from Iviron and the Athonites in general as great landholders. The treasury collected taxes from the properties of the monasteries and from the peasants allocated to them. It also benefited from the general stimulating effect the monks' activities had on the economy at large. Last but not least, their extensive network of estates and villages, endowed with churches in which the monks prayed for the emperor, underlined Constantinople's authority over the Macedonian countryside.

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The Dynamics of Donations to Iviron Monastery on Mount Athos (According to the *Book of Commemorations* [Agapes])

Apolon Tabuashvili and Vladimer Kekelia

1 The Agapes of Athos

The *Book of Commemorations* (Agapes)—an *agape* being a specific type of commemoration for a person who is mentioned during the liturgy, after which a meal in that person's honor is eaten—of Iviron Monastery (the 'Monastery of the Georgians') on Mount Athos, or *Synodikon*, is an integral part of the manuscript copied on Mount Athos in 1074, which is called the 'The Athos Collection' (GNCM Ms. A-558). The manuscript was originally compiled and written by Mikael Dayalisoneli, a member of the community of Iviron Monastery. 'The Athos Collection' underwent three redactions. The third redaction was made by Ioane Taplaisze in the first half of the 12th century. He was a monk of Iviron, and he acted on behalf of the abbot of the monastery, Ioane Kalakala. The agapes arranged in calendrical order by Mikael Dayalisoneli (approximately 50 agapes in total) were placed in the manuscript before the life and sermons of John the Theologian. At the same time, there were agapes written on separate manuscripts or in the form of separate lists, which were difficult to use on a daily basis. Therefore, it became necessary to incorporate separate agapes into the collection, which was technically impossible due to lack of space. Therefore, Ioane Taplaisze moved the agape book to the bottom of the manuscript. He left intact the first five pages of Mikael Dayalisoneli's text, a total of 22 agapes, and transcribed the rest of the material in such a way that it was possible to incorporate new material in chronological and calendrical order. This is how the old agapes were mixed with the new material that Taplaisze inserted to into the *Synodikon*. In the second half of the 12th century, he began to fill in the blanks and pages left in the agape book. Later, in the 16th century, two parchment sheets were added to the manuscript. Eventually, 167 agapes of 'The Athos Collection' have come down to us.

2 Agapes as a Source for Researching Economic History

The *Book of Commemorations* of Iviron Monastery on Athos is an important source for studying various issues in the economic history of both Byzantium and Georgia. In the agapes we encounter information about prices, the circulation of Byzantine gold coins, and other aspects of economic life of the period. Here we focus on the amount of donations to Iviron. This reveals invaluable details about the general economic situation of Iviron.

The *Book of Commemorations* contains a total of 167 agapes, the main part of which—164 agapes—came into being in the 11th–12th centuries (985–1184). Three agapes were added later, which refer to donations from the late 15th–early 16th century. It should be noted that the amount of the donation cannot be determined in all agapes. This is especially true of the earlier agapes. Nevertheless, dozens of agapes have recorded specific donations, allowing us to estimate their total value.

As becomes clear from the *Book of Commemorations*, an agape was not prescribed in the case of small donations. From the agape in which the amount of specific donations is shown, it is clear that the donations are calculated only with gold coins. The term *drahkan* was used to denote gold money in Georgia during the high medieval period. In Georgia of the 11th–13th centuries, the *drahkan* corresponded to both the Eastern dinar and the Byzantine full-weight gold coin. Accordingly, the *drahkan*, along with the dinar, equalled the high-grade *histamenon nomisma* (4.4/4.5 g., gold content up to 98%).¹ In the *Book of Commemorations* of Iviron Monastery on Athos, we find donations mostly made in *drahkan*. Some agapes also refer to the treasure in pounds of currency (Gr. *litrai*). In this case too we are talking only about gold coinage. In some cases it is specified what kind of gold coin hoard was donated. As it is known, from the 30s of the 11th century, a decline in the purity of gold coins in Byzantium began. The debased gold coins in the *Book of Commemorations* obviously were not just referred to by the term *drahkan*. In the case of donations of such debased gold money, the precise meaning of *drahkan* is specified and we come across various terms (*drahkan dukat*, *drahkan hromanat*, *drahkan alexat*, *drahkan perpera*, etc.), which will be discussed below.

1 Gocha Japaridze, *Oqros monetis terminologia XI–XIII saukuneebis saqartveloshi* [Gold coin terminology in the 11th–13th centuries in Georgia], (Proceedings of Georgian National Academy of Sciences, series of History, Archaeology, Ethnology and Art History) 3 (Tbilisi, 1976), pp. 88–89.

3 Agapes without Concrete Details of Donations

The first agape, naturally, was made for Ioane (John) Synkellos (formerly Tornike), the founder of the Iviron Monastery on Athos. He was a representative of the Chordvaneli (Chorchaneli) feudal house. The agape of Ioane (John) Synkellos does not provide specific information about the donation, although the sole founder of the monastery had to pay tens of thousands of *nomismata*, which were spent on building a Georgian monastery and buying and using the lands belonging to the monastery. Ioane (formerly Tornike), as it is known, made this donation in 980–983. He died in 984/985. Later, his agape was established, which is most honored for its composition and abundance of various elements. This agape was a kind of prototype for the writing of other agapes.²

Up to 50 originally-ordained agapes cover the period from the death of Ioane (John) Synkellos (984/985) to 1074.³ The earliest of them are the agapes of Ioane (John) Synkellos (1st agape), Ioane (John) the Monk, Abuharbi, Tornike (16th agape), Constantine, Bagrat, Michael, Symeon (17th agape), Ignatios (18th agape), Mariam (Maria) Enkratis (19th agape), the agapes of Ioane (John) Tsiporeli (29th agapi), Euthymios (71st agapi), and Ioane (John, Euthymios' father) (83rd agape).⁴ These agapes were made for the members of the Chordvaneli (Chorchaneli) feudal house and their relatives who made a special contribution to the monastery. In the 1040s, agapes was established for Grigol (Gregory) (130th and 131st agapes), the abbot of the monastery, for Stephan Khartularis (Chartoularios) (24th agape), and Ioane (John) Khartularis (Chartoularios) (113th agape). All of them obviously made significant efforts in favor of the monastery. The first agape was written in the highest order—"as for Synkellos." Though, as we have mentioned, the amount of the donation is not specified in the agape, the value of these figures must have been enormous. In addition to the listed agapes, agapes were also prescribed for figures of the first half of the 11th century, as well as for the laymen and clergy of the 1050–1070s before 1074 (nos 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 20, 27, 34, 35, 37, 38, 40, 48, 49, 50, 74, 87, 89, 90, 91, 99, 100, 101,

2 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos] (Tbilisi, 1998), pp. 60–61, 134. On this first and most important agape, see the contribution of Tinatin Chronz in his volume, pp. 141–143.

3 For the descriptions of the *agapes* we mainly rely on the above-mentioned work of Elene Metreveli and Niko Berdzenishvili, *Atonis iverta monastris agapebi* [The agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos] (Tbilisi, 2007).

4 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 75–76, 134, 138, 140, 154, 157.

107, 108, 110, 116, 117).⁵ In the above-mentioned agapes, the work of some figures is esteemed more highly: “as for Synkellos.” Thus, for example, the 13th agape is prescribed for Giorgi (George) the Great, with the order “as for Synkellos.” Giorgi (probably a representative of the Chordvanieli [Chorchaneli] family) was the third abbot of the monastery in 1019–1029.⁶ Despite his contributions to the monastery, the agape book says nothing about a specific donation. The same can be said about the agape made for the abbot of the monastery Euthymios the Athonite in 1005–1019, who is referred to as the ‘Builder,’ and the agape value is higher this time as well (71st agape).⁷ The same can be said about the agape (87th agape) of Giorgi the Athonite, who served in Iviron.⁸

In short, despite the vast wealth of the Chordvanieli (Chorchaneli) family and others, the *Book of Commemorations* does not provide specific information on the amount of donations from the time of the founding of the monastery in the 980s to the middle of the 11th century. Information about the number of donations in the agape book can be found only from the middle of the 11th century onward. However, not all agapes contain these kinds of details, and it is not uncommon for agapes to continue to provide general information. For example, the 87th agape, ordained for Giorgi (George) the Athonite in 1065–1066, states that the agape was ordained “for his books, which will remain in the church as a memorial to him forever.” The books left by Giorgi for the Athonite Monastery obviously had a high value. In general, in the 11th–12th centuries, the average price of a manuscript was 20 *drahkans* (*nomismata*), and the price of a book with a sumptuous cover and illuminations was as high as 80 gold coins.⁹ Interestingly, Theophanes the Presbyter, who worked on Mount Athos during the same period, copied books worth 1,500 *drahkans*.¹⁰ Consequently, the books written by Giorgi the Athonite obviously had a very high price, although no specific figure is named. We are dealing with a similar situation in the agape written for Giorgi (George) Chordvanieli (Chorchaneli) in the second half of the

5 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 76–77, 137–165.

6 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 137, 197–198.

7 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 154.

8 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 158.

9 Apolon Tabuashvili, *Pasebi peodaluri epoqis Sakartveloshi* [Prices in feudal Georgia] (Tbilisi, 2019), pp. 166–170.

10 Ivane Javakhishvili, *Qartuli damtserlobamtsodneoba anu paleografia* [Georgian paleography] (Tbilisi, 1949), p. 98.

11th century. This agape mentions the fact of donating a large treasure and precious fabrics to the monastery (50th agape). During the same period, a large treasure was donated by Arsen (Arsenios), formerly Parsman (110th agape).¹¹

It is true that we do not find a specific amount for the donation in the 61st agape, but its content clearly shows the economic prosperity of the Georgian monastery in the 60s and 70s of the 11th century. The agape must have been established after 1080 for George Oltisari (abbot of the monastery in 1065–1077) and his brother Michael. It is clear from the above agape that during the abbacy of George Oltisari the churches and estates seized over time were returned to Iviron, and that the wall of the monastery was erected during his reign.¹² From the 67th agape we learn that to build a wall (enclosure), the brothers of the monastery donated *drahkans*, though the precise quantity is unknown.¹³

4 Agapes with Concrete Details of Donations

Among the agapes in which the amount of a specific donation is indicated is one of the first agapes made in 1054–1056. Several agapes were made in connection with the Byzantine emperor's issuance of an annual subvention¹⁴ for the monastery and the exemption of the monastery estates from state taxes. The 27th and 99th agapes were ordained for this very benefaction of the Byzantine emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (r. 1042–1055). The 90th and 100th agapes were written for the Georgian king Bagrat IV (r. 1027–1072) and his mother Queen Mariam, for it was they who petitioned the emperor. The 15th agape deals with the same issue.¹⁵

According to the agape written for Queen Mariam, Constantine IX donated one pound of *solimni* annually to Iviron. One liter (approx. 324g) of gold in Byzantium of that era was equal to 72 *histamena nomismata*.¹⁶ Accordingly, the

11 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 148, 163.

12 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 151–152.

13 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 153, 225.

14 On these annual subventions paid to monasteries, better termed 'annuity endowments' see the contribution of Zachary Chitwood in this volume.

15 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 137–138, 140, 159–161.

16 Erich Schilbach, "Litra," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan et al., 3 vols (Oxford, 1991): 2:1238.

emperor allocated the same amount for the monastery. In addition to these 72 coins, if we also take into account the fact of tax exemption of the monastic estates, the emperor's donation amounted to a considerable sum.

As it is clear from the 133rd agape, in the 80s–90s of the 11th century the monastery no longer enjoyed tax exemption.¹⁷ Clearly, not even the one pound of gold appears to have still been permanently assigned to the monastery. We must assume that the monastery would have received aid from the Imperial Court by 1074, that is, at least until the time of the original compilation of the *Book of Commemorations*. For two decades, the monastery would receive a total of 1,440 *nomismata* in the form of *solimni*, and if we take into account the tax breaks of the monastery's estates, the donation of the imperial court from about 1054 to 1074 must be set at least at 2,000 *nomismata*.

During the same period, Sanano Kvelisdze donated one pound of gold coins to the monastery, which, as mentioned, amounted to 72 *nomismata* (20th agape). In the early 1060s, the monastery received 100 *drahkans* (*nomismata*) from Saba (Sabas) and his brother Ioane (John) (11th agape).¹⁸ In 1060–1064 the influential Georgian nobleman Liparit Baghvashi visited the monastery, who handed over 156 or 265 *drahkans* to the fraternity of the monastery (34th agape); the prominent Georgian military commanders in Byzantium—Grigol (Gregory) and Abaz Pakourianos (Bakurianis-dze)—donated 200 *drahkans* each to Iviron at the turn of the 60s and 70s in the 11th century (38th agape).¹⁹

Thus, from the mid-1050s to 1074, Iviron received in the form of donation approximately 2,800 *nomismata* (*drahkans*). Spread out over 20 years, the annual income from donations to the monastery stood at around 140 *nomismata*. In addition to this amount, the monastery received much larger donations from members of the Chordvaneli (Chorchaneli) house or other persons during the same period, though, as we have seen, no specific value of the property transferred in the *Book of Commemorations* was recorded.

It should be noted here that from 1060s onward we encounter a new designation for an agape: “As founders.”²⁰ The type of agape accorded the above-mentioned donors was similarly very high. Clearly, not all agapes were of this

17 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 170.

18 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 137–138.

19 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 142–144.

20 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 63.

highest order, and it depended on the amount of the donation. The original edition of the *Book of Commemorations*, as noted, included the agapes set before 1074 (the redaction by Michael Dayalisoneli).²¹ Even so, the institution of new agapes continued afterward. From the end of the 70s of the 11th century until the 40s of the 12th century, many agapes were established. The 166th agape states that Ioane Taplaisze (ca. 1120–1140) included the agapes instituted in the stated period into the *Book of Commemorations* (ca. 1120–1140).²²

In the dozens of agapes from late 1070s to the 40s of 12th century, we find important information about the amount of donations of different individuals. Of these, special attention should be paid to the 56th agape, which was assigned to Giorgi (George) Magistros. The agape is recorded later, in the years 1120–1140,²³ however, the text of the agape itself shows that its assignment took place in the period of Nicholas Protosynkellos—“... I, the abbot of the monastery, Protosynkellos, and the brothers of all the monasteries, together, expressed our gratitude and longing for George Magistros for the great charity he has given to the monastery.”²⁴ Since Nikola Protosynkellos was the abbot of Iviron in 1080–1081,²⁵ the agape must be dated to these years. According to the agape, Giorgi, following the provisions of his will, was buried on 27 July in Iviron Monastery on Mount Athos. Two more (the 73rd and 96th) agapes are assigned to Giorgi Magistros. In all three agapes he is referred to as the “founder.” To the monastery, he donated money, treasures, precious fabrics, pottery, saddles, etc. According to the monks, the total donation of Giorgi Magistros equalled 40 pounds of treasure.²⁶

As was mentioned above, in the *Book of Commemorations* of Iviron, treasure consisted only of gold coins. Since one pound of gold was equal to 72 *hista-mena nomismata*, the donation made by Giorgi Magistros was equivalent to 2880 *nomismata* (*drahkans*). Giorgi, a representative of the Georgian kingdom in Byzantium, was to receive his honorary title of *magistros* in the 50s of the

21 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 57–64.

22 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 191.

23 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 221–222.

24 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 149–150.

25 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 117–118.

26 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 149–150, 154, 160.

11th century, which he held this title until his death (1080/1).²⁷ Much of Giorgi's donation was to be paid in the late 1070s, and as the agape text shows, with some property being transferred to the monastery even after his death. It is interesting to note that in the second half of the 11th century, the annual salary of a *magistros* in the Byzantine Empire—one of the most important officials—was 16 pounds of gold,²⁸ or 1152 *nomismata*. Given the above data, the charity made by Giorgi Magistros looks quite impressive.

It has already been mentioned above that Grigol and Abaz Pakourianos (Bakurianis-dze) in Byzantium each donated 200 *drahkans* to Iviron Monastery on Athos at the turn of the 60s and 70s of the 11th century (38th agape). In addition to this donation, in the late 1070s and early 1080s, Abaz Pakourianos (Bakurianis-dze) donated 500 *drahkan stamenon equstavi* to the monastery. And, after his death (†1084), the monastery received seven horses and mules, as well as a precious garment (11th agape).²⁹

The 500 *drahkan stamenon equstavi* donated by Abaz Pakourianos (Bakurianis-dze) is known to be the devalued *histamenon nomisma* of Romanos IV Diogenes (r. 1068–1071), which depicts on the obverse Jesus Christ, Romanos IV, and Eudokia, and on the reverse Eudokia's sons Michael, Andronikos, and Constantine. The Georgian designation *equstavi* (*six heads*) is derived from the image of the coin. The gold content of the coin was 70%.³⁰ Accordingly, these 500 coins were equivalent to 400 *histamena nomismata*. In addition to the aforementioned amount, Abaz Pakourianos (Bakurianis-dze) donated seven horses, mules as well as precious clothes to the monastery. According to the prices of that time, the minimum price of a medium-quality horse and mule was 15–20 *drahkans* (*nomismata*). Expensive clothes had a similar price.³¹ Thus, in the late 70s and early 80s of the 11th century, Abaz Pakourianos (Bakurianis-dze) visited Iviron, and, taking into consideration the value of money and various goods, donated approximately 550 *nomismata*.

27 Leri Tavadze, *Magistrosi saqartveloshi da qartveli magistrosebi bizantiis imperiashi* [Magistros in Georgia and the Georgian Magistroi in Byzantium] (Tbilisi, 2016), pp. 167–170.

28 Paul Lemerle, “‘Roga’ et rente d’État aux xe–xle siècles,” *REB* 25 (1967), 94; Tavadze, *Magistrosi saqartveloshi da qartveli magistrosebi bizantiis imperiashi* [Magistros in Georgia and the Georgian Magistroi in Byzantium], pp. 167–170.

29 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 163–164.

30 Cecile Morrisson, “Byzantine Money: Its Production and Circulation,” in *The Economic History of Byzantium: From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, (DOS) 39, 3 vols (Washington, 2002), 3:931.

31 Apolon Tabuashvili, *Pasebi peodaluri epoqis Sakartveloshi* [Prices in Feudal Georgia], pp. 78–84, 101–103.

The Byzantine empress, the daughter of the Georgian king Bagrat IV, Mary (born Martha), raised significant funds for Iviron. Accordingly, the 133rd agape was ordained for her and her son Constantine Porphyrogenitos. In addition to having previously championed the affairs of the monastery with her husbands, the emperors Michael VII Dukas (r. 1071–1078) and Nicephoros III Botaneiates (r. 1078–1081), in 1081–1094 she remitted the accumulated debt of Iviron's estates to the fisc by paying five pounds of gold. In addition, six pounds of gold were handed over to the monastery; Mary's degree of agape was of the highest order.³² In a word, Mary donated 11 pounds of gold to the monastery, which was the equivalent of 792 *nomismata*.

The monastery also received substantial aid from Sumbat Kouropalates and his wife Kale, who later became the nun Mariam (Maria).³³ As can be seen from the contents of the agapes nos 60, 103, 120, and 121, a high-ranking Georgian official in Byzantium, Sumbat Kouropalates, and his wife donated treasure to the monastery—one pound of *stamenon* (72 *histamena nomismata*), as well as 500 *drahkan stamenon*. After Sumbat's death, his wife, Mariam (Maria), donated another 1 pound of *drahkan stamenon* (72 *histamena nomismata*), seven pounds of *qinati*, and various jewels to the monastery, including a large silver tray.³⁴ From the 103rd agape we learn that the price of the aforementioned tray was 200 *drahkans (nomismata)*.³⁵ Sumbat Kouropalates died in 1093, so the agape was written in that period.

Based on the above data, in addition to the fees for other valuables, Sumbat Kouropalates and his wife donated up to 850 *nomismata* and seven pounds of *qinati* to Iviron. As for *qinati/qyanati*, it likely is one of the early Georgian designations for the *hyperpyron*, minted by Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081–1118) after the coin reform of 1092.³⁶ Accordingly, seven pounds of *qinati* equalled 504 high-quality, *hyperpyra* (87%) coins.³⁷

32 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 170.

33 On the benefactions of this couple to Iviron, see now Zachary Chitwood, "The Testament of the Nun Maria (Kale): Commemorative Dining, *memoria* and Servitude in Byzantium at the Time of the First Crusade," *Endowment Studies* 7/2 (2023), 97–126; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1163/24685968-20230001>.

34 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 166.

35 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 161.

36 Niko Berdzenishvili, *Atonis iverta monastris agapebi* [The agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 352.

37 Morrisson, "Byzantine Money," 3:924.

From the 121st agape, it is clear that, according to the will of Sumbat, after his death Mariam became a nun and her property was given to the monastery.³⁸ And, according to the 60th agape, after Mariam's death, the village of Rodolivi (Rhadolibos) in her possession passed into the ownership of the monastery.³⁹ Thus, in addition to the donation of 1,350 gold coins, the village of Rodolivi (Rhadolibos)⁴⁰ and other jewels, Sumbat Kurapalat and his wife donated property worth more than 2000 *nomismata* in favor of the monastery in the last quarter of the 11th century and the beginning of the 12th century. Accordingly, in the agape they too are referred to as 'founders.'

According to the data based on agapes, from late 1170s to the early 12th century, when Georgia was in a difficult economic situation due to the invasions of the Seljuk Turks, Iviron received donations of 6,200 *nomismata* made by Georgians active in Byzantium—George Magistros, Abaz Pakourianos (Bakurianisdze), Maria (born Martha), Sumbat Kouropalates as well as his wife Mariam. In addition to large donations, we find dozens of other, relatively small donations in the agapes dating from the late 1070s to the early 1140s. At this point we will briefly touch upon the donations where the amount can be determined. In this case, we provide only the agape numbers in ascending order:

2. Bishop Leon (Leo) forgave the monastery for borrowing 600 *modioi* of wheat;
3. The donation belongs to Shavi Arsen, who donated 2 crosses valued at 120 *dimitrats* (25 agapes were also ordered for Shavi Arsen, but in this case the amount of the donation is no longer indicated);
4. Arsen Kivchak—20 *drahkans*;
26. Basil Eparchos—three pounds *Protokharat*;
30. Ioane (John) and Michael, brothers from Kakheti (eastern part of Georgia)—100 *drahkan stamenon*, one pound *drahkan botaneiates*;
31. Ibnian—two horses;
32. Petre (Peter) Khutsesi—eight books;
41. Monk Klim (Clement)—two horses with a bridle, a carved icon and one liter "*qinati*";

38 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 167; Alice-Mary Talbot, "Une riche veuve de la fin du XI^e siècle. Le testament de Kalè Pakourianè," in *Impératrices, princesses, aristocrates et saintes souveraines: de l'Orient chrétien et musulman au Moyen âge et au début des Temps modernes*, ed. Élisabeth Malamut (Aix-en-Provence, 2014), pp. 201–216.

39 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 151, 239.

40 Jacques Lefort, "Radolibos: Population et paysage," in *Société rurale et histoire du paysage à Byzance*, ed. idem (Paris, 2006), pp. 161–200.

42. Ioane (John) Sisikoneli and his brothers, Gabriel and George—240 *drahkan stamenon alexat*;
43. Ioane (John) Buqaisdze—24 *drahkan dukad-mikhailat*, 250 *tartarons*, and 144 *drahkan alexat stamenon* (he also built a tower and was actively engaged in agricultural matters);
51. Theodore the Syrian—100 *drahkan hromanat*;
52. Svimon (Symeon) Khutses (Greek)—100 *drahkans*;
53. Theodore—one pound of gold and two horses;
55. Liparit, son of Ivane (John)—two good horses;
58. David Kochikai and Zakaria—200 *drahkan aleksat*;
59. David Khutsesi—200 *drahkan dimitrat*;
62. Dzneli—100 *drahkans*;
63. Svimon (Symeon) the Georgian notary—horses, bulls and various items;
64. Theophilachte the tailor—42 *protokharagi*;
65. Iris Furtukhaladkopili, sister of Borana—45 *perpera* and 21 *stamenon* (“new *litrai*”);
66. Ioane (John) Kopana—100 *drahkan protocharat*;
70. Basil—two mills, two horses, and 20 *drahkans*;
72. Christopher, formerly Lalako—one pound of gold, one robe, one mule;
75. Arsen Tevdorakni—200 *drahkan dimitrat*;
76. Svimioni (Symeon), his brother Giorgi and mother Stratigo—three cows with calves, each costing 3 *drahkan*, “fresh *litrai*,” or *perpera*;
77. George Dedopleuri and his father John—four pounds *drahkan*;
78. Gerasime (Gerasmios)—100 *drahkan protokharagi* and treasures: one pound *stamenon*;
79. Theodore—two pounds of *protokharagi* of Alexios;
81. John, formerly Lulu—a “better” horse and a good garment;
82. Gabriel—10 *perpera*;
84. Theophanes—*mamasakhlisi* (local official) of Petritsoni Monastery—two liters of *stamenon* and 100 “*drahkans*”;
86. Raisel and Varaz—100 “new *drahkans*” or *perpera*;
92. Kvirike (Kyriakos) Kakhi—property worth three pounds of treasure;
93. Leonti (Leontios) and Nicola (Nicholas) the Greeks—60 *drahkan perperat*;
102. Milara and her son Kobuli—two mules, one horse, 50 *drahkans*;
106. Michael Abrahamis-dze—300 *drahkan stamenon*;
112. Fantine Basiltmindeli—200 *drahkans*, a wheat field of 500 *modioi*, ten *modioi* of vineyards, church items, etc.;
114. Ophodopai—246 *drahkans*;
115. Proidros (Proedros) Lulu—one mule, valued at 17 *perpera*, one good horse, one silver cup (weighing 60 *exagge*, or about 280 g) and a robe;

118. David the Merchant—100 *drahkans* and *Bardzim-Peshkhumi* (liturgical items: *Bardzim*—a silver, high-legged vessel for the preparation of the Holy Sacrament, *Peshkhumi*—for placing the Eucharist on a plate).
119. Iakob (Jacob), formerly Iaḡut—100 *drakan stavrovotanati*;
123. Giorgi (George) Mchedela the Georgian—40 *protokharagi*;
125. George—*stavras* (clothes woven with several threads), valued at 100 *drahkan protokharagi*;
126. Kvirike (Kyriakos), Dimitri (Demetrios), Bartholomew—four pounds *drahkan*;
134. Michael Laklaki and Giorgi (George) Focholika—120 “old *drahkans*”;
136. Nikola (Nicholas) Khutsesi (priest)—300 *drahkan dimitrat*;
137. Arsen the monk—32 *drahkans*;
138. Ioane (John) Kalakala and Ioane (John) Taplaisdze—120 “old *drahkans*” and 30 *qyanat-protokharagi*.⁴¹

Of the various donations listed above, we will first touch upon the total number of *drahkans*, or *nomismata*, whose number reaches 1608. Among the donations are 250 *tartarons*, or *tetarterons*, whose average weight was 4 g. Accordingly, 250 *tartarons* equalled approximately 200 *histamena nomismata*. Among the donations, we also find a hoard of pounds of gold. In some cases, gold coins of lower value are listed. Donations without such a designation were probably of high-quality gold. The total amount of such treasure was 16 pounds, which was equal to 1152 *drahkans*. Thus, in the period under consideration, Iviron received 2960 *nomismata*.

The sum of other donations is as follows: the monastery received 880 *perpera/drahkan perpera/qinati/qyanat-protokharagi/drahkan protokharati* in the form of coins or pounds; 880 *drahkan dimitrat*; 584 *drahkan aleksat*; 100 *drahkan hromanat*; 100 *drahkan stavrovotanat*; one pound *drahkan botaniates*; and 24 *dukat mikhailat*. *Perpera*, the same as *drahkan perpera*, was called a *hyperpyron*. The *hyperpyron* signified *qinati/qyaniti*, as well as *protokharagi/protokharati*. It seems that after the coin reform of Alexios I Komnenos in 1092, the term *hyperpyron* was used to refer to the above-mentioned terms, which from the middle of the 12th century in Georgia was called only *perpera*.

As for the 880 *drahkan dimitrat* and the 584 *drahkan alexat*, these must be coins of Alexios I Komnenos before the 1092 coin reform. In the pre-reform period, from 1081 to 1092, the gold content of coins dropped drastically, to

41 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 135–172.

10.6–12%.⁴² Accordingly, more than 1450 coins of lower value equalled approximately 200 *hyperpyra*. We have to review separately 100 *drahkan hromanat*, or coins of Romanos IV Diogenes (70%), 100 *drahkan stavrovotanat*/one pound (72 *nomismata*) *drahkan botanlates*, or coins of Nikephoros III Botaniates (35.8%) and 24 coins of *drahkan dukat mikhailat*, or Michael VII Doukas (58.1%).⁴³ Their total value is approximately 150–160 *hyperpyra*. Thus, according to the data of the listed agapes, from the late 1070s to the 1140s the monastery received 2960 *nomismata* and 1250 *hyperpyra*.

As for the various donations, such as jewels, cattle and real estate received in the aforementioned period, considering their prices at the time, their total value is as follows. In the *Book of Commemorations* values can be calculated for the following donations: precious garments worth 100 *drahkans*; three cows, together with calves, priced at nine *perpera*; the price of 13 horses, together with two bridles, was at least 260 *perpera*, and the price of six mules and donkey—90 *perpera*; 600 *modioi* (*modios* = 12.8kg), valued at, according to the average price of wheat was 50 *nomismata* (the average price of a *modios* of wheat in the Byzantine Empire was 1/12 *nomisma*);⁴⁴ 500 *modioi* of wheat fields priced at 200 *nomismata* (in the 11th century a field producing one *modios* in Byzantium cost at least 0.3–0.5 *nomisma*).⁴⁵ The price of ten vineyards stood at 50–60 *hyperpyra*.⁴⁶ Eight books were priced at 160 *nomismata*. The total cost of the donation, along with the oxen, silverware, and various garments, was at least 1000 *hyperpyra*.

To summarize, the total amount of donations to Iviron received from the late 70s of the 11th century for about 60–65 years stood at approximately 9200 *nomismata* and more than 2250 *hyperpyra*, thus a total of 11,450 high-value gold coins, which equalled 185 gold coins annually.

It should also be noted that in addition to the listed donations, in 1085–1104 Nikon Panigos and his parents—Constanti (Constantine) and Anna—donated boats/ships (with a capacity of 400 *modioi*) to the monastery (8th agape). And the amount of the donation of Constantine Protopatar Manglavit (68th agape) and John Enchakopili (85th agape), as well as Anastasia and her mother Maria

42 Morrisson, "Byzantine Money," 3:931; Cecile Morrisson and Jean-Claude Cheynet, "Prices and Wages in the Byzantine World," in *The Economic History of Byzantium: From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, (DOS) 39, 3 vols (Washington, 2002), 2:816.

43 Morrisson, "Byzantine Money," 3:931.

44 Morrisson and Cheynet, "Prices and Wages in the Byzantine World," 2:823.

45 Morrisson and Cheynet, "Prices and Wages in the Byzantine World," 2:818.

46 Morrisson and Cheynet, "Prices and Wages in the Byzantine World," 2:832.

(94th agape) is not given.⁴⁷ We do not find the amount of the donation in the 127th Agapi, which was decreed with great honor for the Georgian king George II (r. 1072–1089).⁴⁸ And, from the 129th Agape, which was prescribed for John Sebastos and his wife Mariam (Maria), we learn that at the end of the 11th century or the beginning of the 12th *prastinni* (monastery estates) became a source of dispute. Eventually, the lands were again handed over to Iviron.⁴⁹

The donations from the 1140s to the 1170s from the *Book of Commemorations* of Iviron should be dealt with separately. In the aforementioned period of 25–30 years, we encounter the following donations:

- 6th agape: Theodore the Ikonomos (Gr. *oikonomos*, the person charged with economic affairs of the monastery)—one good horse, donated by Kelin;
- 7th agape: mother Apeneli—20 *dukats*;
- 22nd agape: Michael Mamakopili (a former abbot)—32 *perpera*, two books (including the metal-covered Gospel);
- 46th agape: Esaia (Isaiah) Asuri—*drahkans* (to bring in water);
- 44nd agape: Monk Giorgi (George) Jubieli—50 *drahkan dukat-mikhailat*;
- 45th: Theodosios—100 *perperat*;
- 47th agape: Ioane (John) Ruskopili—5 books;
- 54th agape: Arishiani—150 *drahkans* (to provide a roof for the church);
- 57th agape: Athanasios—*drahkan perpera* (amount not specified);
- 97th: Giorgi (George) Koshkina—20 *drahkan dokat-mikhailat*;
- 104th agape: Basil, formerly Vache—320 *drahkan perpera*;
- 109th: Baai Manoel—20 *perpera*;
- 122nd agape: David Asuri—40 *drahkan perperat*;
- 124th agape: Gerasime (Gerasimos) and Ioane (John) Khutsi—20 *drahkan perpera*;
- 128th agape: Ioane (John) Popkhaisdze—120 *drahkan perperat*, 100 *triankefali* and two horses;
- 135th + 139th agape: Giorgi Tsikhisjvareli—carried out economic activities worth 50 *perperat* (bought land, planted a field and handed it over to the monastery, together with one mule);

47 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 136, 153, 157, 159.

48 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 168.

49 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 169.

- 140th agape: Moses the Georgian—three good horses and a quarter of his property.⁵⁰
- The 141th/9th agape: Nikola (Nicholas) Petritsoneli—70 *perperat*, 52 *dukats*, 50 *triakefali*, two mules with bridles;
- 143rd+143rda/21st agape: Ioane (John) son of Kojikhi—120 *drahkans* and one mule;

The amount of the donation of Ephrosyne (Eurphrosyne) Protosebastos and Mikhail (Michael) Protosebastos does not appear in the 142nd agape.⁵¹ Around the same time, Leon (Leo) Epistatus left his entire estate to the monastery, although the amount of the estate is not given (98th agape).⁵²

The amount of donations was about 800 *hyperpyra* (including up to 400 *hyperpyra* from different denominations) and 150 *triancephalus/triacephalus*. The latter was a *hyperpyron* struck by John II Komnenos (r. 1118–1143). Accordingly, the amount of *hyperpyra* donated in this period equalled 950.

In addition to the above-given amount, we find the fact of donating 270 *drahkans*. In order to “bring in water,” an unspecified amount of *drahkans* was donated, the minimum number of which should be considered 10 *drahkans*. Accordingly, in 1145–1170, the monastery on average received 280 *drahkans*, which was the equivalent of approximately 335 *hyperpyra*.

During the same period, the monastery received donations of 52 *dukats* and 70 *drahkan dukat-mikhailat/dokat-mikhalat*. The *dukat* referred to the gold coins (75 %),⁵³ struck by Constantine X Doukas (r. 1059–1067), which was approximately equivalent to 50 *hyperpyra*. And the *drahkan-dukat-mikhailat*, as mentioned above, were coins issued by Michael VII Doukas (58.1%). 70 *drahkan-dukat-mikhailat* corresponded nearly to 45 *hyperpyra*.

As for the facts of donating cattle and various property (the value of which is not shown in the agapes), their total amount looks like this: six horses; three mules, with two bridles; seven books, including one metal-covered Gospel; a built cell and a quarter of the property of Moses the Georgian. The price of six horses should be approximately 120 *hyperpyra*; three mules (with two harnesses)—approximately 50 *hyperpyra*; the average price of seven books, including one “Coining Gospel”—160 *hyperpyra*; 10 *hyperpyra* for the cost of

50 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 135–173.

51 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 173.

52 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 160.

53 Japaridze, *Oqros monetis*, p. 91.

building the cell; in addition, as just mentioned, the monastery received a quarter of the property of Moses the Georgian. The total value of the donated property stood at approximately 350–400 *hyperpyra*.

Thus, in 25–30 years, approximately from the 1140s to the 1170s, Iviron received up to 1800 *hyperpyra* as a donation. If we divide into years the total sum of donations during the aforementioned period, in a year the monastery received donations of approximately 65 *hyperpyra*, which is two and a half times less, more or less, than the rate of donations in the previous period.

Other economic assets of the monastery seem to have declined in parallel with the decrease in donations in this period. As a result, the economic health of the monastery deteriorated. As it is clear from the 165th and 167th agapes, when Father Paul was elected abbot of the monastery in March 1170, the economic situation of the monastery was deplorable.⁵⁴ “Pavle [Paul] was entrusted with the monastery, which was in a very bad condition, had a state debt of five hundred *drahkans*, for which the monastery’s estates from the villages of Rodoili to Nikoltsminda were seized.” According to the agape, bread was expensive in Byzantium at that time, with one *modios* costing one *drahkan* (*nomisma*).⁵⁵

The abbot traveled to Constantinople to recover the confiscated monastic estates. With great difficulty, Father Paul, on the basis of numerous requests, managed to bring the monastery out of debt, after which he undertook great construction and agricultural projects: he repaired and rebuilt the great tower, the sanctuary, the Church of the Assumption, and so on. He also erected the wall around the monastery, built the cells, bought the monastery of Kaniska for a great price, and adorned the altar of the great church with “jewels and gold.” Paul also paid great attention to the domain of the monastery: he repaired the church of Bolbol (Bolbos) in Macedonia, built the church of St Theodore as well as two mills, a large stable of Bisons and a house for rent, the monastery of Kalamokop near Thessaloniki, as well as the church of Melindza, St George church in Dobriok and others.⁵⁶

All this reconstruction work was carried out during the leadership of Father Paul in 1170–1184. The economic prosperity of Iviron was largely due to generous donations, in particular from representatives of a Georgian noble house: Grigol and Ioane (John) Kobulis-dze, who were two of the greatest benefactors during

54 On Paul of Iviron and his remarkable hegoumenate, see the study of Kostis Smyrlis in this volume.

55 In this period the price was roughly twelve times the historical average.

56 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 93–99, 188–191.

Paul's time. We learn from the 39th/145th agape that at the turn of the 70s and 80s of the 12th century, the brothers donated 900 *perpera* to the monastery. They would donate more later. In total, the contribution of the Kobulis-dze exceeded 1800 *drahkans*. The money was spent on various construction activities on Mount Athos and on the monastic estates. The sons of the great benefactors from the Kobulis-dze family are referred to "as founders."⁵⁷

We learn from the agape decreed for the Kobulis-dze that Joseph, John, and Basil were sent east from Mount Athos, that is, to Georgia, to ask for help. Not only the members of the aforementioned family, but also Queen Tamar (r. 1178–1210) and various dignitaries responded to them. Among them was Nikoloz (Nicholas) Gulaberidze, who helped Father Paul enormously; the 144th/105th agape was prescribed for this high clergyman close to Tamar. In the agape he is mentioned as having been raised by Svimeon (Symeon) Chkondideli. Nikoloz (Nicholas) Gulaberidze held the position of Katholikos in the 50–70s of the 12th century. After resigning from the position, he arrived on Mount Athos,⁵⁸ where he rebuilt the Church of the Archangels "with all its painting, embroidering, and sculpture." Also, he repaired the reservoir and raised the tower in height. He donated 24 *perpera* to the monastery. In addition, he handed over to the monastery a donkey bought for 15 *perpera* and oxen (two bulls) bought for seven *perpera*.⁵⁹

Queen Tamar donated 20 *dukats* and "two large *stavrans*, which are better than twenty *drahkans*" to the monastery. Nikoloz (Nicholas) Gulaberidze also donated 20 *perpera* (the 153rd/95th agape) for irrigation, repair of the mill, and a vegetable garden.⁶⁰ At the turn of the 70s and 80s of the 12th century, a large amount of property was donated to the monastery by Okropir Kharazi. He handed over to the monastery 600 *stamenom* (*histamena nomismata*), 1000 *perpera* and olive trees (the 146th/132nd agape).⁶¹

Attention should also be given to the 155th agape, which was decreed in 1177–1183 to the great official of the Georgian state, Ioane (John) Mtsignobartukhutsesi. Ioane made a large donation—4 pounds of *perpera* (288 *hyper-*

57 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 144, 174–175.

58 Niko Berdzenishvili, *Atonis iverta monastris agapebi* [The agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 168–175.

59 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 162, 174.

60 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 160, 178.

61 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 170, 175–176.

pera) and one golden brocade (“brocade made of gold”)—to the monastery of St John the Baptist.⁶² If we calculate the total amount of the above donations in *hyperpyra*, the total number is approximately 4300. And if we take into account the construction of the church and various agricultural buildings built by Nikoloz Gulaberidze, as well as the donations of olive trees, golden brocades etc., the total amount of the contributions should have been at least 6000 *hyperpyra*.

In addition to the listed donations, in 1170–1184, other individuals raised funds for Iviron:

- 5th agape: Svimeon (Symeon) Kherkeli—three books;
- 33nd agape: Mikael (Michael), the priest and kanonarxos (κανονάρχος)—40 *perpera*, a house and a vineyard (the 152nd agape was also reserved for Mikael);
- 149th agape: Abulasan Kutateli—40 *perpera*;
- 14th/147th agape: Ioane (John) Bantsua—15 *perpera*, 90 olive trees;
- 69th agape: Meleti (Meletios)—20 *perpera*;
- 156th agape: Pavle (Paul) Kutateli—40 *drahkan perpera*;
- 151st/23rd agape: Yanick—40 *perpera*;
- 154th/80th agape: Giorgi (George) the Georgian—26 *perpera*;
- 159th agape: Anasughli and her son Yaghi—100 *drahkan botanoti*;
- 148th/28th agape: Arsen son of Mardezi, Tbileli Khanbashuri (treasurer)⁶³—38 *perpera*;
- 150th/88th agape: Vardan son of Constant (Constantine), wife Mariam (Maria), son Giorgi (George)—71 *perpera*, one *stavra* and three carpets;
- 160th agape: Okropir Abulasani and his wife—60 *perpera*;
- 161th agape: Tevdore (Theodore) Chilakisdze and his mother Khareba—80 *perpera*.⁶⁴

The 157th agape was decreed for Ivan (John) Skhaltgatsevi. The agape was quite honorable, indicating significant charity, though the amount is not mentioned.⁶⁵ The 36th agape should have been issued at the same time. It is unfinished and neither the donation nor the subject for whom the agape was writ-

62 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 179–182, 259–262.

63 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 263–264.

64 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 135–184.

65 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 182.

ten was specified.⁶⁶ The amount of *hyperpyra* donated from the aforementioned agapes equaled 470. In addition, we find a donation of 100 *drahkans botanos/botaneiates*, which was approximately 40 *hyperpyra*. In addition, in the same series of the agapes we find donations of three books, 90 olives, one “brocade” (a precious garment) and three draw-sheets, a house and a vineyard. Their approximate value is as follows: three books were priced at nearly 60 *hyperpyra*; the average price of 90 olive trees equalled 25–30 *hyperpyra* (in the first decades of the 13th century, the value of one olive tree was about 1/3–1/4 *hyperpyra*),⁶⁷ i.e. the above donation with a “brocade,” “rug,” house and vineyard presumably stood at 200 *hyperpyra*.

Thus, the amount of money and various property donated and mentioned in the agapes was approximately 700 *hyperpyra*. In addition to large donations, the monastery received a total of more than 6700 *hyperpyra* in 1170–1184. The average annual donation during this period was up to 450 *hyperpyra*. As we can see, the donations to Iviron in 1170–1184 significantly exceeded what was seen in the data of the previous period, which led to the economic vitality of the monastery.

The 158th agape also contains important information about the economic prosperity of the monastery, stating that during the abdication of Father Paul and the election of Giorgi (George) “Didi Ikonomosi” (that is the “great” administrator of the monastery’s economic affairs or *oikonomos*) (1184), the churches looked flawless, with “1,500 *modioi* of wheat, and a cellar full of flour, a wine cellar, which was a long-lived residence, 1,500 measures of oil (a *metron* of oil held 9.1 liters) ... and hemp, resin ... hammer-forged iron(...)” 40 *perpera*, 1000 *tri kefali*, and another 760 gold coins were kept in the *sadoshiaro* or treasury. At their disposal were boats with capacities of 1000, 500, and 200 *modioi* (μοδοῖς), “complete with all outfitting and equipment.”⁶⁸

Thus, in the 70–80s of the 12th century, Iviron can be said to have reached the peak of its economic prosperity, but not for long. The political events of the 13th century proved greatly damaging to Iviron. On the one hand, the conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders and the establishment of the Latin Empire, and on the other hand, first the invasions of the Khwarazmian Turks, Jalal ad-Din (1225), and then the Mongols, significantly weakened the Kingdom of Georgia. It seems that large donations were no longer sent to Iviron. In any

66 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 143, 213.

67 Morrisson and Cheynet, “Prices and Wages in the Byzantine World,” 2:837.

68 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 182–183.

case, agapes were no longer written. The economic situation of the monastery was gradually deteriorating. As a result, from the end of the 13th century, Iviron was no longer governed by Georgians alone.

5 Donations of the 15th–16th Centuries

The situation had deteriorated even more by the 14th–15th centuries. This is seen in the 162nd, 163rd, and 164th agapes, which were written on two sheets of paper later added to the *Book of Commemorations*. The 164th agape was written for Bahadur, the son of Kvarkvare Jakeli Tsikhisjvareli, “the Atabag of the Georgians and the Spasalar of Samtskhe.” It states that the Greek priest-monk Svimon (Symeon) and the Georgian monk Akaki left Samtskhe-Saatabago for Mount Athos by the order of Kvarkvare. They found the monastery in a miserable condition: “And so we experienced our monastery, for most of it was in ruins, and the church was greatly distressed, the cells, and towers were mostly torn down, and were completely ruined.”

As a result of the donation of Kvarkvare Atabagi (r. 1451–1498), the difficult position of the monastery must have greatly improved, as at the turn of the 70s and 80s of the 15th century he donated a colossal sum⁶⁹ equivalent to 20,000 *Ottoman* (Ottoman), some with gold coins and some with silver coins, as well as two horses.⁷⁰

Each of the 20,000 *otamnuri* donated by Kvarkvare Atabagi equalled approximately 3.5 g of gold coins—altuns, which were minted in the Ottoman Empire in 1477/1478.⁷¹ The amount mentioned was transferred to the monastery in the form of *fluri* and *tetri*. *Fluri* was used in Georgia since the second half of the 14th century as a term denoting gold money instead of *drahkan* (the term *fluri* originated in Georgia to denote Italian currency—the florin and ducat), which was accompanied by a term denoting a specific variant (e.g. “Venetian”, i.e. Venetian ducat, *otmanuri fluri*, etc.). By contrast, *tetri* denoted silver coins. In sum, in the last quarter of the 15th century, the ruler of Samtskhe donated silver and

69 Ivane Javakhishvili, *Tkhzulebani tormet tomad* [Essays in twelve volumes], 3 (Tbilisi, 1982), pp. 406–407.

70 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The *Book of Agapes* of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 186–187.

71 Giorgi Dundua, *Samoneto mimoqcevis sakitkhisatvis xv saukunis saqartveloshi* [On the issue of coin circulation in 15th-century Georgia] (Tbilisi, 1964), pp. 90–91; Mery Antadze, *Saqartvelosa da turqetis urtiertoba xv–xviii saukuneebshi numizmatikuri masalebis mixedvit* [Relations Between Georgia and Turkey in the 15th–18th Centuries According to Numismatic Materials] (Tbilisi, 1982), pp. 24–26.

gold coins equaling some 20,000 Ottoman gold coins to Iviron. In the agape, the ruler of Samtskhe, obviously, is referred to as “The Founder.”

The donation of the princes of Samtskhe did not end there. As it turns out, from the 162nd agape, at the turn of the 15th–16th centuries, the ruler Mzechabuk (r. 1500–1515) sent Ambrose to Mount Athos. Ambrose made an even greater donation. This time the ruler of Samtskhe donated 25,500 *Otmanuri* to the monastery.⁷² Ambrose, sent by Mzechabuk Atabag, himself made a significant contribution: he erected the icon of the Virgin of Iberia in the church of Iviron, built the tower and other buildings.⁷³

If we put together the data of all three agapes, the princes of Samtskhe donated more than 45,000 gold coins to the monastery. Their donation must be considered unprecedented, which for some time ensured the economic prosperity of Iviron. As it is clear from the same agape, the princes of Samtskhe, in parallel with the donation to Iviron, also raised funds for the benefit of the Georgian monasteries in Jerusalem and Mount Sinai.

As it is known, in the second half of the 15th century, the Kingdom of Georgia disintegrated into several political units. Multiple invasions also occurred during this difficult time of political fragmentation. The precarious economic situation of the country is also evidenced by the fact that during the expedition of Uzun Hasan (r. 1453–1478), the ruler of Aq Qoyunlu, against Kartli and Samtskhe in 1477, it was difficult for King Bagrat and Kvarkvare Atabagi to come up with the 16,000 ducats requested by the invader.⁷⁴ Against this background, it is surprising that such generous donations were made by the princes of Samtskhe.

Of course, the decision of the princes of Samtskhe would have been greatly influenced by the deplorable condition of Iviron, although they probably had other motives as well. In particular, the princes had gained complete independence from the Bagratid kings and ruled Samtskhe-Saatabago as they wished. They sometimes referred to themselves as ‘kings.’ Kvarkvare Atabagi even minted coins in his own name, on which his name was placed in an inverted fashion.⁷⁵ Thus, the princes of Samtskhe tried their best to make themselves

72 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], pp. 184–185.

73 Elene Metreveli, *Atonis qartvelta monastris saagape tsigni* [The Book of Agapes of Iviron Monastery on Athos], p. 186.

74 Babilina Lominadze, “Saqartvelo xv s. meore nakhevarshi. Ertiani saqartvelos saboloo dashla samefo-samtavroebad [Georgia in the second half of 15th century. The final disintegration of a united Georgia into kingdoms and principalities],” in *Essays on the History of Georgia*, 3 (Tbilisi, 1979), pp. 742–743.

75 Tedo Dundua and Giorgi Dundua, *Catalogue of Georgian Numismatics. Part Three. Com-*

equal to the Georgian kings. Of course, the princes of Samtskhe used the aid sent to Iviron and other foreign centers in dire straits to legitimize their rule.

6 Conclusion

Finally, it should be noted that, according to the *Book of Commemorations*, from the 80s of the 10th century to the middle of the 50s of the 11th century, despite the abundant donations, no specific data are indicated in the agapes. This practice also applies in part to the agapes imposed in the following period, although we also find spurts of donations from 1054–1056. According to the *Book of Commemorations*, the minimum donation stood at 9–10 *hyperpyra*. The amount of donations according to the periods stated in the agapes is as follows:

- From 1054–1056 to 1074: 2800 *drahkans* (*histamena nomismata*);
- From 1075 to early 1140: up to 9200 *drahkans* (*histamena nomismata*) and more than 2250 *perper* (*hyperpyra*);
- From the mid-1140s to 1170: 1800 *hyperpyra*;
- 1170–1184: more than 6700 *hyperpyra*;
- The last quarter of the 15th century: 20,000 “*Otmanuri*” (each coin being about 3.5g of gold);
- Early 16th century: 25,500 “*otmanuri*” (each coin being about 3.5g of gold).

For about 130 years, from the mid-1050s to the mid-1180s, Iviron received a total of up to 23,000 high-quality gold coins (12,000 *histamena nomismata* and up to 11,000 *hyperpyra*) in the form of donations of money or various assets. According to the metric system, this amount exceeds 100 kilograms of high-grade gold. Given the fact that the amount of the benefaction is not recorded in dozens of agapes (including the agape of Ioane [John] Synkellos [formerly Tornike], the founder of the monastery), the actual donation from the 980s to the 1180s would have been at least twice the given amount. Most of the donations were made either from Georgia or related to Georgian actors in Byzantium. Against the background of the cessation of donations, the condition of the monastery deteriorated significantly in the 14th–15th centuries, although the unprecedented amount of money issued by the princes of Samtskhe in late 15th and early 16th centuries should have improved the condition of the

piled by Aleksandre Boshishvili, Apolon Tabuashvili, Leri Tavadze, Akaki Chikobava, Emil Avdaliani (Tbilisi, 2015), pp. 150, 298.

monastery. This amount would have been enough to pay off debts, to renovate churches, to buy liturgical objects, and to lead a normal monastic life for some time.

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PART 4

*Consolidating Wealth in a New World:
Mount Athos and the Ottomans*



Endowment, Rule, and Theology: Political Theology in the Endowment Deeds for Mount Athos of 15th- and 16th-century Wallachia

Mihai-D. Grigore

In the following contribution, I will argue for the close connection between the intensity and the theological elaborateness of the endowment deeds of the lords of Wallachia and their legitimacy to occupy the throne. The more legitimate their claim was, the fewer, shorter and more theologically ‘sparse’ their deeds of donation were for the Athos monasteries.

1 Structural Aspects: Legitimacy

In Wallachia, legitimacy meant dynastic blood ties to the Basarab dynasty and descent from Wallachia’s founder, Basarab I the Founder (r. ca. 1310–1352). It was of fundamental importance that the country’s ruler should be of voivodal ancestry, indeed, “of ruling bone” (*de os domnesc*), meaning patrilineal descent, since women were not allowed to rule, excepting of course the regency of their underage sons.¹ In contrast to the Roman Empire, for instance, where meritocracy, acclamation due to the legions, or the right of the stronger brought the laurel wreath, the Danube Principalities set, therefore, great store on the ruler’s legitimation by blood, in a manner similar to the Germanic *ius sanguinis*.²

As a matter of fact, patrilineal descent was laxly interpreted, as was the order of succession. Not only did younger male siblings contest the claim to the throne of the firstborn of the deceased ruler, but even illegitimate sons of the voivodes expressed pretensions to the throne and were, in certain circumstances, successful. As an interesting observation, among the most promi-

1 Alexandru I. Buzescu, *Domnia în Țările Române până la 1866* [The institution of princes in the Danubian Principalities until 1866] (Bucharest, 1945), p. 67; Ioan Platon, *Domnia în Țările Române până la instaurarea regimului fanariot (sec. XIV–XVII [sic])* [Princely rule in the Danubian Principalities up to the beginning of the Phanariot regime (14th–17th centuries)], PhD thesis, University of Bucharest (Bucharest, 1992), p. 66.

2 Karen Piepenbrink, *Konstantin der Große und seine Zeit*, 3rd ed. (Darmstadt, 2010), p. 62.

nent and meritorious lords of Wallachia or Moldavia were illegitimate sons, for instance, Stephen the Great of Moldavia (r. 1457–1504), with the longest rule in the premodern history of the Danubian Principalities, or Michael the Brave of Wallachia (r. 1593–1601), the first prince to unify under his sceptre, even briefly, the three Danube Principalities of Wallachia, Transylvania, and Moldavia.³

Thus, it seems that a blood relation to previous rulers, implicitly to Basarab I, was the sole essential precondition for rule. Lawful descent, which would have annulled the claim of bastard sons, was no criterium, which led to the fact that after Michael I (r. 1418–1420), the lawful son of Mircea the Elder (1386–1418), the whole line of the lords of Wallachia came down from illegitimate sons. To conclude, the broad and ancient practice of investing a ruler, no matter whom, if he had a blood tie to the dynasty, created in Wallachia broad acceptance and legitimacy for rulers, who after the 15th century were *stricto sensu* offspring of the unlawful sons of the 'lawful' voivodes of the 14th century, the legitimate descendants of Basarab I. This is why illegitimacy or contested legitimacy had to be defined by criteria supplemental to that of blood lineage, since this no longer sufficed to distinguish 'lawful' from 'unlawful' rule.

A seldom-used method to counteract this dissolution of *ius sanguinis* and the contention for the crown among multiple pretenders was the act of association: the ruler associated with his favored successor to the throne. This was, however, not new, being present in the political practice of the Roman Empire, the East Roman/Byzantine Empire, as well as the European dominions in the Medieval West or the Orthodox East. In contrast to the Medieval West, the Church did not impose rulers on the thrones of Wallachia or Moldavia, just as it had not done in the Byzantine Empire.

In terms of domestic politics, accession to the throne needed to be legitimized, due to elective procedures. Especially in difficult cases, when the pretender took the throne to the detriment of better-qualified descendants, the recognition through the 'country' (*țară*) offered an additional boost to his legitimacy. The sheer force of arms was mostly effective only for short periods; this is why there were associations to the ruler or elections by the estates (i.e. councillors, boyars, and the people of the capital city). From the outset, the lordship in Wallachia and Moldavia was a form of consensual rule.

The strength of the boyars' electoral power fluctuated throughout history. Over long periods, it dwindled to a mere formality of acclamation, only to rise again later as a political force. Not even during the Ottoman hegemony after the

3 See with many examples Constantin Rezachevici, *Cronologia Domnilor din Țara Românească și Moldova: a. 1324–1881*, 1 (Bucharest, 2001).

end of the 15th century could the sultans ignore the will of the aristocracy. This elective system endured in Wallachia into the 17th century. Cases are recorded of voivodes who were unable to take office for lack of recognition by the boyars of the council, which demonstrates that it was not always a mere formality.⁴

2 Practical Aspects: Endowment

In 1863, when all monastic estates in Moldavia and Wallachia were secularized under Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza (r. 1859–1866), the Athos monasteries, through their 109 *metochia* (μετόχια), controlled between 700,000 and 1,000,000 hectares of land in both countries. Their landholding in Wallachia corresponded to some 27 % of the arable land. In the transition from a monopolar context centered on imperial Byzantium to a multipolar Orthodox world, the Byzantine endowment tradition survived, from the 14th century onwards, not least due to the activity of the voivodes of Wallachia and Moldavia.⁵

In contrast to other Orthodox entities in the period between the 14th and 16th centuries, Wallachia was a young principality. Only after the battle of Posada (1330) between the Lord of Wallachia, Basarab I the Founder (r. ca. 1324–c. 1352), and the Hungarian King Charles Robert of Anjou (r. 1308–1342) did Wallachia gain recognition as an independent political entity on the south-eastern European stage. State formation in Wallachia and Moldavia cannot be separated by the foundation of monasteries through the lords of these countries.⁶

Through the establishment of a monastic infrastructure due to the practice of ktetorship, which meant endowments in the form of funding entire monastery complexes, the lords of Wallachia and Moldavia were able to strengthen the Orthodox identity of their territories against the claims of their Latin or—later—Islamic neighbours. The foundation of monasteries seems to

4 Platon, *Domnia*, pp. 70–71.

5 Constantin Coman, “Moldavians, Wallachians, and Romanians on Mount Athos,” *Mount Athos. Microcosm of the Christian East*, eds. Graham Speake and Kallistos Ware (Bern, 2012), pp. 127–128; Zachary Chitwood and Mihai-D. Grigore, “Byzantinisches Stiftungswesen ohne byzantinischen Staat: Die Entwicklung der byzantinisch-orthodoxen Stiftungskultur von 1204 bis zu den Fürsten der Walachei im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert,” eds. Ludger Körntgen et al., *Byzanz und seine europäischen Nachbarn. Politische Interdependenzen und kulturelle Missverständnisse*, (Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident) 17 (Mainz, 2020), pp. 95–96.

6 Mihai-D. Grigore, “Ein Glaubensgutachten für Neagoe Basarab,” in *Orthodoxa Confessio? Konfessionsbildung, Konfessionalisierung und ihre Folgen in der östlichen Christenheit Europas*, eds. Mihai-D. Grigore and Florian Kühner-Wielach (Göttingen, 2018), pp. 256–259.

have been a privilege and an instrument of the rulers in the early years of the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, which is confirmed by their protectionist policies.

Although the high boyars could in principle also endow and fund the own monasteries (*Privatkirchen-System*), the princes initially tried to prevent this tendency by making lavish gifts to the foundations of the nobility in order to increase their prestige and symbolic value. Afterwards, they bought them from their aristocratic founders and gave them to princely foundations as *metochia*. Their original aristocratic *ctetor* was thus erased from the foundation's *memoria*.⁷

Even though most of the endowment evidence of the lords of Wallachia is now on Mount Athos, the first recipients of Wallachian largesse outside the principalities were the lavras of the Paroria (borderlands), in the strip of land between Bulgaria and the Byzantine Empire. While hopes for the salvation of the soul through philanthropy were, of course, an important factor, it was also a matter of prestige and an opportunity for the voivodes to appear as patrons of Athos, the spiritual centre of the Orthodox world. Monastic settlements such as Panteleimon or Rossikon, Zographou, Xeropotamou, Hilandar, and Docheiariou enjoyed the generous support of the most Orthodox lords (ὀρθόδοξότατοι) of Wallachia, as they called themselves.

The Wallachian princes commemorated their commitment to Orthodoxy following the example of Byzantine rulers. The example of the *basileis* donating money and objects, but no land to monasteries, was followed by Wallachian princes until Vlad the Monk, at the end of the 15th century, who was the first to have endowed land to monasteries outside the country.⁸ Money annuities had, besides the symbolic function of the imperial tradition of donation, the pragmatic purpose of ensuring that the country's land would be not alienated and that, by endowing land, there would be no indirect donation of taxes from those lands, with an impoverishing effect for the financial well-being of the country.

Some of the lords of Wallachia had themselves depicted in frescoes of the churches in the imperial garb of Byzantium. Radu the Great (1495–1508), one of the most influential lords of Wallachia, appears on the wall of the cathedral of Curtea de Argeș wearing red shoes, which was a mark and the sole privilege of the Byzantine emperor. In the same way, Neagoe Basarab, another most gener-

7 Mihai-D. Grigore, "The Space of Power. State Consolidation by Means of Religious Policy in the Danube Principalities in the Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 116 (2017), 50.

8 On sovereign annuity endowments, see the contribution of Zachary Chitwood in this volume.

ous lord of Wallachia between 1512 and 1521, had himself portrayed in the same cathedral wearing the Byzantine imperial robe with the double eagle of the autocrats. This quasi-imperial consciousness of power reached its peak with the Moldavian prince Vasile Lupu (r. 1634–1643, with a brief interruption), who both summoned a pan-Orthodox synod and controlled the election of the ecumenical patriarchs. Few of the Wallachian princes⁹ thus formed the first link in the chain connecting the Byzantine political construct of the ‘New Rome’ with that of the ‘Third Rome,’ which the ideology of imperial Russia claimed to embody after the fall of Constantinople.

In the difficult final decades of the Byzantine Empire, the Wallachian rulers displayed an increasing tendency to take on the Byzantine emperors’ function as guardians and sponsors of the Orthodox Churches in southeastern Europe. One reason for this growing self-confidence was their military power, which in the 14th and 15th centuries had not yet been broken by the Ottomans. On the other hand, there was the economic power the Danube Principalities derived from the geopolitically advantageous position on the Danube and in control of the mouths of the Danube, exploited through a clever policy of trading privileges that the lords granted to Polish, Transylvanian, or Armenian merchants.¹⁰

Until the mid-14th century, to give here an example, Koutloumousiou was a rather modest, average monastery, neither rich nor influential; its spectacular wealth in the later centuries was due to its good connections with the lords of Wallachia. After seven trips to Wallachia, the abbot Chariton persuaded Prince Vladislav I Vlaicu (r. 1364–1377) to take on the role of founder, in order to compensate for the now diminishing power and commitment of the Serbian kingdom. Vladislav styled himself an *οἰκοκύριος* (master) and *κῆρυγος* (endower) of the monastery. The lord of Wallachia saw himself entitled in Chariton’s testament to confirm the successor of the abbot of Koutloumousiou after he was chosen by the brethren.¹¹ His successors accordingly treated the monastery

9 The claim of the Lords of Wallachia and Moldavia to re-enact and continue Byzantine rule, with its symbols and majesty, was a practice not as widespread as generally assumed in the historiography. It forms instead an historiographic construct. Iorga’s concept of *Byzance apres Byzance* is largely misunderstood, since it tries to show nothing more than the transition of endowments from Byzantine to Wallachian agents, and not necessarily the political theory and symbolism of the Danubian Lords as somehow the continuators of the Byzantine emperors. However, this study is not the place to elaborate on such a complex subject. For that matter, we have to content ourselves here with the assertion of this thesis, which shall be dealt with in detail in a future study.

10 Mihai-D. Grigore, *Neagoe Basarab—Princeps Christianus: The Semantics of Christianitas in Comparison with Erasmus, Luther, and Machiavelli (1513–1523)* (Oxford, 2021), pp. 50–54.

11 *Actes de Kutlumuş*, no. 30, ed. Paul Lemerle, (*ArchAth*) 2 (Paris, 1945), p. 121, lines 137–138; English translation: George Dennis, “Koutloumousiou: Testaments of Chariton for the Monastery of Christ Savior of Koutloumoussi on Mount Athos,” in *BFMD*, 4:1423 (B18).

from the same position of endowers and benefactors (κτήτορες), and Koutloumousiou was occasionally called “the Monastery of the Voivode,” which reflects its close bond to the lords of Wallachia.¹²

But Chariton, the abbot of the monastery at the time, not only enjoyed the support of the voivode but also that of the metropolitan of Wallachia. Appointed himself to the second metropolitan of Wallachia in 1372 as a result of his good relationship with Vladislav I Vlaicu, Chariton, who became in 1376 the *protos* of Mount Athos as well, exhorted his successor in the metropolitan chair to be a benefactor of Koutloumousiou and not to neglect the monastery. One can point to—as a general observation—an increase in donations by Wallachian rulers to Athonite monasteries precisely when the metropolitan chair of Wallachia was occupied by Greek hierarchs.

Thus, the political as well as the religious authority of the Danube princes expanded over all of Mount Athos. The boom of endowments and donations took place on the threshold between the 15th and 16th centuries at the time of the voivodes Radu the Great and Neagoe Basarab; both closely associated with the Greek metropolitan of Wallachia, Niphon, the former patriarch of Constantinople for multiple times (1486–1488, 1497–1498, and 1502–1503).

3 Symbolic Aspects: Political Theology

Beyond personal faith and prestige in the Orthodox international community, there was another reason for the increase in endowments of the lords of Wallachia for the Athonite monasteries: the legitimacy of their rule, by proving to be pious and faithful. It was a legitimacy conferred by merits and personal deeds, meant to somehow compensate for the fact that all pretenders against whom one had to prevail stood somehow—as I previously said—in the bloodline of Basarab I.

Lords with a problematic claim to legitimacy tended, therefore, to shift the emphasis for the legitimation of their rule from the ancient customary law of the land based on ancestry—which could, however, get leveraged and relativized—to the *theological* argument of God’s absolute will: God’s will, softened by good works of philanthropy and endowment. The elaborate theological preambles, the προοίμια or the medieval Germanic *harengae*,¹³ of their

12 Chitwood and Grigore, “Byzantinisches Stiftungswesen,” p. 95. For the good relations with the lord of Wallachia, see for instance the first testament of Chariton in *Actes de Kutlumuş*, ed. Lemerle, pp. 110–116; English translation: Dennis, “Testaments,” pp. 1413–1418.

13 Herbert Hunger, *Prooimion. Elemente der byzantinischen Kaiseridee in den Arengen der*

endowment deeds always allude to the sole legitimacy of rule coming exclusively from God's grace; which is, to be sure, not new in the Orthodox traditions.



With Vlad the Monk, from 1481 Wallachia saw a series of illegitimate rulers, consisting of Radu the Great, Vlad the Younger, and Neagoe Basarab. I will now consider, in the following, Vlad the Monk, Radu the Great, and Neagoe Basarab.

The legitimacy problem of Vlad the Monk (r. 1481–1495, with a short interruption) was, unsurprisingly, *not* his dynastic pedigree. He was indeed the son of Vlad the Dragon (r. 1436–1447, with a short interruption) and stepbrother of Vlad Drăculea, “the Impaler,” (r. 1448, 1456–1462, 1476), thus fully in the bloodline of the Basarab dynasty. It was, of course, a bloodline through unlawful sons, since Vlad Dracul, the father of our protagonist, was an illegitimate son of Mircea the Elder.¹⁴ But this did not matter, since all rulers in the 15th century were in the same situation. The difficulty in Vlad the Monk's case was one of canon law, and implicitly of common law, which undoubtedly created a serious issue of legitimacy.

Born as Peter, he had become a monk in his childhood under the name Pachomios. His voivode name, Io Vlad, is in fact a symbolic takeover of his father's name, Vlad II the Dragon, to enhance his legitimacy. He made—as the son of a voivode—a good monastic career, being firstly ordained as a priest-monk, a *hieromonachos* (ἱερομόναχος), and eventually advancing to become an abbot, as we know from the contemporary Slavonic *Tale of Dracula Voyvode* from the end of the 15th century. After that, he left the monastery and married, as we learn from the same source.¹⁵ Around 1457, Vlad the Impaler wrote to the city council of Braşov to complain about the fact that they protected a pretender to the throne, *sacerdos Wolahorum qui se nominat filium wayvode*: of course, this was his brother, Peter—Pachomios.¹⁶

Urkunden, (Wiener byzantinistische Studien) 1 (Vienna, 1964). For the Germanic-influenced *latinitas*, see the sources collection of Friedrich Hausmann and Alfred Gawlik (eds.), *Arengenverzeichnis zu den Königs- und Kaiserurkunden von den Merowingern bis Heinrich VI.* (Munich, 1987).

14 *Documenta Romaniae Historica: B. Ţara Românească 1 (1247–1500) DRH 1*, ed. P.P. Panaitescu and Constantin Mioc (Bucharest, 1966), no. 239, pp. 385–386.

15 *Cronicile Slavo-Române* [Slavonic-Romanian chronicles], ed. Ion Bogdan and P.P. Panaitescu (Bucharest, 1959), pp. 213–214.

16 *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor DPIR*, vol. 15/1: *Acte şi scrisori din arhivele oraşelor*

Entering a monastery and taking monastic vows, including the renunciation of the world and any temporal power, should have ended any pretensions to secular rule, even if someone was a descendant of voivodes. This would have theoretically excluded Vlad the Monk from any claim to the throne of Wallachia.

He issued six Athos deeds, two confirmations of older documents and four new donations of money and annuities for Rossikon—Panteleimon, for Docheiariou, and for Koutloumousiou, as well as one endowment deed of villages and a mountain for Koutloumousiou.¹⁷ In addition, he also donated holy relics to one of the Meteora monasteries.¹⁸ This is an important number of deeds, considering that his predecessors put together issued after 1433 only seven donation deeds to Athos.¹⁹

This might have been the result not only of his piety as a former monk, but I think it can also be viewed as a form of clearing his conscience, burdened by sin, and a way to enhance his legitimacy to rule, which stood in contradiction to canon law. We have to consider that Vlad the Monk created a dangerous precedent being the first monk in the history of the Danubian Principalities to seize the throne. I think, in contrast to other scholars, who have argued for the positive relationship of Vlad the Monk and his successors to his monastic past, that he was rather ashamed of it. Vlad and his contemporaries were well aware of the fateful breach of canon law which made Vlad a sinner. Furthermore, ruling practice in the Orthodox World, where forced tonsure was one of the principal methods of dealing with pretenders and destroyed their claims to the throne, would seem to refute a recent attempt to align Vlad the Monk with the old Christian tradition in both the Latin West and Eastern Christianity of rulers who combined in their biographies monasticism and secular power.²⁰

ardelene (1358–1600) [Documents regarding the history of Romanians: Documents and letters in Transylvanian archives], ed. Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki and Nicolae Iorga (Bucharest, 1911), no. 82, p. 47.

17 *DRH* 1, nos 202, 203, 214, 223, 231, and 235.

18 *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor DPIR*, vol. 14/1: *Documente grecești (1320–1716)* [Documents regarding the History of the Romanians: Greek documents], ed. Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki and Nicolae Iorga (Bucharest, 1915), no. 90.

19 *DRH* 1, nos 74, 100, 116, 119, and 151; *DPIR* 14/1, nos 74 and 83.

20 Marian Coman, “The Reign of a Defrocked Monk. A Late Fifteenth-Century Case Study in the Wallachian Political Language,” in *Religious Rhetoric of Power in Byzantium and South-Eastern Europe*, eds. Ivan Biliarsky, Mihail Mitrea and Andrei Timotin (Brăila, 2021), pp. 194–200.

In contrast to Vlad the Monk, previous donation deeds of voivodes like Alexander I Aldea, Vladislav II (r. 1447, 1456), and Vlad III the Impaler have only *brief* religious preambles. Alexander I Aldea (r. 1431–1436) stresses, for instance, his status as “Lord in Christ,” alluding that his money donation for Zographou is a virtue and a duty of the philanthropic Christian ruler.²¹ He was indeed an illegitimate son of Mircea the Elder, but this was, as I have previously tried to make clear, no impediment to rule since he was legitimate by his blood. Similarly, Vladislav II’s, Vlad III the Impaler’s, and Basarab Laiotă’s (1473–1477, with many interruptions) deeds also have formal religious preambles, accentuating in many places their authority.

“Hear, hear, the faithful and the blessed, Io Basarab voivode and lord, the son of Dan voivode eager to follow the old emperors and lords who ruled on earth in peace-giving benefactions [...],” wrote Basarab Laiotă in his deed for Koutlounousiou from Bucharest, in the first half of 1476.²² Laiotă designated Koutlounousious as “my monastery” and showed by the symbolic value of his actions that he was a part of the long tradition of Byzantine imperial benefactors and of the rulers of old, in whose lineage he stood himself.

The reasons for these voivodes’ donations are therefore located on the one hand in the duty of the ruler to be a benefactor for, and caretaker of, the Church, which they took over from Byzantine *basileis* and Serbian despots. On the other hand, it was a form of *repayment* of the “grace of God” to *confirm* them on “the throne of our fathers,” as they put it. Hence continuation, not innovation. This was prompted not as much as humility and Christian modesty as it was by an affirmation of their right to be there where they belonged, on the throne.

The donation deeds of Vlad the Monk are different. They are full of theology and quotations from the Prophets and the Gospel, and not only in the preamble. One can easily discern his theological education and monastic rhetorical skills, possibly perfected by preaching. Most interesting is his first Athos deed, issued around 1487 for Philotheou, and the last one, given before he died in 1495 for Hilandar, heeding the plea of Empress Mara Branković (1416–1487).²³ She had been very concerned about the fate of this Serbian monastery before her death and wanted to know that it would be well-provided for, for which the best addressees were the powerful and rich lords of Wallachia, in

21 DRH I, no. 74, p. 136.

22 DRH I, no. 151, pp. 250–251.

23 DRH I, nos 202 and 235.

our case, Vlad the Monk.²⁴ Both donation deeds contain plenty of allusions to the idea that benefactions for monasteries are the best way to atone for one's *sins*.

Those hit by the "arrow of the devil," so it is written in the first charter, should go to the physician, who is Christ himself, and who told us through Ezekiel the Prophet that "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezekiel 33:11). Vlad feels this need because "we groan, encumbered under the heavy burden of sin." Feeding the poor means feeding Christ, the deed says, recalling Matthew 24, and in this way, the sinners buried under the heavy burden of their sins will arise. The awareness of sin in this text is, for me, self-evident. To have the heavy burden of his sins lifted from his shoulders, Vlad donated an annuity of 4000 *aspra*, every year in May, for Philotheou Monastery at the behest of the abbot (ἡγούμενος) Germanos, who had travelled to Wallachia for this purpose and received an extra 300 *aspra* for travel expenses.²⁵

The last Athos deed of Vlad the Monk is for Hilandar. Asked by Empress Mara, Vlad the Monk was ready to take over the role of *ktetor* for this Serbian monastery. He thus granted, together with his son Io Radu voivode, an annuity of 5000 *aspra* with 500 *aspra* of travel expenses for those coming to take the funds. What is interesting regarding the theological contents of Vlad's deeds is that they are not formulaic at all. While the deeds of his predecessors were poor in their theological contents and mechanically utilize the same formulations, Vlad's change all the time.

An awareness of the fragility and contingency of ruling is expressed in this last deed with a paraphrase of Isaiah 8:9–10: "Raise the war cry, you nations, and be shattered! Listen, all you distant lands. Prepare for battle, and be shattered! Prepare for battle, and be shattered! Devise your strategy, but it will be thwarted; propose your plan, but it will not stand, for God is with us." Vlad completes this with a quote from Wisdom of Solomon 6:1–3: "Hear, therefore, O ye kings, and understand [...]. For power is given you of the Lord, and sovereignty from the Highest [...]."

Unlike his predecessors, Vlad the Monk mentions, as we have seen, as a benefactor in his deeds not only himself but also his son: the voivode Io Radu (the later Radu the Great) became associated with his rule already in 1492. He and Radu became the new *ktetores*, taking over the pious duty of the now-extinct

24 *DRH* 1, no. 235, p. 378. For Mara Branković, see Mihailo Popović, *Mara Branković. Eine Frau zwischen dem christlichen und dem islamischen Kulturkreis im 15. Jahrhundert*, (Peleus. Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Griechenlands und Zyperns) 45 (Mainz, 2010).

25 *DRH* 1, no. 202, p. 324.

line of Serbian rulers “because of our sins” and hoping that God would preserve the rule in their family.²⁶ Vlad obviously tried to create a positive perception of Radu in the eyes of his contemporaries and offer him legitimacy already before his effective ascension to the throne. This can be viewed as yet another indication that the claim to rule might have not been airtight for either of them.

Vlad the Monk found the foundation of his illegitimate rule in the absolute will of God, who rises and causes to fall any powerful person he desires, in accordance *not* with their right by blood, but with their good or bad works. Both donation deeds end, as is typical for Vlad the Monk, with ardent prayers to the Holy Virgin, mentioning her function as an intercessor at the moment of the terrifying Final Judgement. In this, I deviate from the interpretation given in a recent study by the Romanian medievalist Marian Coman, that all the elaborated *prooimia* of Vlad the Monk are to be seen as an attempt of political theology to prepare his country and his people for the End of Days, since around year 7000, according to the Byzantine reckoning (i.e. 1491 of the Christian era), apocalyptic expectations were acute in the Orthodox world.²⁷ Sources brought forth as proof of such an assessment are scarce and indirect. This is why I tend to consider the personal conscience of sinfulness to be the main cause of Vlad the Monk’s theological fervour in his deeds of endowment.



The right to rule was also illegitimate for Vlad the Monk’s son and successor, Radu the Great (r. 1495–1508). He left at least twelve donation deeds for Athos, more than his father. His first Athos deed from 1495 is a renewal of his father’s annual donation of 3000 *aspra* to Rossikon. The long preamble, full of theological considerations and biblical quotations, is simply transcribed from his father’s deed of 1487. Radu the Great ends this deed with a plea of intercession to Saint Panteleimon, the patron saint of Rossikon, and again, as his father did, to the Holy Virgin, to help him at the moment of the terrifying Final Judgement.²⁸

Interestingly, Radu the Great wished for his deceased father to be entered in the commemorative list (*pomelnik*) as the “monk Pahomios.” Moreover, Radu desired that the monks read a mass every week for the sins of the whole family, his grandfather, Io Vlad (i.e., Vlad the Dragon), his father, and himself, Io Radu.

²⁶ DRH 1, no. 235, pp. 377–378.

²⁷ Coman, “The Reign,” pp. 214–221.

²⁸ DRH 1, no. 263, pp. 424–425.

Vlad the Monk is at this place mentioned as the “monk Pahomios,” although a few lines earlier he was remembered of as “my father, Io Vlad.”²⁹ This possibly indicates that Radu hoped that God would mercifully forgive the sins of his father, taking into consideration his monastic past.

Of course, it was not unusual for deceased rulers to be mentioned in *pomelnik* as monks or nuns if they happened to die while in the monastic state! In the same deed, the mother and the grandmother of Radu were entered as nuns because they took their vows after the death of their husbands. This is not the case with Vlad the Monk, who died as lord of Wallachia, not as a monk. Why is he thus entered by his son as Pahomios, and not as Io Vlad voivode?

Radu's plea for God's mercy for his father would have been complicated by the mention of grievous sins, like leaving the monastery, taking secular power, and begetting children, and to wit after taking vows of reclusion, poverty, and chastity. Or it might as well indicate that the secular rule Vlad the Monk exercised was only a temporary episode and his real status before God was always that of a monk. It is difficult to say, but we can see why leaving the monastery was a delicate issue not only for Vlad the Monk but also for his son, who still needed rationalizations of his father's actions.

In a donation deed to Mount Sinai from 1497, the preamble focuses on the fact that everything is in the hand of God, who gives and takes as he wishes: “All glory is temporary. We should take the example of the orthodox and in holiness departed lords before us, who administrated earthly things well in order to gain by them heavenly goods, which they thus inherited, while earthly things they left to the earth.”³⁰ This affirmation can be corroborated with a passage from the donation deed to Rossikon from February 1502, where Radu the Great asked for God “not to separate us from his holy goodness because of our sins. May he make us inheritors of eternal life and his kingdom.”³¹

Interestingly, after the first-quoted Athos deed of Radu, where he entered his father unusually in the *pomelnik* as the “monk Pahomios,” in all other deeds there is no mention of Pahomios anymore, only of “my father, the great and most generous Io Vlad voivode.” The different appellation in the first deed, given shortly after Radu's ascension to the throne, is thus almost certainly a result of the insecurity the young voivode felt about both his father's and his own legitimacy to rule.

29 DRH 1, no. 263, p. 424, respectively p. 425.

30 DRH 1, no. 279, p. 454.

31 *Documenta Romaniae Historica: B. Țara Românească 2 (1501–1525)* DRH 2, ed. Ștefan Ștefănescu and Olimpia Diaconescu (Bucharest, 1972), no. 12, p. 32.

All the leitmotifs imposed by the rhetorical and theological literacy of Vlad the Monk in the literary style of the donation charters were mostly copied by his sons, Radu the Great and Vlad the Young (r. 1510–1512). It is thus impossible to say how conscious they were that, because of the illegitimacy of their father's claim, their own rule was also problematic. The mention of the “monk Pahomios” in the first of Radu's Athos deeds indicates at least some awareness in this direction. It is important to underline that Vlad the Monk definitely had it because his deeds changed radically from those of his predecessors and accentuated the hope of absolution of sinfulness and the absolute freedom of God to put on the throne anyone he wanted, even a fugitive monk.



Neagoe Basarab (r. 1512–1521) could not even rely on a dynastic connection to the Basarab bloodline. He was a boyar, a scion of the influential Craiovescu family. He and his family invented his ancestry, trying to present him as an illegitimate son of a previous prince, Basarab the Young (r. 1477–1482, with an interruption), who supposedly had a love affair with his mother, Neaga. Although it is impossible to definitively prove the veracity of this claim, everybody from Wallachia to the Sublime Porte seems to have doubted it. Historical circumstances as well would seem to cast doubt on this fantastic genealogy.³²

Neagoe Basarab rose to become lord of Wallachia with the aid of an Ottoman army led by the Mehmed Pasha of Nikopolis. After defeating Prince Vlad the Young near Bucharest at the beginning of 1512, Neagoe Basarab occupied the throne in an elective procedure through the High Council, corroborated with an acclamation by the citizens of the capital, Bucharest. Gabriel Protos writes in his *Vita Nephonis* from 1517 that the citizens of Bucharest cried out loud—although Neagoe wanted to refuse the serious responsibility of rule—that he would be the only one worthy (ἄξιος) of it. They would not accept anyone but him to be their voivode.³³

This has an evident parallel to the Byzantine tradition. In the Middle Byzantine era, the crowd gathered in the church for the emperor's coronation was asked three times “ἄξιός?” (Is he worthy?), to which they each time answered

32 Rezachevici, *Cronologia*, pp. 124–125; Grigore, *Neagoe Basarab*, pp. 32–37.

33 Gavriil Protul, *Viața Sfântului Nifon* [The life of Saint Niphon], ed. Vasile Grecu (Bucharest, 1944), p. 138.

“ἄξιος!”³⁴ In Neagoe’s case, it was not quite that elaborate. Yet the manner in which he humbly protested that he was not worthy of ruling the country suggests that it was essentially the same ritual. It appears to have been important for the usurper to demonstrate that he did not seize power himself, but was called upon to rule. In symbolic terms, this underscores the contingency of the ruler’s person compared with God’s omnipotence expressed by the Christian people (*vox populi, vox Dei*).³⁵

Although Wallachian chronicles affirm that the Pasha decapitated Vlad the Young, who was only a sixteen-year-old boy, his tombstone in the monastery of Dealu indicates that it was Neagoe Basarab himself who executed Vlad. And it was this guilt that seems to have motivated many of Neagoe’s deeds.³⁶

Neagoe Basarab was undoubtedly a usurper. His legitimacy, which I have detailed elsewhere (see n. 8), was problematic in every way: he was, moreover, quite conscious of this. Not only did he build the architectural masterpiece of Curtea de Arges, then the mausoleum of the lords of Wallachia and kings of Romania, but he also wrote a treatise of political advice for his son Theodosius, who was supposed to follow him on the throne.

Here, Neagoe underlined everywhere that it was not one’s own merits and ancestry that justified him in becoming ruler, but rather the pure will of God, who can make a king from a peasant, just as he did with the shepherd David.

Therefore, none shall deceive himself and rest secure in the false hope that he might claim anything as his wisdom and his merit. For all these come from God and He alone grants them to men [...]. And we owe it to God to repay what He has lent us [...]. And none shall deceive himself and be conceited, though he be king, prince, boyar, or whatsoever, for it is God who grants all these [titles] and it is for Him to reclaim them.³⁷

34 Anthony Kaldellis, *The Byzantine Republic: People and Power in New Rome* (Cambridge, Mass., 2015), pp. 135, 147–149, 164.

35 Grigore, *Neagoe Basarab*, pp. 43–44.

36 Grigore, *Neagoe Basarab*, p. 40.

37 “Dreptu acéia nimeni să nu să înșale și să să amăgească gândidu că doar are cevași întru înțelepția și vrédnicia sa. Că toate sunt de la Dumnezeu și de la Dumnezeu sunt dăruite oamenilor [...]. [P]entru că suntem datori să plătim lui Dumnezeu ce ne-au dat. [...] [D]reptu acéia nimeni să nu să amăgească și să să ție mare, măcar să fie împărat, măcar domnu, măcar boiaru, măcar fiește ce va fi; că acéstea toate Dumnezeu le dă, Dumnezeu le ia”, Neagoe Basarab, *Învătăturile lui Neagoe Basarab către fiul său Theodosie*, ed. Dan Zamfirescu and Florica Moisil, 2nd ed. (Bucharest, 1984), pp. 29, 39. See Mihai-D. Grigore, “Reformatorsche Ideen in der Walachei und der Moldau zwischen 1519 und 1521? Mögliche Transferwege von reformatorischem Gedankengut südlich und östlich

And some pages further bluntly affirmed that:

For even though you may be a monarch or lord, judgment is God's alone. You were ultimately installed by His decision and at His behest as the shepherd and administrator of His works [in the world] [...]. You are God's anointed and Christian monarchs and the lords whom He chooses, in your hands will He place God's imperial flock.³⁸

The Athos deeds of Neagoe Basarab, of which there are six, somehow reflect his guilty conscience. Not only do they possess important theological content, but Neagoe intensified the, until then, very rare practice of endowing land to the Athos monasteries, while his predecessors—as we have seen—relied mainly on money donations in one-time and annuity form.

In the endowment deed for Koutloumousiou from 23 July 1512, Neagoe does not forget to recall 'his' grand-grandfather Mircea the Elder, thus nourishing the narrative of his blood descent from the dynasty. In the same endowment deed, Neagoe begins with the cosmological function of the Holy Trinity keeping and preserving creation even after the fall of Adam and Eve. This caretaker role had gone over to the most Christian and pious emperors of Byzantium. But now, since they no longer existed, Neagoe would continue their tradition and take care of Athos, the Mother of God's garden on earth.³⁹

All this is not new, as it was also present in the deeds of Vlad the Monk and Radu the Great, but not in the same intensity. Interestingly, in what is possibly the first of his Athos deeds from 20 February 1512, given to Koutloumousiou a month after his ascension to the throne, Neagoe designated himself as the "son of Basarab voivode," i.e., the aforementioned Basarab the Younger, as he used to do all his life. Sloppy in its formulation, short, and poorly preserved with many gaps, the document looks more like a proof of ownership than an endowment deed.⁴⁰

This impression is accentuated by the contrast to the more appropriate and stylistically accurate deed connected with the same issues for Koutloumousiou from the end of February 1512. In this longer deed—which seems to be an

der Karpaten," *Jahrbuch des Bundesinstituts für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im östlichen Europa* 22 (2015), 193–202.

38 "Că măcară de ești și împăratu sau domnnu, iar judecata tot iaste a lui Dumnezeu și cu porunca lui ești pus păstor tu și tocmitor faptelor lui. [...] [S]unteți unșii lui Dumnezeu și împărați creștinești și domni pre carele va alége Dumnezeu și va da în mâna lui să păzească turma cea împărătească a lui Hristos [...]", Basarab, *Învățăturile*, pp. 11, 123.

39 *DRH* 2, no. 105, p. 208.

40 *DRH* 2, no. 96, p. 194.

improved reformulation of the sketch given at the beginning of February (cf. n. 33)—there is no mention of “my father, the great Basarab voivode.”⁴¹ By contrast, in a very long and detailed deed given again to Koutloumousiou on 23 July 1512 (or maybe 1513), Neagoe Basarab speaks of both “my father, Io Basarab voivode” and “my grand-grand-father Mircea the Elder.”⁴²

And this was the last time that he would refer to ‘his’ father Basarab. Of the three remaining Athos deeds,⁴³ only one of them mentions Mircea the Elder, ‘his’ great-grandfather. This state of affairs has for me but a simple explanation: in the documents for institutions outside his country’s borders, where the ruler’s legitimacy was not that relevant, Neagoe, a genuinely pious man, might have not liked in such holy places like Athos to proliferate the lie that he was son of a voivode. Why would it be otherwise, since in all the deeds for monasteries and boyars in Wallachia, Neagoe Basarab repeatedly stressed his descent from Basarab the Younger?

4 Conclusions

The increase of donations and endowments for the Holy Mountain in Wallachia started with those rulers with legitimacy issues. In the documents of Vlad the Monk, and, after him, in those of his son Radu the Great, or of the usurper Neagoe Basarab, the theological content is extremely elaborated. There might have been several reasons for this.

On the one hand, Vlad had been a monk for a long time, so he had plenty of opportunities to attain a good degree of theological literacy. Neagoe Basarab was similarly well-read and was attested in the *Vita Sancti Nephoni* to have been the prominent pupil and intimate friend of the former Patriarch Niphon II of Constantinople (1486–1488, 1497–1498).⁴⁴

A second reason might lie in the fact that the lords of Wallachia in the 15th century became thoroughly Orthodox, while their predecessors in the 14th century had always left open the possibility of switching to the Latin faith. Although the adoption of Byzantine Orthodoxy might seem to have constituted a definitive step already in the 14th century for both principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, the reality was, however, quite different. The princes kept the Latin trump card in their hands, to be played in times of need. The successor of

41 DRH 2, no. 98, pp. 198–200.

42 DRH 2, no. 105, p. 208.

43 DRH 2, nos 130, 160, 187.

44 Gavriil Protul, *Viața*, pp. 92, 96, 124, 140.

the Lord of Wallachia Nicholas Alexander, Vladislav I Vlaicu, whose very influential stepmother Clara was of the Latin faith, in 1369 emphatically supported the rights of the Latin bishop of Oradea (in Transylvania) to visit the Latin congregations in Wallachia. He encouraged the bishop to do everything he could to consolidate these congregations in order to keep their faith and spirit alive.⁴⁵ In Moldavia, Prince Alexander the Good (r. 1400–1432) founded, in addition to Prince Țațcu's bishopric of Siret, a second Latin bishopric in Baia.⁴⁶

Finally, there might be also a moral reason for this accentuation of sin, of benefactions as penitence in order to clean the dirt of wickedness, of the justification of rule not by one's bloodline but by *faith* and *good works*. This could possibly be there because all the voivodes discussed knew that—according to the ecclesiastical and civil laws of men but not in the unexplored ways of God—their rule was unjust.

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46 *Documenta Romaniae Historica, C: Transilvania* (1366–1370), ed. Academia Republicii

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Archival Treasures of the Holy Mountain: Interpreting Ottoman and Arabic Documents as Sources of Athonite Wealth

Vanessa R. de Obaldía

1 Introduction

Interest in the study of Ottoman documents preserved at the archives of the monasteries on Athos has been increasing over the years, reflecting the recognition of their significance for the study of a multiplicity of Ottoman-era subjects linked to the Holy Mountain. Original pioneers in the study of such documents, such as Paul Lemerle, Paul Wittek, Elizabeth Zachariadou, Vančo Boškov, Vassilis Dimitriadis, and John Alexander (Alexandropoulos) were followed by Phokion Kotzageorgis, Aleksandar Fotić, and Elias Kolovos, to name just a few prominent Ottoman historians. Consequently, Athonite Ottoman documents are now being made accessible in print form and being published individually or as collective studies. Likewise, an increasing number of collections of individual Athonite archives are being catalogued and even digitized. The thousands of Ottoman documents located in the 20 monasteries of the Holy Mountain dating from the late 14th century (1386)¹ until the early 20th

1 The earliest extant Ottoman document from Mount Athos was first published by Vančo Boškov in 1979. It consisted of an order (*nişān*) dated 1386 from the Ottoman holdings of Saint Paul Monastery regarding the granting of a military fief to a Serbian nobleman. Through an extensive analysis, Boškov concluded that it was an original: Vančo Boškov, "Jedan originalan Nisan Murata I. iz 1386. godine u Manastiru Svetog Pavla na Svetoj Gori," *Prilozi za Orijentalnu Filologiju* 27 (1977), 225–246. Yet the authenticity of the document continued to be the subject of debate in three subsequent articles: Nicoară Beldiceanu and Irène Beldiceanu-Steinherr, "Un faux document ottoman concernant Radoslav Sampias," *Turcica* 12 (1980), 161–168; Hans-Georg Majer, "Some Remarks on the Document of Murad I from the Monastery of St Paul on Mount Athos (1386)," in *Ο Άθως στους 14ο–16ο αιώνες* [Mount Athos in the 14th–16th centuries] (Athens, 1997), pp. 33–39; Irène Beldiceanu-Steinherr and Raúl Estangüi Gómez, "Autour du document de 1386 en faveur de Radoslav Sablja (Šabya/Sampias): du Beylicat au sultanat, étape méconnue de l'état ottoman," *Turcica* 45 (2014), 159–186. For the early Ottoman documents of Mount Athos and their diplomatic characteristics see Elias Kolovos, "Early Ottoman Diplomats Revisited: An Order of the Beglerbegi of Rumeli Hacı Firuz ibn Abdullah in Favour of the Athonite Monastery of Vatopedi (1401)," *Turcica* 45 (2014), 187–208.

century undisputedly represent a source of Athonite wealth as religious and cultural heritage, with each individual document containing its own source of wealth in terms of its historic, palaeographic, and prosopographic value.

The Ottoman documents in the Athonite archives shed light on the social, economic, institutional, and legal histories of the Ottoman Balkans. Consequently, in addition to providing insights into major themes that were common to all the monasteries during the Ottoman era, at a microlevel they reveal individual monasteries' fiscal privileges and obligations, the relations of the monks with local societies through their *metochia*, legal procedures of conflict resolution, and the influence of powers and individuals outside the Athonite peninsula usually exerted through generous donations in money and kind. The documents are ultimately an insight into the periods of flourishing, diminishment, and revival of the individual monasteries. Having been designated the status of a World Heritage Site by UNESCO since 1988, Athos' Ottoman holdings should be considered part of the inextricable cultural heritage of this unique peninsula. Legally, the documents served as testaments of the monasteries' material possession, such as estates and incomes, both on the Athonite Peninsula and farther afield. In the Ottoman era, these documents were used as legal evidence of property ownership in monastic lawsuits against the Ottoman state and other Athonite monasteries, as well as against the lay people; whereas today, such documents continue to be presented before the courts by the monks as claimants or defendants against the Greek state and local communities because of the absence of a Greek Cadastral Register.² This study will present documents from three of the Athonite monasteries, emphasising the elements of document type, prosopography, and aesthetics with their respective facsimiles and transliterations to be included as appendices.

2 Themes

A comprehensive overview of published research based on Athonite Ottoman documents is presented in a recent article published in 2019 and authored by Elias Kolovos and Phokion Kotzageorgis, entitled "Turco-Athonica: The

2 In contrast, the Greek, Slavonic, and Georgian documents preserved on Mount Athos have intrinsic value in and of themselves: some of them were luxury items, with rich bindings and illuminations, as well as being necessary for the functioning of a monastery as a religious institution, i.e., for the liturgy (psalters, readers, *typika*, saints' lives, etc.). On the value of Byzantine manuscripts in Athonite monasteries, please see the contribution of Zissis Melissakis in this volume.

Ottoman Archives of the Athonite Monasteries.” It includes an appendix of 35 editions, translations, and summaries of Ottoman documents kept on Mount Athos. Importantly, they also provided a division of the main topics of these studies into the following ten categories: 1. The legal status of the Athonite lands during the early Ottoman period (ca. 1430–1569); 2. The fiscal privileges and obligations of the Athonite monks; 3. The relations of the Athonite monks with local societies through their *metochia* and travelling to request alms (*zeteies*); 4. The monasteries as enterprises; 5. The legal procedures of conflict resolution; 6. The incorporation of the Balkan aristocracy in the Ottoman state in the 15th century; 7. Balkan prosopography; 8. Ottoman palaeography and diplomatics; 9. The question of the Ottomans as *gazis*; 10. The history of the monastic buildings.³

Unlike the authoritative “Archives de l’Athos” series, which aims to publish documents in Greek from the Byzantine era (ca. 880–1500) of all twenty monasteries on Mount Athos, no such systematic efforts have existed for the Ottoman holdings, apart from those of the two Athonite monasteries of Xeropotamou and Saint Paul, which take the form of catalogues. The first is by Phokion Kotzageorgis and is titled *Η Αθωνική Μονή Αγίου Παύλου κατά την οθωμανική περίοδο* [The Athonite Monastery of Agios Pavlos during the Ottoman period]. While the first two thirds of the book are dedicated to the history of the monastery, the last third, in the form of an appendix, provides a description in terms of the catalogue number, type of document, measurements, date, and the addressee of seventeen of the most significant Ottoman documents from the mid-15th to the early 19th centuries, and provides their full translation and respective facsimiles.⁴ The second, and most thorough, is Elias Kolovos’ unpublished doctoral thesis *Χωρικοί και μοναχοί στην οθωμανική Χαλκιδική 15ος–16ος αιώνες: όψεις της οικονομικής και κοινωνικής ζωής στην ύπαιθρο και η Μονή Ξηροποτάμου* [Peasants and monks in Ottoman Halkidiki 15th–16th centuries: aspects of economic and social life in the countryside and Xeropotamou Monastery]. In the first part of his extensive thesis, he examines aspects of economic and social life, in the second part, the topography, population, and tax rates of the rural hinterland of Salonika, while the third section is dedicated to the summaries of each of the 515 documents in Xeropotamou’s Ottoman holdings until 1821.⁵

3 Elias Kolovos and Phokion Kotzageorgis, “Turco-Athonica: The Ottoman Archives of the Athonite Monasteries,” in *Lire les Archives de l’Athos*, eds. Olivier Delouis and Kostis Smyrlis, (TM) 23/2 (Paris, 2019), pp. 647–648.

4 Phokion Kotzageorgis, *Η Αθωνική Μονή Αγίου Παύλου κατά την οθωμανική περίοδο* [The Athonite Monastery of Agios Pavlos during the Ottoman period] (Thessaloniki, 2002).

5 Elias Kolovos, *Χωρικοί και μοναχοί στην οθωμανική Χαλκιδική 15ος–16ος αιώνες: όψεις της οικονομι-*

Similarly rich studies are Georgios Salakides' publication on the 16 earliest Ottoman documents preserved in Vatopedi Monastery dating from the 15th to the early 16th centuries, during the reigns of sultans Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512) and Selim I (r. 1512–1520), which include facsimiles, transliterations, and translations.⁶ Likewise, Alexander Fotić's ten-year work made accessible the Ottoman documentary heritage of Hilandar from the 15th to the 17th centuries and includes twenty-three facsimiles.⁷

These publications have been complemented by presentations of overviews of Ottoman holdings of the monasteries of Zographou and Simonopetra. The quantity and variety laid down in the two abovementioned general outlines of the contents of the two Athonite monasteries are evidence of the successful integration of the monasteries into the Ottoman administrative and legal systems and reveal important historical details relating to the monasteries about their wealth, their relations with the Ottoman state, and those with the other Athonite monasteries and the *metochia*.⁸

In this study, I shall not reiterate the abovementioned ten subjects; rather, I shall dedicate this article to providing an analysis of Ottoman documents from the two different Athonite monasteries of Iviron and Simonopetra. By focusing on three main elements—prosopography, type of document, and aesthetics—I shall provide a glimpse into the extent of the wealth of the Ottoman holdings of the Athonite Peninsula.

2.1 *Prosopography*

The Ottoman holdings of the Athonite monasteries are a rich source for the study of prosopography. From the 15th century onwards, these elements within the documents become a lot richer for one principal reason: continuous Ottoman rule, which began from the reconquest of Thessaloniki by Sultan

κής και κοινωνικής ζωής στην ύπαιθρο και η Μονή Ξηροποτάμου [Peasants and monks in Ottoman Chalkidike in the 15th–16th centuries: aspects of economic and social life in the countryside and Xeropotamou Monastery] (Thessaloniki, 2000).

6 Georgios Salakides, *Sultansurkunden des Athos-Klosters Vatopedi aus der Zeit Bayezid II. und Selim I.: kritische Edition und wissenschaftlicher Kommentar* (Thessaloniki, 1995).

7 Aleksandar Fotić, Света Гора и Хиланар у Османском царству (xv–xvii век) [The Holy Mountain and Hilandar in the Ottoman Empire (15th–17th centuries)] (Belgrade, 2000).

8 Vassilis Dimitriadis, "The Turkish Documents," in *Simonopetra: Mount Athos*, ed. Stelios Papadopoulos (Athens, 1991), pp. 267–280; Maria Kiprovska and Grigor Boykov, "Колекцията от османски документи от архива на Зографския манастир: предварителни бележки върху нейното състояние, съдържание, значимост и перспективи за работа," in *Zographou Sympraktika. The Archives and Library or the Monastery of Zograf: Studies and Prospects*, eds. Dimiter Peev et al. (Mount Athos, 2019), pp. 318–349.

Murad II (r. 1421–1444) in 1430 and lasted until 1912. This resulted in an increased amount of contact between the monks and the Ottoman administration at the central and provincial levels.⁹ Consequently, the documents contain important prosopographical data which reveal the ecclesiastical actors who came into contact through different bureaucratic and administrative channels with their Ottoman rulers. The monks are often only referred to in generic terms. This was not uncommon in Ottoman documents because the absence of specific personal names for ecclesiastics was indicative of the strict rules of modest behavior and religious status in not exercising diplomatic or representative functions towards the Ottoman authorities, apart from exceptional circumstances. Notwithstanding, monks are also addressed by their individual names, which has facilitated the drawing up of lists of names of monks and the writing of prosopographical entries for those who resided on Athos during certain periods, and thereby confirming existing data. Moreover, such data will also fill in missing gaps and allow us to draw conclusions, including regarding their number and ethnicity. It also emphasizes their reliance on state actors, whose protection they sought and would in turn often represent the monks before the Ottoman seat of government, the Sublime Porte. Other important prosopographical information that can be derived from the documents includes that of the Ottoman officials, who were addressees, addressors, and decision makers. Names were accompanied by titles, including but not limited to sultan (*sultān*), judge (*mollā/ kâzî*), commander of the Janissaries (*yeniçerileri ağası*), head of the imperial palace guards (*bostāncıbaşı ağası*), commander of the irregular corps (*sekbānbāşı*) and appear within the body of the text as well as in signatures and seals. Thus, we can identify significant personalities at the central and local levels of the state who had contacts with the monks, such as the renowned *şeyhülislām* Ebussuud Efendi, who was behind Sultan Selim II's (r. 1566–1574) confiscation of the Athonite monastic estates, which became known as the Confiscation Crisis of 1568 to 1570.

2.2 *Type and Nature of These Documents*

The Ottoman holdings of the twenty monasteries of the Athonite peninsula display a multiplicity of different types of documents, which contribute to their richness and importance. These include but are not means limited to imperial edict (*fermān*), certificate of appointment (*berāt*), decree (*biti*), receipt

9 Elias Kolovos, "The Monks and the Sultan Outside the Newly Conquered Ottoman Salonica in 1430," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 40 (2013), 271–279; idem, "Early Ottoman Diplomats Revisited: An Order of the Beglerbegi of Rumeli Hacı Firuz ibn Abdullah in Favour of the Athonite Monastery of Vatopedi (1401)," *Turcica* 45 (2014), 187–208.

(*tezkere*), muftis' opinion (*fetva*), court document (*hüccet*), endowment charter (*vakfiyye*), report (*taḳrīr*), and petitions (*ʿarz-ı hāl*). The intricacies of relations between the Ottoman state and the monastery more specifically, and Mount Athos and the Orthodox Church more generally, are revealed and encompass topics from state recognition of and control over the Church to the adaptation to the new legal system imposed by the conquerors and navigation of laws and use of the Islamic legal system by the monks in securing the survival of an ecclesiastical institution. Wider issues pertaining to the legal status of Athos during the early Ottoman period, its fiscal privileges and obligations, the relations of the monks with local societies through their *metochia*, the history of the monastic buildings and the rights of construction and repair, legal procedures of conflict resolution, and the influence of powers and individuals outside the Athonite peninsula usually exerted through generous donations in money and kind can be discovered. The documents are ultimately an insight into the periods of efflorescence, decline, and revival of the Athonite monasteries.

2.3 *Aesthetics*

An overview on Athonite Ottoman documents would be incomplete without highlighting their aesthetic beauty in terms of their illustrations, no matter how rare and of which only very few have been published. The illuminations were intended to create pleasure for the eyes of the beholder and could be interpreted as a visual and artistic imperial effort at legitimation, attempts to impress, or for religious reasons as in the case of *ahdnames*. The degree of illumination also depended on the addressee of the document. The two following examples published in the exhibition catalogue *Treasures of Mount Athos*,¹⁰ which was based on an exhibition held for the-then Cultural Capital of Europe, Thessaloniki, can be mentioned. The first is a certificate of appointment (*berāt*) measuring 147 × 55 cm from Vatopedi Monastery, dated 10 September 1818. The first quarter of the document is filled with the illuminated and elaborately decorated calligraphic tughra of Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808–1839), which reads “Mahmud khan, the son of Abdulhamid, the ever-victorious (*Maḥmūd ḥān bin Abdulhamīūd el-muzaḳḳar dāima*).” It is surrounded by a triangular-shaped motif filled with a floral pattern and bordered on each side by a single rose, which blossoms out into two other flowers: a blue and pink carnation. Flowers were an important part of Ottoman imperial tradition because they were

10 Athanasios A. Karakatsanis (ed.), *Treasures of Mount Athos* (Thessaloniki, 1997).

symbolic of power and the renewal of life.¹¹ The contents of the document can be summarized as follows: it appoints the monk Gregorios as the metropolitan of Stromnitsa, following the death of Ananias, the previous officeholder. While the patriarch of Constantinople and the Holy Synod appointed him, the sultan's approval for the appointment was needed. This could not be achieved without first paying 13,500 aspers to the Ottoman public treasury. It provided details of the metropolitan's rights and ordered that public officials not prevent him from carrying out his duties.¹² It should be emphasized that certificates of appointment were often embellished especially if they were for an illustrious and expensive seat. Another earlier example that can be appreciated is from 1703, issued for the appointment of Gerasimos II of Alexandria, albeit in black and white.¹³

The second document is an imperial edict (*fermān*) from Protaton in Karyes, which is the administrative seat of Mount Athos. It is dated 7–16 June 1759 and issued in the name of Sultan Mustafa III (r. 1757–1774). To summarize the contents, the document provides exemption from taxation on provisions being sent from monastic estates to Mount Athos for their sustenance.¹⁴ The document is headed by an elaborately illustrated imperial cypher, which reads “Mustafa khan, the son of Ahmed, the ever-victorious (*Muṣṭafa ḥān bin Aḥmed el-muzaffer dāima*).” The gilt is accentuated by a delicate floral pattern with a leaf border, while the rose positioned to the right of the tughra symbolises the mystical path to God. The illumination continues further down the text with three circular gilded separators between the lines of the text.

3 Documents from the Athonite Ottoman Holdings

3.1 *Berāt* from Iviron Monastery

Iviron is one of the oldest and most venerable of the twenty Athonite monasteries and occupies the third rank in the hierarchical order of the Holy Mountain. The large and impressive monastic compound is situated in a small, picturesque cove on the northeastern coast of the peninsula between Vatopedi

11 For flowers in Ottoman illumination, see Yıldız Demiriz, *Osmanlı Kitap Sanatında Doğal Çiçekler* (Istanbul, 2019).

12 Karakatsanis (ed.), *Treasures of Mount Athos*, pp. 551–552.

13 For other reproductions of richly decorated *berāts* appointing Orthodox bishops in the Balkans from the same time, see Mihail Guboglu, *Paleografia și diplomatica turco-osmană* (Bucharest, 1958).

14 Karakatsanis (ed.), *Treasures of Mount Athos*, p. 553.

and the Great Lavra. The monastery became known as Iviron (“of the Iberians”) in honor of its founder John Tornikios, who was a prominent member of the royal court (*Iberia* being the Greek name for Georgia), who is said to have established the Georgian monastery on the foundations of another around 980.

Today, the library is well-organized and richly stocked with more than twenty thousand books of a range of genres and provenance from the monastery’s dependencies in the Balkans, Asia Minor, Russia, and at the Greek parishes in Western Europe, many of which were acquired through the donations of rulers, patriarchs, bishops, and learned monks as well as votive offerings by pious Christians. Moreover, it houses a large collection of Byzantine manuscripts of music and of medieval Georgian manuscripts,¹⁵ although many books and manuscripts were plundered, lost, and others were misplaced. As regards its Ottoman holdings, the exact content of all its documents is unknown and is virtually untouched by modern scholarship, although there is a total of approximately 1,150 Ottoman documents with another 150 Greek translations. While the rich collection of Iviron’s Ottoman documents consists of the standard documents expected to be found in such holdings, such as petitions (*‘arz-ı hāl*), imperial orders (*fermāns*), and tax receipts (*tezkires*), there are also more unusual contents in the form of Islamic legal opinions (*fetvas*) directly applicable to ecclesiastical properties.

The document to be presented in this article from the Iviron Ottoman holdings is a certificate of investiture which is commonly known as *berāt*, dating from 19 *rebī’u’l-āḥir* 1045 / 2 September 1635 (figure 10.1). During the early centuries of Ottoman rule it was also called a *biti* or *mişāl*. They have specific parts and bear an imperial cipher (*tuğra*) of the sultan on whose behalf it was issued. Thus, they generally contained six parts, structured along the following lines: the word *fermān* or its equivalent; the name and title of the person to whom it was given or sent (*inscriptio*); the reason for which it was issued (*narratio*), which is usually a summary of the petition; followed by a clear explanation of the sultan’s order (*dispositio*); the imperial exhortation for the successful fulfillment of the order by the official to whom it was addressed (*comminatio*); and the date and place where the *fermān* was written.¹⁶

In the Iviron *berāt*, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Cyril presents a petition before the Sublime Porte. It pertains to taxes on state lands (*mīri*) and other yields paid by the patriarch *ab antiquo* on the Vlatadon Monastery as well as its affiliated churches called Agios Athanasios, Lagudiara

15 For more on Georgian manuscripts from Iviron see Jost Gippert et al., *Catalogue of the Georgian Manuscripts: Holy Monastery of Iviron* (Mount Athos, 2022).

16 Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı Belgelerinin Dili (Diplomatik)* (Istanbul, 1998), pp. 124–145.

(Panagia Lagoudiani, today Laodigitria) and Agios Nikolaos Orphanos which are located in Thessaloniki. The *berāt* also appoints Matthew (Matthaíos) as hegoumen of Iviron Monastery. It lists his privileges such as appointing or dismissing monks, his possession and administration of church properties as endowments (*vakıf*), and his duties towards the Patriarch in Istanbul. Payments on the vineyards, orchards, agricultural estates, fields, springs, water channels, shops, and the rest of their endowed produce/ yields belonging to the abovementioned monasteries and churches were to be made. It ends with an exhortation to the addressee to not contradict established practices and to act according to the noble monogram of the Sultan.¹⁷

Regarding the manuscript's prosopographical elements, it mentions the names of one Ottoman sultan and two monks. The former is that of Sultan Murad IV, who ruled the empire from 10 September 1623 to 8 February 1640.¹⁸ The latter two consist of Patriarch Cyril II Kontares (*Kirilos*) (d. 1640), who was the patriarch of Constantinople during three separate periods: 7 to 11 October 1633, 10 March 1635 until June 1636, and 20 June 1638 until the end of June 1639.¹⁹ The second is that of Matthew (*Matyos*), about whom we have no other details other than that he was appointed the abbot (*gumenos*) of Iviron Monastery.

As mentioned above, in addition to the Athonite monastery of Iviron, the names of two other monasteries and three churches are mentioned, but some attention should be given to the philology of the name of the monastery to which the document refers. It appears as Nivir instead of Ivir, which can be attributed to two reasons. The first is the level of education of the monk, since a well-educated monk would have known the meaning of the name Iviron in Greek, whereas an uneducated one would not. Therefore, at the beginning of the name we can observe the prefixing of a /n/ due to the phenomenon of *fausse coupure*: *Stin / tin Iviron* > *ti-n-iviron* > *Niviron*. The second can be attributed to dialects. It can be postulated that the Ottoman scribe heard the

17 The *berāt* is very similar in form and content to contemporary patriarchal *berāts*, see Hasan Çolak and Elif Bayraktar-Tellan, *The Orthodox Church as an Ottoman Institution. A Study of Early Modern Patriarchal Berats, Istanbul* (Istanbul, 2019), pp. 74–78. Also see Radu Dipratu, *Regulating Non-Muslim Communities in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire: Catholics and Capitulations* (London—New York, 2022), pp. 172–176.

18 For a detailed history of the sultan, see Abdülkadir Özcan, *IV Murad* (Ankara, 2016).

19 Charles A. Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans: The Church and the Ottoman Empire 1453–1923* (London, 1983), pp. 101–102; Eleni Gara and Ovidiu Olar, “Confession-Building and Authority: The Great Church and the Ottoman State in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century,” in *Entangled Confessionalizations? Dialogic Perspectives on the Politics of Piety and Community-Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–18th Centuries*, eds. Tijana Krstić and Derin Terzioğlu (Piscataway, 2022), pp. 182–185, 212.

name Nivir pronounced by the monk, because the development of affixing an /n/ at the beginning of words starting with a vowel is a common phenomenon in Greek dialects, especially those of Northern Greece. Consequently, it can be postulated that the monk (probably Abbot Matthew) who pronounced the name of the Iviron Monastery came from Northern Greece and was not well-educated or that this pronunciation prevailed during that period. Mount Athos belongs to a geographical area where northern idioms of Greek were spoken, meaning that the people of Halkidiki used to say Nivir, so it was easy for the monks to adopt this pronunciation.

In response to the argument that the above may have been a case where the scribe miscomprehended by hearing the Greek name and wrote a close equivalent to the linguistic preferences of Turkish, there is an undeniable common occurrence of the name Iviron in Ottoman Turkish and Greek archival sources. The classic is Ivir, but Nivir is also common. Uneducated monks or general speakers did not know the ancient word “Ivires” = Georgians, so they easily made it Nivir(on). The appearance of a non-etymologically justified /n/ before a vowel is common in northern Greek dialects. For instance, another phonetic phenomenon of Northern Greek dialects that have been transmitted into the Ottoman Turkish documents is that the s before /i/ is usually /š/ and not a simple /s/ as in Koine Modern Greek. For this reason, where one would expect the scribe to write plain /s/ to put /š/. E.g. the name Simopetra appears not infrequently as Şimopetra. The same name in Greek also appears as Ασινόπετρα (Asimopetra) Silverstone, where we have another common phenomenon of the Northern dialects, i.e. development of a folk etymology to *asimi* ασήμι “silver.”

The philology of the monastery of *Vilātudos Şotīra* should also be examined. As we conclude from the name *Çavuş manastırı* which preceded and was in use during the Ottoman period for Vlatades/Vlatadon Monastery, the name *Vilātudos Şotīra* is the Greek form of the name of the Monastery. It derives from the medieval Greek *Vlatades* or in genitive *Vlatadon* and the name *Sotira* ‘Savior,’ because the monastery was dedicated to the Transfiguration feast of Christ the Savior.²⁰ Therefore, under the title *Çavuş manastırı dimekle ma’rūf Vilātudos Şotīra nām manastır* the Ottoman scribe first writes the Ottoman form of the name of the Monastery (*Çavuş manastırı*) and immediately after the Greek (Byzantine) form (*Vlatadon Sotira*).

20 For the dedication of the Monastery to Christ Pantokrator and the Transfiguration of the Savior, see Melina Paissidou, “Vlatadon Monastery,” in *Impressions: Byzantine Thessalonike through the Photographs and Drawings of the British School at Athens (1888–1910)* (Thessaloniki, 2012), p. 167.

The *berāt* is written in *divānī* script which, along with *siyakāt*, was almost exclusively used in the Ottoman bureaucracy and was a calligraphic script employed in official documents such as imperial edicts, ministerial registers, and state letters. Undoubtedly, the most aesthetically striking feature is the imperial cypher (*tuğrā*) which heads the page. The earliest known example, that of Sultan Orhan in 1324 in the form of a signature, was a symbol comprising the name and title of the reigning sultan of the Ottoman Empire. It appeared on money, official documents and buildings, and stamps, for example. It contained features such as the name of the sultan, the name of the sultan's father, the first mention of *el-muẓaffer dā'imā* appeared during Murad I's reign, and the titles of *ḥān* and *ṣāh*, which were also added with time.²¹ The cypher of Ivron's *berāt* reads "Shah Murad, the son of Ahmed khan, the ever-victorious" (*Ṣāh Murād bin Aḥmed ḥān el-muẓaffer dāimā*). It is gilded and adorned with red flowers throughout because *fermāns* would often display visually striking features to affirm their importance as a legal document, regularly being adorned with motifs, illuminated or dusted with gold powder.

3.2 *Ahd of Simonopetra Monastery*

The majestic, mid-13th century monastery of Simonopetra is one of the oldest and most architecturally impressive of the 20 Athonite monasteries that have survived until today. The seven-story, bold monastic compound was built upon one huge and precipitous rock, situated at an elevation of 270 meters above the sea on the southern coast of the Holy Mountain between the port of Daphni and Gregoriou Monastery. The monastery was partly named after its eponymous founder, Saint Simon Myroblytes (d. about the middle of thirteenth century), who was a hermit dwelling in a cave nearby when he received divine instruction to build the monastery.²²

Today, the library is well-organized and richly stocked with modern books and periodicals relating to the humanities, and the archive has a large collection of documents in different languages. This is despite many books, manuscripts, and documents being plundered in the early centuries by Latin and Turkish corsairs, while others were lost or misplaced. The Ottoman holdings are considerably smaller than those in other monasteries, which can be attributed to three conflagrations suffered by the monastery in 1580, 1622, and 1891, thereby, according to the monastery's traditions, fulfilling a prophecy of its founder

21 For more information see Derman M. Uğur, "Tuğra," *Diyanet İslam Ansiklopedisi* 41 (2012), 336–339.

22 For more on the history of Simonopetra Monastery, see Stelios Papadopoulos (ed.), *Simonopetra. Mount Athos* (Athens, 1991).

St Simon, who stated that the monastery would be in danger from fires, but never from earthquakes. Despite their limited number, the Ottoman archive contains over 600 documents, many of which are significant in type and content, dating between the early 16th and early 20th centuries. The vast majority date from the period after the fire of 1580, with approximately 200 from the 19th century, consisting primarily of court decisions, tax receipts, and documents from the Halkidiki Forestry Inspectorate. Although it is worth noting that a few documents of significance, having been kept in the monastery's coffers or at the *metochia*, were preserved from the first conflagration of 1580, including court documents (*hüccets*) dated *rebī'yü'l-evvel* 955/ 1548 and 12 *safer* 986 /20 April 1578, and an endowment charter (*vakfiyye*) dating from 1569, most of them were from its *metochia*. Significantly, Simonopetra Monastery's Ottoman holdings are virtually untouched by modern scholarship, and only a total of five have been published. All these documents are written in Ottoman Turkish, except for the Arabic covenant to be presented below, and some also contain Greek notes written on the verso and very occasionally on the recto.

Among the many Ottoman documents in the Athonite archive, the existence of Arabic documents is often overlooked. One such document is a capitulation or covenant (*ahd*), which is found in the majority of Athonite monasteries as well as many of their dependencies. Most are copies of the original Arabic, whereas other are translations and are certified by a *ḵāẓī*.²³ Two exist in the archive of Simonopetra, one of which I'm presenting as the first one here, whereas a facsimile of the second one has been published by Dimitriadis; they were both written in the first half of the 19th century.²⁴ This was not the only treaty to be granted by Muhammad to a non-Muslim population: rather, he concluded the Pact of Najran with the Christians of Yemen in 631. This pact was to determine the fundamental nature of all subsequent treaties with non-Muslim populations under Muslim rule, that is, People of the Book and Zoroastrians.²⁵

23 Dimitriadis, "Turkish Documents," p. 268.

24 Dimitriadis, "Turkish Documents," p. 274.

25 The relevant part of the pact: "Najran and their followers have the protection of God and the *ẓimmah* of Muhammad the Prophet, the Messenger of God, for themselves, their community, their land, and their goods ... and for their churches and services. No bishop will be removed from his episcopate and no monk from his monastic position and no churchwarden from his church-wardship ... On terms stated in this document, they have the protection of God and *ẓimmah* of the Prophet forever until God comes with His command, if they are loyal and perform their obligations well, not being burdened by wrong." For the original Arabic, see Abū Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah al-nabawīyyah* (Cairo, 1955), 3:112. Ahmed El-Wakil, "The Prophet's Treaty with the Christians of Najran: An Analytical Study to Determine the Authenticity of the Covenants," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 27 (2016), 273–354.

They differ from the Ottoman capitulations (*‘ahdnāmes*). Not described as such in classical Islam, their designation was anachronistic and supposedly derived from the Arabic *‘ahd* in their title with the second Persian syllable *-nāme* (letter) seemingly added by the Ottomans to better relate to their own privilege-granting documents.²⁶ The Ottoman definition of capitulation was the general term *‘ahdnāme*, which was used until the 19th century to refer to all agreements of the Porte with foreign countries, be they related to peace, trade, etc., although the term *kapitülasyonlar* was also adopted by the Ottomans. They were of two categories: unilateral, non-reciprocal treaties granting privileges and concessions to a nation or people on the condition of maintaining peaceful relations with the Muslim state; and capitulations containing bilateral articles and were even subjected to the ratification of a foreign ruler, such as the majority of Habsburg, Polish, and Russian capitulations as well as some Venetian ones. A consequence of the breaking of these terms was a revocation of individual privileges or the whole capitulatory agreement. Therefore, the first capitulations were contracted in very general terms, by guaranteeing the freedom of establishment and movement of individuals, freedom of commerce and religion, immunity of residence, and penal and civil jurisdiction.²⁷

The document, known as the Covenant or Testament of Muhammad, was commissioned by Muhammad (d. 632) and written by his son-in-law Ali (d. 661), and was granted to the monks of St Catherine's Monastery on Mt Sinai, where Muhammad was reported to have frequented (figure 10.2). The monks claimed that during the Ottoman conquest of Egypt during the Ottoman-Mamluk War (1516–1517), Ottoman soldiers expropriated the original document, which was taken to Sultan Selim I's palace in Istanbul for safekeeping.²⁸ It has been postulated by Vassilis Dimitriadis that the document found its way into the monasteries after the conquest during the same period, in order to inspire respect in the Ottomans who made contact with the monasteries. Its authenticity has been questioned and it can be postulated to be a false document due to its style and language, the use of the word sultan, which was only

26 I thank Radu Dipratu for bringing my attention to this point.

27 Hans Theunissen, "Ottoman-Venetian Diplomats: The 'ahd-names. The Historical Background and the Development of a Category of Political-Commercial Instruments together with an Annotated Edition of a Corpus of Relevant Documents," *Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies Utrecht* 1/2 (1998), 192–256; Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations (15th–18th Century): An Annotated Edition of 'Ahdnames and Other Documents* (Leiden—Boston—Cologne, 2000), pp. 68–80.

28 Brandie Ratliff, "The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai and the Christian Communities of the Caliphate," *Sinaiticus* (2008), 14–17.

used for the first time by Mahmud (r. 998–1030), as well as the minarets on the illustration of the mosque which was an architectural feature dating from the 9th century.²⁹ While the original text of the Covenant of Muhammad was genuine, the actual copies issued by the sultans during the Ottoman era in their capacity as caliphs and preserved within the Athonite archives do not date from the time of Muhammad.

The document addresses the Muslims, stating that a covenant has been granted to Christians universally “in the east and west, far and near, Arabs and foreigners, the known and the unknown” (*dīn al-naṣṣrāniyya min mushāriq al-arḍ wa maḡhāribiha qarībiha wa baʿīdiha faṣīhihā wa ʿajīmihā maʿrūfihā wa maḡhūlihā*). It grants three privileges: protection, freedom, and exemption. The first is protection to Christian monks, devotees, and pilgrims, their gatherings regardless of location, their properties, and their morals; as well as protection from plundering, destruction of or expropriation from their houses of worship and brought to a Muslim place of worship or house (*la jalas min ṣūmʿatihi wa la sāyih min siyāhatihi wa la bi hadm baytan min buyūt kanāishim yasham wa bayʿihim wa la bi dakhl shayi min mal kanāsihim fī binā masjid wa la fī manāzil al-muslimīn*). The second is freedom of worship, ritual, and religious habitation, and freedom from coercion and compulsion from travelling or going to war. The third is exemption from payment of the *jizya* and any other taxes as well as fines for monks or those engaged in worshipping God.

The document contains some interesting prosopographical elements. In addition to the names of Muhammad ibn ʿAbdallah and his son-in-law Ali ibn Abi Talib, it mentions the names of 22 Arab Muslim signatories who were the companions of Muhammad. As regards the subject of the document, the Christians and monks are defined not by name but in generic terms such as “who follows the Christian religion” (*man yatakhayyul dīn al-naṣṣrāniyya*) and “the monkish sect” (*tāʾifat al-ruhbān*).

The aesthetic elements of the document are striking in terms of decoration, colour, and illustration. It is framed with a gilt border and floral motifs at the top. The *kāzī*’s certification and seal are likewise encircled in gilt. The black script of the contents of the document contrasts with the names of the witnesses, written in red. At the bottom of the document, there is a simple illustration of a mosque. The most impressive feature is the rudimentary outline of the back of the hand supposedly of Muhammad himself, who was illiterate and

29 John Andrew Morrow, *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* (New York, 2013); John L. Esposito, “Sultan,” *The Islamic World: Past and Present* (Oxford, 2013). It can be noted that minarets were influenced by the pillar of St Symeon the Stylite and other stylites.

thus signed with an imprint of his hand. In the present document it appears in black whereas in a second version published by Vassilis Dimitriadis it is in green.³⁰

4 Conclusion

Despite the wealth of extant Ottoman documents within the archives of Mount Athos' 20 monasteries, there remain large thematic and periodic gaps. It is hoped that these can be filled to some extent through the cataloguing of existing collections on Athos as well as the collection and incorporation into wider catalogues of related documents found in other institutional or state archives, such as at the Patriarchal Archive of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Phanar and the Presidential State Archives of the Turkish Republic in Kağıthane, Istanbul, as well in private collections. It is also hoped that the digitalization of such catalogues and their respective documents will provide ease of access to researchers and thus provide the answers to many unanswered questions, as well as new questions being posed about the Holy Mountain and its inhabitants during the Ottoman era.

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³⁰ Dimitriadis, "Turkish Documents," p. 274 (fig. 181).

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Appendices



FIGURE 10.1 An imperial edict (*fermān*) dated 19 *rebīʿuʿl-āḥir* 1045 / 2 September 1635 and granted by Sultan Murad IV

Transliteration Figure 10.1

[Imperial cipher]: *Şah Murād bin Aḥmed ḥan el-muzaḥffer dāimā*

nişān-ı şerif-i ‘alişān-ı şāmī-meḳān-ı sultānī ve tuğrā-yı cihān-sitān-ı ḥakānī
hüküm oldur ki

[1] *Hālyā İstanbul keferesi paṭrıḡı olan Kirilos [Kyrillos] nām rāhib der-i sa‘ādetime ‘arz gönderüb patrıklıḡına mute‘allık neḡs-i Selānıkde kule-ḡuyusı kur-bında vāḡı’ Çavuş [2] manastırı dımeḡle ma‘rūf Vılātodos [Vlatadon] Şotira nām manastır ve tevābī‘i olan Ayā Atanş [Agios Athanasios] ve Laḡudyara [Panagia Laodigitria] ve Aya Niḡkola Orfanos [Agios Nikolaos Orfanos] nām kenīselerü [3] üzere düşen mīrī rusūm ve taşdıḡ aḡçeleri ve sāir maḡşūlātı kadīmden paṭrıḡ ṡarafından ḡabṡ olunugelmeḡin ḡālā girü üslūb-ı sābık üzere [4] ve āyinleri müce-bince ṡarafından Nivir Manastırı gumenosı olan Matyos [Matthaíos] nām rāhib ḡabṡ u taşarrıf eylemek üzere gumenos ta‘yīn olunmaḡ bābında berāt-ı şerīfūm rıcāsına [5] bildirüb ve ‘adet peşkeşin için bīn kırḡ beş rebṡu’l-evvelin yirmi altıncı gününden ḡizāne-i ‘amireme bervech-i naḡd iki bi beş yüz aḡçe teslīm etmeyin [6] rāhib-i merḡūmi mezkūr manastır ve kenīseler keferesine gumenos ta‘yīn idüb bu berāt-ı ḡümāyūnu virdüm ve buyurdum ki rāhib-i mezbūr varub [7] ḡıkr olunan manastır ve kenīselerde olunan pāpās ve keşışlere ve sāir keḡere ṡāifesine kadīmden oligelen ‘adet ve ḡanūn ve üslūb-ı [8] sābık üzere āyinleri mücebince gumenos olub gumenosluḡına mute‘allık umūrda mezbūre mūrāca‘tları olup ṡoḡru sözīnden tecāvüz eylemeyeler [9] ve ‘azl ve naşb mustaḡaḡ olān pāpās ve keşışleri mezbūr gumenos āyinleri muḡteḡāsınca ‘azl ve naşb eyledikde āḡardan kimesne daḡıl eylemeye ve mezbūr [10] kenīseler mute‘allık keḡere ṡāifesinin sāir-i ḡuşūşuna daḡı mezbūr gumenosdan ḡayrī kimesne ḡarışmıya ve ḡıkr olunan manastır ve kenīseler [11] mute‘llık bāḡ ve bāḡçe ve ḡıftlıklere ve tarla ve cayırlara ve ḡücerat ve dukkānlarına ve sāir vakḡ olān maḡşūlātına bundan evvel gumenos olanlar ne-vechile ḡabṡ [12] idüb mutaşarrıf oligelmişler gibi girü paṭrıḡ-i mezbūr ṡarafından rāhib-i merḡūm daḡı ol-minvāl üzere ḡabṡ ve taşarrıf eyleye min b‘ād mu‘tād-i kadīme muḡālīf düşen [13] maḡşūlātına ve āḡardan bir ferd daḡıl ve ta‘arrüz kılınıyalar şöyle bilesiz ‘alāmet-i şerife i‘timād ḡılasız [14] taḡrīren fī yevm-i tāsi‘ aşr fī şehr rebṡu’l-evvel fī sene ḡamse ve ‘erba‘yīn ve elf. Be-maḡkām-i Kostantīniyyetü’l-mahruse.*

Transliteration Figure 10.2

Muṡābiḡ l-aşlıḡı

Alā al-muhalat mahkama li-iṡār al-ahlaḡ al-‘aliyya al-faḡir al-seyyid Tysā, uḡıya lah.

[Seal] *‘Abd’allah—maḡhar aḡzāde*

[1] *Nuskhat sijil al-‘ahd katabahu Muḡammad ibn ‘Abd Allah rasūl Allah şalā Allahu ‘alayhi wa salam ilā kāfat al-naşārā ḡādhā al-kitāb katabahu Muḡam-*



FIGURE 10.2

Copy of the covenant granted to the monks of Sinai Monastery

SIMONOPETRA ARCHIVE, WITH PERMISSION

mad ibn 'Abd Allah [2] ilā kāfat al-nās bashīr aw nadhīran aw muthminan 'alā wadī'at Allah fī khalqihī laylan yakūn lil-nās 'alā Allah ḥujja ba'd al-rusul wa kāna Allah [3] 'azīzan ḥakīman katabahu li-ahl milletihi ve li-jamī' man yatakhayyul dīn al-naṣrāniyya min mushāriq al-arḍ wa maghāribiha qarībiha wa ba'dīha faṣṭihā [4] wa 'ajīmihā ma'rūfihā wa majhūlihā kitāban ja'ala lahum 'ahdan faman lakatha al-'ahd al-adhī fihī wa khālafah ilā ghayrihi wa ta'ddā mā amarahu [5] kāna li-'ahd Allah nākithan wa li-mīthāqid nāqīdan wa bi-dīnihi mustahazunan wa li-lugha mustawjiban sulṭānan kān aw ghayrihi min al-muslimīn [6] al-mumunīn wa iza ihtama rahib ow musaiḥ fī jabal aw wad-dan wa maghara wa 'amran aw sahl aw ramal aw rune aw bi'ayah [7] fa-anā akūn min warā'ihim dhāb 'anhum min kul 'udūlihim bi-naṣfi wa a'wānī wa ahl millati wa itbā' liannahum ra'yatī wa ahlī [8] dhimmatī wa anā a'zil 'anhum al-adhī fī al-mūn al-atī taḥammala ahl al-'ahd minhu al-qiyām bil-kharāj al-amā tālib bihi nufūсахum [9] wa laysa 'alayhim jabar wa lā ikrāh 'alā shay min dhā-

lik wa la yughayyir asqaf min asqafatihi wa la rāhib min ruhbāniyatihī wa la jalas [10] min šūm'atihi wa la sāyih min siyāhatihī wa la bi hadm baytan min buyūt kanāishim yasham wa bay'ihim wa la bi dakhil shayī min mal kanāsihim [11] fī binā masjid wa la fī manāzil al-muslimīn wa min dhālik fa'ala fa-qad nakatha 'ahid Allah wa khālafā rasūl Allah wa la yaḥmal 'alā al-ruhbān [12] wa al-asāqifh wa la man yata'yyid jizīyya wa la gharāmah wa anā aḥfaz dhimmatahum aynamā kānū man tarā wa baḥara fī al-mashriq wa al-maghrib [13] wa al-shamāl wa al-junūb wa hum fī dhimmatī wa mithāqī wa amānī min kul maqrūn wa kadhā man yanfarid fī al-jibāl wa al-mawāqī' al-mubārika [14] la yalzamhum mumāyiz wa 'awn li-kharāj wa la 'ashr wa la yushatirūn li-kun nud-dabir sahim afwāhahum wa yu'ānū nuwa 'and adrāk al-ghilla [15] bi-itlaq qadah wahid min kulli ardab bir sahim afwahim wa la yalzamu bi-khuruj fī harb wa la qiyam bi-jazbit wa la min [16] ashab al-kharaj wa zuī al-amwal wa al-'aqarat wa al-tijaarat mima akthar min isthna 'ashr wa huma bil-hijja fī kuli 'am [17] wa la yukallif ahadan minhum shatatan wa la tujadilu fasl al-kitab illa bil-lati hiya ahsan wa yahfaz lahum janah al-rahma [18] wa yakif 'anhum 'azab al-makruh haythuma hiluwanan sarat al-nasr anihī 'and al-muslimin fa'liyi bi-raziha [19] wa tamkiniha min al-salawat fī bay'iha wa la yahil bayniha wa bayn man huwa min diniha w aman khalaf 'ahd Allah wa i'tama bil-dad [20] min zalik fa qad 'asa mithaqihī wa ruhulihi wa yu'anū 'ala marma bay'ahum wa muwaza'hum wa yukun zalik ma'unah lahum 'ala [21] dinihim wa fa'alihim bil-'ahd wa la yalzim ahadan minhum yanqal silah bal al-muslimin wa la yukhalifu ahl al-'ahd [22] avadan ila hayn taqum al-sa'ah wa tamzi al-dunya wa shahada bi-hada al-'ahd alathi katabahu Muhammed bin Abd'allah rusul Allah [23] sala Allahu 'alayhi wa salam li-cami' al-nasara wa al-wafa bi-cami' ma sharata lahum 'alayhi min athbat ismahu wa shahadat ajrahu.

[Signatures]

[Row 1] 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Abū Bakr bin Quḥāfa, 'Umar ibn al-Ḥaṭṭāb, 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān, Abū al-Dawdā, Abī Ḥurayra, 'Abd Allah ibn Mas'ūd, 'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib;

[Row 2] Faḍīl ibn 'Abbās, Al-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām, Ṭalḥa ibn 'Abdallah, Sa'd ibn Mu'adh, Sa'd bin 'Ubāda, Thābit bin Nafīs, Zeyd ibn Thābit;

[Row 3] Abū Ḥanīfa ibn 'Abīd, Hishām ibn 'Abīd, Ḥārith ibn Thābit, 'Abd al-'Azīm ibn Ḥusayn, Mu'ẓẓam ibn Qarshī, 'Abd Allah ibn al-'Ās, 'Umar ibn Yāsīn.

[1] 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib wrote this contract with his handwriting in the mosque of the Prophet hādha al-'ahd bi-khaṭihī fī masjid al-nabī salā Allahu may the blessings of God and peace be upon him in the year 3 of muḥarram thānī [2] sana al-hijra al-nabawīyya wa awda't naskhatuhu fī khazāna al-sultān wa khatama bi-khatm al-nabī 'alayhi al-salām wa hua maktūb [3] fī jildan dīma ṭāi'fī fa ṭūbā thumma ṭūbā li-man 'amala bihi wa bi-shurūṭihī wa hua 'and Allah min

wājibīn ‘afū rabuhu wa fī al-aṣl [4] al-manqūl minhu hadhihi al-nuskha al-mutawwaja bi’l-nishān al-sharīf al-sultānī bi ṣūratihī naqalat hadhihi al-nuskha min al-nuskha [5] al-kātibah bi khaṭṭ amīr al-mu’minīn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib kar-rama Allahu wajahahu bil-amar al-sharīf al-sultānī li-izāl nāfidhan [6] bi-‘awn al-ma’in al-subḥānī wa waḍ‘at bil-yaddī ṭā’ifat al-ruhbān al-qāṭinīn bi-Jabal Ṭūr Sīnā li-yakūn [7] sanadan ‘alā mā tashahhada bihi al-marāsīm wa al-sajilāt al-atī fī iydī al-ṭā’ifa al-madhbūra al-madhbūra.

PART 5

***Material Remains: Athonite Manuscripts,
Seals, and Digital Humanities***



Byzantine Monasteries and Their Wealth as Shown by Lead Seals: The Case of the Imperial Monastery of Lakape

Martina Filosa

1 Seals in Monasteries, Seals from Monasteries: An Overview

According to current calculations, some 80 to 90,000 Byzantine lead seals have survived to the present day, and this number is steadily increasing.¹ A case study of major historical significance that has not, however, yet been paid due attention by the scholarly community is represented by the seals pertaining to the monastic world. This group of seals includes both seals preserved within monastic archives,² such as, for instance, the archives of the Athonite monas-

1 See Werner Seibt and Marie Luise Zarnitz, *Das byzantinische Bleisiegel als Kunstwerk* (Vienna, 1997), p. 20. The total number of attested seals has since grown, mainly due to archaeological excavations and the increasingly common auctions offering Byzantine seals for purchase; sigillographers tend to suggest the number of Byzantine seals currently known to be around 100,000 units.

2 For a broad overview of seals attached to documents found in monastic archives, see Alexandra-Kyriaki Wassiliou, “Zur indirekten Überlieferung von Siegeln in byzantinischen Urkunden,” *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 7 (2002), 140–157. An interesting instance of a seal still attached to a document matching detached seals belonging to the same actor comes from Iviron Monastery. A Theodore Kladon *protospatharios* (*PmbZ*, no. 27828 = *PBW*, no. Theodoros 20325) is known from five seals. He is most probably the same Theodore attested in September 975 as *protospatharios*, *epi tou manglabiou* and *ekprosopou* of Strymon signing a *sigillion* confirming to the monasteries of Kolovou, Polygyros, and Leontia the ownership and the exemption of their *paroikoi*: *Actes d'Iviron*, 1, no. 2, ed. Jacques Lefort, Nicolas Oikonomides and Denise Papachryssanthou, (*ArchAth*) 14 (Paris, 1985), p. 112, lines 1–2. Were this identity to be confirmed, we would have yet another seal of Theodore, as the document preserved in the monastery is one of the few with a seal attached to it. In the document, Theodore announces the presence of his “usual seal” (τῇ συνήθει ἡμῶν βύλλῃ), bearing religious imagery on either side, a bust of St Nicholas and a bust of St Panteleimon with their usual attributes, published in Nicolas Oikonomides, *A Collection of Dated Byzantine Lead Seals* (Washington D.C., 1986), pp. 74–75. More on this topic in Maria Teresa Catalano, Martina Filosa and Claudia Sode, “New Insights into Known Byzantine Seals: Specimens from the Collection Robert Feind and Their Parallels in Bulgaria,” in *Volume in Memory of Prof. Ivan Jordanov*, eds. Pantelis Charalampakis and Georgi Sengalevich, (*Bulletin of the National Archaeological Institute*) 49 (Sofia, forthcoming 2024).

teries or those of the monastery of St John the Theologian on Patmos, and seals mentioning monasteries, monks, nuns, or other personnel and institutions tied to the monastic environment. Concerning the first category, as highlighted by Jacques Lefort, the Athonite monks overseeing the archives were quite negligent in managing the seals attached to the documents, totaling 219 instances.³ The proportion of missing seals is particularly evident in the case of gold seals, where 70% of them are unaccounted for. Pinpointing the precise timeframe of this loss is generally a challenging—if not impossible—task, but for the case of gold seals, it is likely a medieval phenomenon linked to the object's value, potentially leading to their sale for profit. Occasionally, even the lower portion of the document has been intentionally cut, seemingly to extract the gold seal, like in the case of charter from Lavra.⁴ In the instance of lead seals, 45% of them are lost, with their intrinsic value markedly lower, if not entirely non-existent.⁵ Furthermore, some Athonite documents, identified by scholars as forgeries, have attached gold (11 documents) and lead seals (two documents), intended to substantiate their alleged authenticity. Additionally, there is the unique case of the Lavra archives containing several detached seals, mostly imperial gold seals and all stemming from the Palaiologan period onwards.⁶ Finally, as part of recent restorations of the Byzantine bell tower of the Athonite Monastery of Vatopedi, excavations were conducted, revealing a seal belonging to an otherwise unknown Constantine *chartoularios* and *epi tou patriarchikou sekretou*.⁷

As is evident, trying to reconstruct the wealth of Mount Athos based on the extant seals is a vain endeavor. This is because, among the few seals preserved in monastic archives, the majority are imperial seals that inform us, indeed, about the presence of chrysobulls issued in favor of the monasteries but do not provide any new information beyond what is already present in the documents they were accompanying. Directing our attention, as we will in this

3 Jacques Lefort, "La gestion des archives dans les monastères de l'Athos au Moyen Âge," in *Lire les Archives de l'Athos*, eds. Olivier Delouis and Kostis Smyrlis, (TM) 23/2 (Paris, 2019), pp. 3–18, in particular p. 11.

4 *Actes de Lavra*, 3, no. 119, ed. Paul Lemerle et al., (ArchAth) 10 (Paris, 1979), p. 9.

5 See also Jean-Claude Cheynet, "Le bullaire monastique à Byzance," in *Lire les Archives de l'Athos*, eds. Olivier Delouis and Kostis Smyrlis, (TM) 23/2 (Paris, 2019), p. 278, commenting on Lefort, "La gestion des archives," p. 11.

6 Published in *Actes de Lavra*, Appendix xx, pp. 222–226.

7 Published in Christos Stavrakos and Dimitrios Liakos, "New Evidence Regarding the Early History of the Monastery of Vatopedi (Mt Athos): Unpublished Sigillographical Material," *BZ* 113/1 (2020), 175–188; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1515/bz-2020-0008>.

article, towards another monastery can assist, as we shall argue, in obtaining a clearer picture of the wealth of monasteries in the Byzantine Empire in the early 11th century.

A comprehensive estimate of the lead seals belonging to monks, nuns, and monasteries is undoubtedly difficult to carry out, and the reasons for this difficulty are of varied nature. Firstly, one has to take into account the haphazardness and fortuity of the transmission of lead seals—a small-in-size, perishable source which was for centuries disregarded in the framework of archaeological excavations. Moreover, unpublished seals still greatly exceed those which are published—thus presenting a serious obstacle in the accessibility of the sources.⁸ Finally, there are some seals for which one can suggest, but cannot maintain with absolute certainty, that they were issued by a monastic institution or by one of its members. This is notably the case for anonymous figural seals bearing mostly religious imagery.⁹ These seals lack any inscription that provide identification of the issuer, such as name, family name or office(s), and bear on one or both sides depictions of distinctive saints—otherwise scarcely attested or altogether unattested on lead seals—who are also known to be the namesakes of one or more monasteries mentioned by other sources.¹⁰ Another

8 On the topic of accessibility of, among other primary sources, Byzantine seals, and of the information they convey see, most recently, Martina Filosa, Usama Gad and Gabriel Bodard, “Description, Translation and Process: Making the Implicit Explicit in Digital Editions of Ancient Text-Bearing Objects,” in *Can't Touch This! Digital Approaches to Material and Immaterial Heritage*, eds. Chiara Palladino and Gabriel Bodard (London, 2023), pp. 51–75; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/bcv.d>.

9 On this topic see, most recently, John Cotsonis, *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art, Volume 7: The Iconographic Seals* (Washington DC, 2019), in particular the introduction to the catalogue, pp. 1–44.

10 On the correlation between iconography and the (intended) anonymity of the seal's issuer, see Cotsonis, *Catalogue*, p. 3 with earlier bibliography. On the iconography of monastic seals, see most recently Cheynet, “Le bullaire monastique,” p. 253 and pp. 273–277. An interesting example of an anonymous iconographic seal certainly belonging to a monastery is given on p. 253, n. 30. It is the seal of the monastery of St Theophylaktos of Kouzenas (Numismatik Naumann Auction 80, [4 August 2019], Lot 716, now in the collection Kofopoulos, no. 2462). Recently, another seal struck by the same *boullo-terion* has been sold at auction (Leu Numismatik Web Auction 20, [16–18 July 2022], Lot 3136). The seal bears on the obverse the image of the Mother of God *orans* with a medallion of Christ before her chest and on the reverse the bust of a male saint with sigla on either side reading “St Theophylaktos of the Kouzenas.” Another seal certainly belonging to the same monastery was published in Claudia Sode, *Byzantinische Bleisiegel in Berlin*, 2, (ΠΟΙΚΙΛΑ BYZANTINA) 14 (Bonn, 1997), p. 148, no. 134: here the sigla flanking the bust of the saint read “our holy father Theophylaktos of the Kouzenas.” The monastery on Mount Kouzenas (Κουζηνάς) near Smyrna is attested in Ioannes Skylitzes, *Synopsis Historiarum*, ed. Hans Thurn, (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae) 5; (Series Berolinensis)

instance of this kind of dubious seals would be those whose owners do not identify themselves as belonging to the monastic milieu, even though other sources undoubtedly show that they did.

A comprehensive estimate, as has been shown, is extremely hard to achieve. However, all the above-mentioned difficulties considered, one can try and give a rough estimate of approximately one thousand lead seals.¹¹

An attempt at a systematization of the sigillographic evidence stemming from the monastic milieu has been recently carried out by Jean-Claude Cheynet.¹² He identifies the following four main categories:

1. seals issued by the monastery in its institutional capacity;¹³
2. seals issued by a high-profile figure within the monastery, such as an *hegoumenos*, or an *oikonomos*;
3. seals attesting monks holding offices outside of the monastery, thus working either for the Church or for the State, such as a bishop or a *synkellos*, but also an *anagrapheus* or a *doux* mentioning their prior status of monk;
4. seals issued by simple monks with no further attribute or specification.¹⁴

The chronological distribution of seals relating to the monastic milieu does not seem to reflect the importance that monks and monasticism had in the social sphere in Byzantium: in fact, up to and including the period of Iconoclasm, the number of seals of monks is almost insignificant. The quantity seems to grow in conjunction with the development of the administrative and management

(Berlin, 1973), p. 478, line 95. On the episode see the review of Claudia Sode, *Byzantinische Bleisiegel in Berlin* by Jean-Claude Cheynet in *REB* 56 (1998), pp. 335–336, in particular p. 335. On the monastery see also Hélène Ahrweiler, “L’histoire et la géographie de la région de Smyrne entre les deux occupations turques (1081–1317),” *TM* 1 (1965), 96.

11 So Cheynet, “Le bullaire monastique,” p. 243.

12 This attempt to a systematization is to be found in Cheynet, “Le bullaire monastique,” *passim*.

13 These could also be referred to as ‘corporate seals.’ The phenomenon of corporate identity and its expression including, but by no means limited to, lead seals in Byzantium and, in particularly, in the monastic milieu undoubtedly needs further research. On the topic of corporate identity relating to urban society in the Byzantine Empire, see Claudia Sode, “The Formulation of Urban Identity on Byzantine Seals,” in *Seals: Making and Marking Connections Across the Medieval World*, eds. Brigitte Bedos-Rezak and Carol Symes (Berlin—Boston, 2018), pp. 149–165; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781641892575-008>, as well as the article co-authored by Max Ritter and Claudia Sode, “Echte und falsche Dementsiegel. Mit einem Parergon zu den Numera der Ambianenses,” in *Anekdotia Byzantina: Studien zur byzantinischen Geschichte und Kultur. Festschrift für Albrecht Berger anlässlich seines 65. Geburtstags*, eds. Isabel Grimm-Stadelmann et al. (Berlin—Boston, 2023), pp. 617–640; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1515/978311070315-039>. I would like to thank the authors for sending me an early draft of this paper.

14 Cheynet, “Le bullaire monastique,” p. 243 and *passim*.

functions of monastic properties and, perhaps, also with the increasing aristocratization of society, at least until the end of the 11th century.¹⁵

Apart from the above-mentioned article by Jean-Claude Cheynet, there has been to my knowledge no attempt to systematically investigate the corpus of Byzantine seals relating to monks and monasteries in Byzantium. The most exhaustive survey of seals related to the monastic world remains the one carried out by Vitalien Laurent in his major work *Le corpus des sceaux de l'Empire byzantin*, in particular in its fifth volume, entirely devoted to the Byzantine Church.¹⁶

However, in the almost 50 years that have gone by since the publication of the fifth volume of Laurent's *Corpus*, much has happened in the field of Byzantine sigillography: countless publications have followed one another over the years, the attention of archaeology on these artifacts is greater, and—for better or for worse—more and more seals are being offered for sale by auction houses. The number of seals related to the monastic world, therefore, has increased and needs a new systematization. This paper, however, will not review all seals relating to the monastic milieu, but only focus on a specific category of seals, i.e., the ones mentioning offices relating to the management of resources within monasteries. This is also why this paper will not deal with the seals kept in the Athonite archives, or in any monastic archive, but rather with the seals attached to documents and correspondence going outwards from the monasteries. A prominent case study within this sub-category is provided by the monastery of Lakape and its sigillographic corpus, which constitutes the core of the present paper.

2 Seals of Monks with Management and Administrative Offices

While for my research I collected a much broader dataset, in the scope of this paper, I decided to narrow my interest to a very specific group of seals. I will review only the seals bearing the mention of offices related to the management of resources within a monastery which is explicitly mentioned—whether the institution could be identified with certainty or not is, at this point, of secondary importance. These selection criteria narrowed down the search quite sensibly. As a matter of fact, if we observe the corpus of seals constituted by Vitalien Laurent, we note the rather limited number of seals where the name

15 Cheynet, "Le bullaire monastique," p. 244.

16 See Vitalien Laurent, *Le Corpus des sceaux de l'empire Byzantin, Tome v: L'Église* (Paris, 1963–1972), V/2:62–118, 147–303; V/3:205–224, 232–250, 253–284.

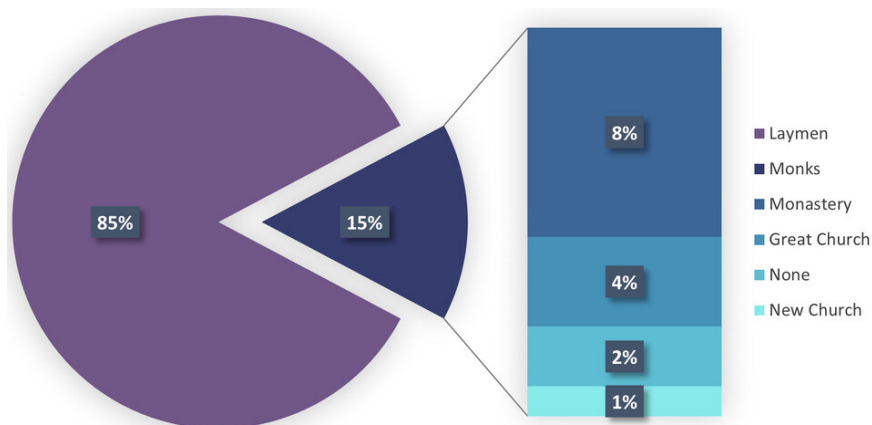


FIGURE 11.1 Percentage of laymen and monks serving as *oikonomoi* attested on lead seals

of a monastery appears, whether it be a seal of the institution itself, of its *hegoumenos* or of its *oikonomos*, whereas the seals of the ‘simple’ monks are quite abundant. However, the combination with an office other than the ones mentioned above is rather exceptional. There are few exceptions to this rule, and these concern mainly larger monastic establishments in Constantinople, which disposed of a broad array of specialized personnel units and at some point, fell under the administration of a *kourator*, such as, among others, the Mangana. These establishments, however, will not be the focus of the present paper.

In the light of the filters applied to the search, sigillographic evidence is admittedly rather scarce. However, we can try and formulate hypotheses in the light of the data at our disposal.

The only two offices relating to the management of resources within monasteries attested by sigillographic evidence are the *oikonomos* and the *notarios*.¹⁷ As regards the *oikonomoi*, we can observe that out of a sample of 84 *oikonomoi*, only 13 are monks (15%). Amongst the monks, seven are *oikonomoi* who mention the monastery to which they belonged (8%), three are *oikonomoi* of the Great Church (4%), two do not mention any institution (2%), and one is *oikonomos* of the New Church (1%).

¹⁷ The search has been conducted on a database consisting of more than 28,000 entries based on published seals. Seals sold at auction are not considered. The database has been compiled by Robert Feind (Cologne), whom I thank for sharing with me this *instrumentum* of crucial importance.

3 A Sigillographic Addendum to the Dossier of the Imperial Monastery of Lakape

In the framework of the investigation of the sigillographic evidence pertaining to the actors with economic responsibilities within monasteries, a case study of significant relevance is the imperial monastery of Lakape.

The imperial monastery of Lakape is attested in a novel of Nicephoros II Phokas (r. 963–969), by which the emperor ordered that the land that had been previously confiscated or alienated from the Armenian *stratiotai* be given to this monastery or be returned to their original owners if they claimed them.¹⁸

Εἰ δέ τινα τῶν τοιούτων ἀρμενικῶν τοπίων εἴτε τῇ βασιλικῇ τῆς Λακάπης μονῇ, ὡς ἔγραψας, ἐπεδόθησαν, εἴτε ἀφωρίσθησαν οἰαισδήποτε κουρατωρεῖαις ἢ καί τινι τῶν δυνατῶν οὐ διὰ τινος κοινωφελεῖς δουλείας ἀλλὰ διὰ μόνην προσπάθειαν ἐδωρήθησαν, τῶν τοιούτων οἱ κληρονόμοι, μὴ μόνον εἰ τριετία διήλθεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ πρὸ τῆς παρελεύσεως τῶν τριάκοντα χρόνων ὑποστρέφοντες, ἐχέτωσαν ἐπ' ἀδείας ἀναλαμβάνειν τὰ ἴδια. Κἂν γὰρ λιβέλλους ἐποπτῶν καὶ χρυσοβούλλια ἐπιφέρονται οἱ ταῦτα εἰληφότες διὰ προσπάθειαν, ὡς εἴρηται, τὸ μηδὲν κελεύομεν λογίζεσθαι πάντα καὶ τοὺς τῶν στρατιωτῶν κληρονόμους τοὺς ἰδίους ἀπολαμβάνειν βουλόμεθα τόπους.¹⁹

But if some of these Armenian properties have been donated to the imperial monastery of Lakape, as you have written, or assigned to curatories of any kind, or bestowed to one of the *dynatoi* not because of public service but as a favour only, the heirs to these properties may reclaim their own lands not only if they return after three years have gone by, but also before the passage of thirty years. Even if persons who have received these properties as a favour produce the inspectors' certificates or chrysobulls, we

18 On the alienation of military land to the imperial monastery of Lakape see Eric McGeer, *The Land Legislation of the Macedonian Emperors* (Toronto, 2000), p. 24, n. 47 with references.

19 Nicolas Svoronos (ed.), *Les nouvelles des empereurs macédoniens concernant la terre et les stratiotes* (Athens, 1994), p. 170, lines 15–24. This novel has been commented on abundantly, see, e.g., Svoronos, *Novelles des empereurs macédoniens*, pp. 174–175 and Peter Charanis, "The Monastic Properties and the State in the Byzantine Empire," *DOP* 4 (1948), 51–118, in particular 59–60. See also Rosa Benoit-Meggenis, *L'empereur et le moine: Les relations du pouvoir impérial avec les monastères à Byzance (IXe–XIIIe siècle)* (Lyon, 2017), p. 144, n. 22, and John Philip Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire*, (DOS) 24 (Washington D.C., 1987), p. 145 with n. 144.

rule that all this counts for nothing. It is our wish that the heirs of the *stratiotai* take back their own properties.²⁰

Other than this mention in 963/964 (?), this imperial monastery is absent from the written sources. Sigillographic evidence, however, is unusually abundant—and it has been thoroughly examined by Jean-Claude Cheynet in 2013.²¹ The seals, moreover, introduce a certain variability in the monastery's name: hence, we encounter the form "Lakape", as recorded in the novel by Nicephoros II Phokas, alongside the variations "Lakapa"²² and "Lakapos."²³ In the majority of instances, however, the monastery's name is abbreviated, typically after the *pi*.²⁴ Seals abounded in the halls of this monastery and deliver the image of an extremely lively establishment, which disposed of reasonable wealth, too, judging by the personnel attested by sigillographic data. The sigillographic dossier of the Monastery of Lakape, spanning from the mid-10th to the late-11th century, consists of nine seals mentioning the following actors:²⁵ three *oikonomoi* (Antonios, Peter, with as many as four seals to his name, and Bartholomaios), one *notarios* (Timotheos), one monk (Sabas), and one layman, Constantine Kostomyres, who was *ostiaros*, *hebdomarios*, imperial *notarios*, and *pronoetes* of the monastery.

20 Translation McGeer, *Land Legislation*, p. 88.

21 See Jean-Claude Cheynet, "Le monastère impérial de Lakapè," in *Holokotinin: Studies in Byzantine Numismatics and Sigillography in Memory of Petros Protonotarios*, eds. Elene Papaethymiou and Ioannes Turatsoglou (Athens, 2013), pp. 173–179.

22 Attested on the seals of Antonios monk, *kouboukleisios*, and *oikonomos* (BnF Collection Zacos, inv. no. 1286), of Peter monk and *oikonomos* (Istanbul Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 1463–1416; BnF Collection Zacos, inv. no. 1513; BnF Collection Zacos, inv. no. 1514; State Hermitage Museum, inv. no. M-12077), and of Epiphanius monk, *kouboukleisios*, and *hegoumenos* (E-Rex, Auction 3 [17 November 2023], Lot 668; Papillon Numismatic, Auction 8 [19 September 2021], Lot 1063); the seals belonging to the first two persons are published in Cheynet, "Monastère impérial de Lakapè," pp. 173–175, while the third one is published below.

23 Attested on the seals of Timotheos monk and *notarios* (Département des Monnaies, médailles et antiques of the Bibliothèque nationale de France [henceforth BnF] Collection Zacos, inv. no. 1716; NBS Auctions, Web Auction 9 [27–28 November 2021], Lot 731) and of Constantine Kostomyres *ostiaros*, *hebdomarios*, imperial *notarios*, and *pronoetes* (State Hermitage Museum, inv. no. M-6783), published in Cheynet, "Monastère impérial de Lakapè," pp. 176–177.

24 As on our seals, with very few exceptions, which will be discussed below. We have decided to expand the abbreviations, where applicable, using the form "Lakape" known from the novel by Nicephoros II Phokas.

25 As Cheynet points out, there are rarely more than four or five seals for a single monastic institution, even in the case of large Constantinopolitan establishments, such as, for instance, that of the Virgin Eleousa.

The relatively high number of extant seals relating to this monastery—along with its mention in the novel from 963/964—allowed Cheynet to formulate hypotheses towards a partial reconstruction of its history.²⁶ The monastery was most probably founded in the first half of the 10th century, and its administrators, *oikonomoi* recruited from among the monks, fostered its development and increased its wealth through a policy of land acquisition so that its management required at a given point in time the presence of a *notarios* who, according to the extant sigillographic material, was a monk himself. The monastery was most probably integrated into the state administration as early as the 11th century and was thus managed by a *pronoetes*, who was a layman.²⁷ One can only speculate as regards to the disappearance of the monastery from the sigillographic sources (arguably not much distant from its disappearance *tout court*), but, as Cheynet points out, considering the geographical location of the monastery within the eastern provinces of the empire, it is likely that its disappearance can be tied to the Turkish invasions of the 1070s.

In the ten years since Cheynet's article was published, new sigillographic evidence relating to the imperial monastery of Lakape has come to light, thus an *addendum* to the dossier of this monastery is now necessary. The seals, offered for sale by various auction houses between 2020 and 2023, amount to a total of eight, bringing, therefore, the number of seals mentioning the monastic institution to a total of 17. Out of the newly-discovered seals, six attest to four hitherto unknown actors, while the remaining two seals are parallels of already known and published specimens.²⁸ In what follows, the first edition of the unpublished seals is presented.

26 See Cheynet, "Monastère impérial de Lakapè," p. 179.

27 On the role of the *proenetes* in the management of imperial estates as reflected by lead seals, see Jean-Claude Cheynet, "Épiskeptitai et autres gestionnaires des biens publics (d'après les sceaux de l'IFEB)," *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 7 (2002), 87–117, in particular 96–98, with a useful discussion of the previous bibliography at 96, n. 52 (repr. *La société byzantine. L'apport des sceaux*, [Paris 2008], pp. 237–272, in particular pp. 247–249, n. 58).

28 These were offered for sale by (1) Pompei Ancient Numismatic, Online Auction 2 (3 December 2021), Lot 933, hammer price: €170, parallel of the seal of Bartholomaios, monk and *oikonomos* of the imperial monastery of Lakape (BnF, Collection Levante, no. 4), published in Cheynet, "Monastère impérial de Lakapè," p. 175 (images available: <https://www.biddr.com/auctions/pompeiantientnumismatic/browse?a=2143&l=2363466> [accessed: 26 January 2022]); (2) NBS Auctions, Web Auction 9 (November 27–28, 2021), Lot 731, hammer price: €190, parallel of the seal of Timotheos, monk and *notarios* of the imperial monastery of Lakape (BnF Collection Zacos, inv. no. 1716), published in Cheynet, "Monastère impérial de Lakapè," p. 176 (images available: <https://www.biddr.com/auctions/nbsauctions/browse?a=2147&l=2366634> [accessed: 26 January 2022]).

3.1 *Michaelios (?) Monk and Oikonomos of the Imperial Monastery of Lakape*

On the obverse, bust of the Mother of God with her right hand before her chest, presumably holding Christ on her left arm (only part of the nimbus of Christ is visible). Sigla visible on the right side ΜΡ–.. : Μ(ήτη)ρ [Θ(εο)ῦ]. Border of dots.

On the reverse, inscription of 5 lines, likely preceded and followed by ornamental motifs on separate lines. Border of dots.

..ΕΡ,Θ,
....ΗΛ,
ΑΧΞΟΙΚ,
Τ,Ρ,ΜΟΝ,
ΛΑΚΑΠ,

[Θ(εοτό)κ]ε β(οή)θ(ει) [....]ήλ(ω) (μονα)χ(ῶ) (καὶ) οἰκ(ονόμω) τ(ῆς) β(ασιλι-
κῆς) μον(ῆς) Λακάπ(ης)

Θεοτόκε βοήθει ήλω (or ηλίω) μοναχῶ καὶ οἰκονόμω τῆς βασιλικῆς μονῆς
Λακάπης.

Mother of God aid elos (or elios) monk and *oikonomos* of the imperial
monastery of Lakape.

Due to the state of preservation of the seal, the first name of the seal issuer cannot be read in its entirety. From the extant letters, however, we can infer that he is not among those already attested, making him yet another actor within this monastery. Of the extant text portion, only the letter combination ΗΛ along with an abbreviation sign are clearly discernible. This, in conjunction with the lacuna on the second line of text, which—considering the dimensions of letters and spaces on the reverse—can only have previously contained four letters, leaves room for speculation. The traces of the last letter of the lacuna, i.e. right before the letter combination ΗΛ, point to a triangle-shaped letter, such as *alpha*, *delta*, or *lambda*; whereas the abbreviation sign at the end of the second line of text would hint at a name ending in -ήλος, -ήλιος, or -ήλειος, while being aware that *eta* might stand for one of its homophones. Keeping in mind the observations made so far, the name Μιχαήλιος appears to be a valid hypothesis. While the name is well attested on sigillographic evidence until the 9th century, it seems to disappear from the 10th century onwards.²⁹ A further sug-

29 See, for example, Michaelios *hegoumenos* (*PmbZ*, no. 5154) attested by a seal from the 7th



FIGURE 11.2 Demos, Auction 2, Lot 1190 (5 June 2021)
 Inv.: Demos, Auction 2, Lot 1190 (June 5, 2021); hammer price: €130. The current whereabouts of the seal are unknown.
 Dimensions: Diameter 26 mm.
 Description: slightly corroded, partially obliterated, otherwise fine.
 Unpublished.
 //: No parallels known.
 Date: late 10th century-early 11th century

gestion, which, however, would imply an error on the part of the engraver of the seal, is the name Μιχαήλ: if this were the case, we would have to disregard the abbreviation sign at the end of the second line and consider it an oversight of the engraver. The reading of the name of the seal issuer would be greatly facilitated by a parallel specimen in a better state of preservation, or by a photographic reproduction in a higher resolution.

The iconography of this seal, showing the Mother of God with Christ on her left arm, is unique within the small corpus of seals relating to the imperial monastery of Lakape; this should not, however, be surprising considering

century published in Laurent, *Corpus*, V/2, p. 231, no. 1323; Michaelios *koubikoularios* (*PBE*, no. Michael 34 = *PmbZ*, no. 5012) attested by a seal from the first quarter of the 8th century, published in Werner Seibt, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel in Österreich. I. Teil, Kaiserhof* (Vienna, 1978) pp. 166–167, no. 56, possibly identical with the homonymous issuer (*PmbZ*, no. 5155) of George Zacos and Alexander Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals* (Basel, 1972), p. 640, no. 942, of Vitalien Laurent, “Bulletin de sigillographie byzantine,” *Byz* 5 (1929/1930), 586, n. 4, and with two more seals now in the Musée national de Carthage (so Vivien Prigent *per litteras*); Michaelios imperial *spatharios* (*PBE*, no. Michael 124 = *PmbZ*, no. 5156) on a seal from the 8th century published in Zacos-Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, p. 1218, no. 2209.

that this imagery ranks among the most popular religious iconographic types on Byzantine seals.³⁰

3.2 *Basil Monk and Notarios of the Imperial Monastery of Lakape*

On the obverse, patriarchal cross with an x at the lower transverse bar mounted on three steps with fleurons arising on either side. Circular inscription within the iconographic field, beginning with a cross. Border of dots.

+ΚΕΡΟΗΘΞ.ΤΩC.....

+ Κ(ύρι)ε βοήθε[ι] τῷ σ[ῶ] δούλῳ]

On the reverse, inscription of five lines beginning with a cross; a single decorative pellet precedes the inscription, while the fifth and last line of the inscription is between two decorative pellets. Border of dots.

•
+RACI
Λ,ΑῚSNO
TAP,T,R³MO
N,ΛΑΞΑ
• Π, •

+ Βασιλ(είῳ) (μονα)χ(ῶ) (καὶ) νοταρ(ίῳ) τ(ῆς) β(ασιλικῆς) μον(ῆς) Λακάπ(ης)

Κύριε βοήθει τῷ σῶ δούλῳ Βασιλείῳ μοναχῷ καὶ νοταρίῳ τῆς βασιλικῆς μονῆς Λακάπης.

Lord aid your servant Basil monk and *notarios* of the imperial monastery of Lakape.

These two specimens, which were sold by two different auction houses a little more than a year apart, were struck with certainty by the same *boullo-terion*. The specimen sold by Zeus Numismatics, in Auction 13 (31 October 2020), Lot 1163, which is in an excellent state of preservation except for some minor scratches, allows for a safe interpretation of the iconographic motif on the obverse and for a complete reading of the legend on the reverse of the seal.

30 So Cotsonis, *Catalogue*, p. 124. In scholarship this iconographic type is often referred to as



FIGURE 11.3 Zeus Numismatics, Auction 13 (31 October, 2020), Lot 1163
 Inv.: Zeus Numismatics, Auction 13 (31 October 31 2020), Lot 1163; hammer price: £55. The current whereabouts of the seal are unknown.
 Dimensions: Diameter 24 mm.
 Description: slightly corroded, partially erased, otherwise very fine.
 Unpublished.
 //: NBS Auctions, Web Auction 9 (27–28 November 2021), Lot 752; hammer price: €180.
 Date: late 10th century–early 11th century

Basil, the seal's issuer, is one of the very few monastic *notarioi* explicitly mentioned on lead seals, as we saw above, and he broadens the pool of *notarioi* active in the framework of the imperial monastery of Lakape. His colleague Timotheos³¹ left a seal which, due to a specific paleographic feature, i.e., the presence of the *omicron-epsilon* ligature with straight upper bars, which seems to disappear from sigillographic sources around the 1030s, can be dated slightly later than the seal of Basil.³² The imagery on the obverse of the seal of Basil, in turn, is typical of the reign of Basil II, which allows us to hypothesize a slightly older issuing date.

Hodegitria, even when the epithet is not explicitly engraved on the seal. On the iconography of the Mother of God on Byzantine lead seals see, most recently, Cotsonis, *Catalogue*, pp. 73–199; for the Mother of God holding Christ on her arm see pp. 124–132. On the same topic see also Herbert Hunger, “Zur Terminologie der Theotokosdarstellungen auf byzantinischen Siegeln,” *Aachener Kunstblätter* 60 (1994), 131–142, in particular 132–133 and Werner Seibt, “Die Darstellung der Theotokos auf byzantinischen Bleisiegeln, besonders im 11. Jh.,” *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 1 (1987), 35–56, in particular 47–48.

31 His seal is published in Cheynet, “Monastère impérial de Lakapè,” p. 176 and a parallel specimen is NBS Auctions, Web Auction 9 (27–28 November 2021), Lot 731.

32 See Oikonomides, *Collection of Dated Byzantine Lead Seals*, pp. 162–163.



FIGURE 11.4 NBS Auctions, Web Auction 9 (27–28 November, 2021), Lot 752

As regards the iconographic motif on the obverse of the seal,³³ depicting a nicely adorned patriarchal cross mounted on three steps, with an x at the lower transverse bar and fleurons arising as well as with an invocation to the Lord within the inscribed field, is not unusual in the sigillographic corpus pertaining to the imperial monastery of Lakape: the same imagery can be found on the seal of Bartholomaios, monk and *oikonomos*, as well as on the seal of the monk Sabas.³⁴

3.3 *Epiphaios Monk, Kouboukleisios, and Hegoumenos of the Imperial Monastery of Lakape*

On the obverse inscription of four lines beginning with a cross, preceded by a decoration consisting of a line, signaling at the same time the *nomen sacrum* Κύριε, between two decorative dots, and followed by a decoration consisting of a cross of dots between two decorative lines. Border of dots.

33 For a discussion of the image of the cross on seals see Alexandra-Kyriaki Wassiliou-Seibt, “Σύμβολον ζωηφόρον. Παραστάσεις σταυρών σε βυζαντινά μολυβδόβουλλα,” in *Philotimia: Studies in Honour of Alkmene Stavridou-Zafra*, eds. Theodoros Korres et al. (Thessalonike, 2011), pp. 669–685; Béatrice Caseau, “L’iconographie des sceaux après la fin de l’iconoclasme (IXe–XIe s.),” *Sto godini ot rozhdenieto na dr Vasil Haralanov (1907–2007)* [One hundred years since the birth of Dr. Vasil Haralanov (1907–2007)], ed. Ivan Jordanov (Shumen, 2008), pp. 225–232; Ioanna Koltsida-Makre, “The Representation of the Cross on Byzantine Lead Seals,” *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 4 (1995), 43–51, with earlier bibliography; Jean-Claude Cheynet, “Quelques remarques sur le culte de la croix en Asie Mineure au Xe siècle,” *Histoire et culture chrétienne. Hommage à Monseigneur Yves Marchasson*, ed. Yves Leduc (Paris, 1992), pp. 67–78 (repr. *La société byzantine. L’apport des sceaux*, [Paris, 2008], pp. 275–284).

34 Both seals published in Cheynet, “Monastère impérial de Lakapè,” pp. 175–176. For the seals issued by Bartholomaios see also our no. 3.

· — ·
+KER,
TΩCΩΔ,
ΕΠΙΦΑΝ,
ΜΟΝΧ,
— ∴ —

+ K(ύρι)ε β(οήθει) τῷ σῷ δ(ούλῳ) Ἐπιφαν(ίῳ) μοναχ(ῷ)

On the reverse inscription of four lines, preceded by a decoration consisting of a cross of dots between two decorative lines. Border of dots.

— ∴ —
KΘRΘK,
SHΓΘM,T,
R̄,MON,ΛA
KAΠAC

Κουβουκ(λεισίῳ) (καὶ) ἡγουμ(ένῳ) τ(ῆς) β(ασιλικῆς) μον(ῆς) Λακάπας

Κύριε βοήθει τῷ σῷ δούλῳ Ἐπιφανίῳ μοναχῷ κουβουκλεισίῳ καὶ ἡγουμένῳ τῆς βασιλικῆς μονῆς Λακάπας.

Lord aid your servant Epiphanius, monk, *kouboukleisios*, and *hegoumenos* of the imperial monastery of Lakapa.

This specimen is of particular historical interest as it attests to the only known *hegoumenos* of the imperial monastery of Lakape. In addition, the seal issuer Epiphanius is the second person within this monastery to bear the title of *kouboukleisios*, an honorific title which lends itself to being combined with both ecclesiastical and monastic offices.³⁵

35 Alongside him, only Antonios, monk, *kouboukleisios*, and *oikonomos*; his seal is published in Cheynet, "Monastère impérial de Lakapè," pp. 173–174. For an accurate analysis of the instances and evolution of the title of *kouboukleisios*, see Vasiliki Leontaritou, *Εκκλησιαστικά αξιώματα και υπηρεσίες στην πρώτη και μέση βυζαντινή περίοδο* [Ecclesiastical titles and offices in the Early and Middle Byzantine Period] (Athens—Komotini, 1996), pp. 286–300, and Jean Darrouzès, *Recherches sur les offikia de l'Église byzantine* (Paris, 1970), pp. 39–44, especially pp. 41–42 (with a classification of the *kouboukleisioi* according to the legends on their seals).



FIGURE 11.5 E-Rex, Auction 3 (17 November 2023), Lot 668
Inv.: E-Rex, Auction 3 (17 November 2023), Lot 668; hammer price: €260. The current whereabouts of the seals are unknown.
Dimensions: Diameter 22.87; Weight 8.77 g.
Description: slightly corroded, otherwise fine.
Unpublished.
//: Papillon Numismatic, Auction 8 (19 September, 2021), Lot 1063; hammer price (whole lot): £480. The current whereabouts of the lot of seals are unknown.
Dimensions: unknown.
Date: late 10th century-early 11th century



FIGURE 11.6 Papillon Numismatic, Auction 8 (19 September 2021), Lot 1063

This seal is a piece of exquisite craftsmanship, especially regarding the execution of paratextual signs, some of which evoke paleographic book hands.³⁶ Worth noting as well is the unique abbreviation for the word μοναχῷ, where the *alpha* is positioned in apex, above the *nu*.

3.4 *Agapios Monk and Oikonomos of the Monastery of Lakape*

On the obverse, patriarchal cross with an x at the lower transverse bar mounted on three steps with fleurons arising on either side. Circular inscription within the iconographic field, beginning with a cross. Border of dots.

+ΚΕΡΟΗΘΕΙ

+ Κ(ύρι)ε βοήθει

On the reverse, inscription of five lines beginning with a cross; a pellet between decorative bars precedes the inscription. Border of dots.

— . —

+ΑΓΑ

ΠΙΩΑΧΣΝ

ΚΟΝΩΜ'.

ΜΟΝΙΛ.

ΚΑΠ

+ Ἀγαπίω (μονα)χ(ῷ) (καὶ) ὑκονώμ(ω) [τ(ῆς)] μονίς Λ[α]κάπ(ης)

Κύριε βοήθει Ἀγαπίω μοναχῷ καὶ ὑκονώμω τῆς μονίς Λακάπης.

Lord aid Agapios monk and *oikonomos* of the monastery of Lakape.

This specimen raises some doubts about its attribution to the imperial monastery of Lakape due to the fact that the last line of text on the reverse, where the name of the monastery is expected to be located, is heavily damaged. Moreover, the attribute 'imperial' seems to be missing from the seal. The traces of the last letter of the third line of the legend, partially obliterated due to mechanical

36 This rich diversity could not be reproduced in the diplomatic transcription above as the font here employed, Athena Ruby, does not (yet) provide all the necessary characters for this specific instance.



FIGURE 11.7 Papillon Numismatic, Auction 8 (19 September, 2021), Lot 529
 Inv.: Zeus Numismatics, Auction 13 (31 October 2020), Lot 1163; hammer price: £55. The current whereabouts of the seal are unknown.
 Dimensions: Diameter 24 mm.
 Description: slightly corroded, partially erased, otherwise very fine.
 Unpublished.
 //: No parallels known.
 Date: late 10th century-early 11th century

damage, lead one to hypothesize the presence of either a *tau* or an open *beta*. In the first case, the expansion of the abbreviation into τῆς would not raise any questions (and this is, in fact, the preferred solution in this edition); whereas in the second case, the expansion of the abbreviation into βασιλικῆς would be plausible yet would put us in the position of having to imply an article not engraved on the seal. This seal, therefore, is to be included in the sigillographic corpus of the imperial monastery of Lakape with a *caveat*, and its reading and interpretation will be improved by the presence of a parallel in a better state of preservation.

4 The Prosopographical Dossier of the Monastery of Lakape

In light of the new seals presented in this paper we can update the prosopographical dossier of the imperial monastery of Lakape as follows:³⁷

37 The seals which came to light after the publication of Cheynet, “Monastère impérial de Lakapè” in 2013 are highlighted in bold.

1. **Agapios (?)** monk and *oikonomos* (late 10th-early 11th century)
 - i. **Papillon Numismatic, Auction 8 (19 September 2021), Lot 529**
2. **Antonios** monk, *kouboukleisios*, and *oikonomos* (mid-10th century)
 - i. BnF Collection Zacos, inv. no. 1286³⁸
3. **Bartholomaios** monk and *oikonomos* (late 10th-early 11th century)
 - i. BnF Collection Levante, inv. no. 4³⁹
 - ii. **Pompei Ancient Numismatic, Online Auction 2 (3 December 2021), Lot 933**
4. **Basil** monk and *notarios* (late 10th-early 11th century—presumably before Timotheos)
 - i. **Zeus Numismatics, Auction 13 (31 October 31 2020), Lot 1163**
 - ii. **NBS Auctions, Web Auction 9 (27–28 November 2021), Lot 752**
5. **Epiphanios** monk, *kouboukleisios*, and *hegoumenos* (late 10th-early 11th century)
 - i. **E-Rex, Auction 3 (17 November 2023), Lot 668**
 - ii. **Papillon Numismatic, Auction 8 (19 September 2021), Lot 1063**
6. **Constantine Kostomyres** *ostiaris*, *hebdomarios*, imperial *notarios*, and *pronoetes* (mid-11th century)
 - i. State Hermitage Museum, inv. no. M-6783⁴⁰
7. **Michailos (?)** monk and *oikonomos* (late 10th-early 11th century)
 - i. **Demos, Auction 2, Lot 1190 (5 June 2021)**
8. **Peter** monk and *oikonomos*⁴¹ (10th century)
 - i. Istanbul Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 1463–1416⁴²
 - ii. BnF Collection Zacos, inv. no. 1513
 - iii. BnF Collection Zacos, inv. no. 1514
 - iv. State Hermitage Museum, inv. no. M-12077⁴³
9. **Sabas** monk (late 10th-early 11th century)
 - i. BnF Collection Zacos, inv. no. 1959⁴⁴

38 Published in Cheynet, “Monastère impérial de Lakapè,” pp. 173–174.

39 Cheynet, “Monastère impérial de Lakapè,” p. 175.

40 Cheynet, “Monastère impérial de Lakapè,” p. 177.

41 *PmbZ*, no. 26476.

42 Published in Jean-Claude Cheynet, Turan Gökyıldırım and Vera Bulgurlu, *Les Sceaux Byzantins du Musée Archéologique d'Istanbul* (Istanbul, 2012), pp. 591–592, no. 6.98.

43 Published in Elena Stepanova, “Pečati s monogrammami x–xiv vekov iz sobranija Ermitaža [Seals with monograms from the 10th to the 14th century from the Ermitage collection],” *Vizantijskaja ideja. Vizantija v epohu Komninov i Paleologov* [The Byzantine idea. Byzantium in the Komnenian and Palaiologan Era] (Saint Petersburg, 2006), pp. 170–172. Seals (i) through (iv) are also published in Cheynet, “Monastère impérial de Lakapè,” pp. 174–175.

44 Cheynet, “Monastère impérial de Lakapè,” pp. 175–176.

10. **Timotheos** monk and *notarios* (late 10th-early 11th century—presumably after Basileios)
 - i. BnF Collection Zacos, inv. no. 1716⁴⁵
 - ii. NBS Auctions, Web Auction 9 (27–28 November 2021), Lot 731

5 Conclusions

The corpus of lead seals relating to the monastic milieu is difficult to evaluate, even more so when we deal with those seals pertaining to the management of resources. The lack of evidence hinders a complete reconstruction of the phenomenon and leaves much unsaid. The extant specimens, however, are testimony to the wealth of which some monasteries disposed—wealth which needed to be administrated by personnel within the monastery or from the outside. The scarcity of sigillographic evidence relating to the management of resources in comparison with the larger corpus of monastic seals raises several questions, relevant both for the history of the monastic establishments and for the field of Byzantine sigillography. Were these actors perhaps using their seals as simple monks also when acting in their capacity of *oikonomos* or *notarios* on behalf of the monasteries? Should this be the case, then perhaps the document secured by the seal might have conveyed more information on the status of the sender. Would they have used two different seals to sign their correspondence, one official seal for communicating with higher authorities and a more generic one for other purposes? This seems rather unlikely. Was the correspondence from within the monasteries signed preferably by the *hegoumenos* or with a seal issued by the monastery as an establishment? Speculation on this track would probably explain to some degree the relative abundance, in the corpus of monastic seals, of seals mentioning *hegoumenoi* and of ‘corporate’/institutional seals of monastic establishments. All these questions are probably bound to remain open for now and the preliminary results of this paper represent only a first attempt at the systematization of the material, which will surely benefit from the contribution of new, not only sigillographic, evidence.

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45 Cheynet, “Monastère impérial de Lakapè,” p. 176.

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Manuscripts as Part of the Wealth of Athonite Monasteries

Zisis Melissakis

The study of the economic parameters of the preparation, ownership, and circulation of manuscript books in Byzantium is a topic of importance, although the extant sources with numerical data are limited. What we know derives mainly from the many notes by scribes, owners, sponsors, or readers within the books, which are important primary historical sources. They are also, however, uneven in volume and the information they give is sometimes vague, lacking a continuous flow of data that would allow us to trace the changes over time.¹ Previously, such notes, as well as certain philological or archival testimonies, were gathered and studied by Peter Schreiner in 1990, Vasiliki Kravari in 1991, and Florentia Evangelatou-Notara in the collections of dated notes in manuscripts that she published in 1978, 1984, and 2000. In the meantime, I offered an approach to the topic of the inexpensive manuscript based on paleographical and codicological data in 2018.²

- 1 The rarest information in such notes concerns the cost of manufacture or purchase of a codex. While the method of payment and more generally the conditions under which such transactions took place are also not mentioned, however, there is frequent mention of the individuals that covered the cost, mainly sponsors or donors of manuscripts.
- 2 Peter Schreiner, “Kosten der Handschriftenherstellung in Byzanz,” in *Buch- und Bibliothekswissenschaft im Informationszeitalter: Internationale Festschrift für Paul Kaegbein zum 65. Geburtstag*, eds. Engelbert Plassmann, Wolfgang Schmitz and Peter Vodosek (Munich, 1990), pp. 331–344 and 478; Vasiliki Kravari, “Note sur le prix des manuscrits (ixe–xve siècle),” in *Hommes et richesses dans l’Empire byzantin, 2. VIIIe-XVe siècle*, eds. Vasiliki Kravari, Jacques Lefort and Cecile Morisson, (Réalités byzantines) 3 (Paris, 1991), pp. 375–384; Florentia Evangelatou-Notara, “Σημειώματα” ἑλληνικῶν κωδίκων ὡς πηγὴ διὰ τὴν ἐρευναν τοῦ οἰκονομικοῦ καὶ κοινωνικοῦ βίου τοῦ Βυζαντίου ἀπὸ τοῦ 9ου αἰῶνος μέχρι τοῦ ἔτους 1204. [“Notes” of Greek manuscripts as a source for the study of the economic and social life of Byzantium from the 9th century to the year 1204] (Ph.D. thesis Athens, 1978). See the financial data in notes nos 9, 12, 19, 20, 30, 175, 185, 200, 247, 377, 420, 424, 425, 497, and an analysis of the data on pp. 6–37; eadem, Συλλογὴ χρονολογημένων “σημειωμάτων” ἑλληνικῶν κωδίκων, 13ος αἰ. [Collection of dated “notes” of Greek codices of the 13th century] (Athens, 1984). See the financial data of note no. 170; eadem, Χορηγοί, κτήτορες, δωρητές σε σημειώματα κωδίκων. Παλαιολόγιοι χρόνοι [Sponsors, patrons, and donors in manuscript notes. The Palaiologan era] (Athens, 2000), see especially notes nos 152, 312, 317, 330, and 338; Zisis

In this paper we will examine the financial dimension of the topic in focusing on Mount Athos, by approaching the manuscript book as an asset of the monastery (static wealth), but also as product and something distributable (dynamic wealth) until the 16th century. This issue had been examined by Cyril Pavlikianov in 2003, but he focused exclusively on the Slavic manuscripts of Mount Athos, and only from the 14th to the 16th century, making use of various scattered pieces of information.³ Given that the relative testimonies with numerical data for Greek manuscripts are scarce,⁴ we will not try to examine the price values, but rather the general economic framework concerning books on Mount Athos. In other words, we will try to examine the extent to which the Athonites treated books as an important asset, and the extent of the circulation of this object of wealth. For the examination of whether it was an asset, it is necessary to distinguish between:

- A) the spiritual and utilitarian value of the manuscript, which derives from its content and the needs of its owner or user;
- B) its value as an heirloom, which was usually connected with the provenance and the long-term ownership by a particular monastery, but possibly also with its sumptuous appearance;
- C) the purely material—economic value, which, again, depended on its appearance (the quality of its production) and its condition, possibly the

Melissakis, “Βιβλία ταπεινά—βιβλία ταπεινών. Η προσιτή εκδοχή μιας πολυτέλειας. Η προσιτή κάλυψη μιας ανάγκης [Humble manuscripts—manuscripts of the humble. The affordable version of a luxury. The affordable covering of a need],” in *Το Βυζάντιο χωρίς λάμψη. Τα ταπεινά αντικείμενα και η χρήση τους στον καθημερινό βίο των Βυζαντινών* [Byzantium without glamour. Mere objects and their use in the everyday life of the Byzantines], eds. Anastasia G. Yangaki and Aggeliki Panopoulou (Athens, 2018), pp. 231–251. The collection of dated notes from the period 9th–15th centuries by Florentia Evangelatou-Notara forms the content of the database “Σημειώματα-Κώδικες” [Notes-Manuscripts]; see http://simeiomata-kodikon.arch.uoa.gr/index.php/simeiomata/generic_search?q=αγορ&p=DiaforaXaraktiristika (last visit 10.8.2022).

- 3 Kyrillos Pavlikianov, “Τιμές και κυκλοφορία τῶν σλαβικῶν χειρογράφων στὸ Ἅγιον Ὄρος κατὰ τοὺς 18-19 αἰῶνες [Prices and circulation of Slavic manuscripts on Mount Athos, 14th–16th centuries],” in *Χρῆμα καὶ ἀγορὰ στὴν ἐποχὴ τῶν Παλαιολόγων* [Money and markets in the Palaiologan era], ed. Nikos G. Moschonas, (*Τὸ Βυζάντιο σήμερα*) 4 (Athens, 2003), pp. 283–292. On Mount Athos see Peter Soustal, *Makedonien, südlicher Teil*, (TIB) 11; (Denkschriften der philosophisch-historischen Klasse) 535 (Vienna, 2022), pp. 240–244.
- 4 From the manuscripts bearing notes with financial information that were gathered by the aforementioned researchers, the only one relevant to Mount Athos is Lond. Add. 39602, which was taken from Karakallou Monastery in the 19th century by Robert Curzon; Marcel Richard, *Inventaire des manuscrits grecs du British Museum*, (Publications de l’Institut de Recherche et d’Histoire des Textes) 3 (Paris, 1952), p. 76; for the note in the manuscript see Evangelatou-Notara, *Σημειώματα*, note no. 185; Kravari, “Note,” pp. 376 no. 3 and 381 no. 4;

rarity of its content, but also its provenance, although generally, from the scarce data available to us, it is evident that books in Byzantium were usually a costly object.⁵

In practice, however, this distinction, as it appears in the available sources (scribal notes and ownership notes, paleographical and codicological data, archival sources), is quite vague, particularly when trying to determine their heirloom and material value. Intellectual value (mainly religious, since the largest number of manuscripts in Athonite collections is of religious content) can be seen in words or phrases in notes that praise the author and the importance (the sacredness) of the text. Characterizations, such as *ιερόν*, *θεῖον*, *ἄγιον*, *θεόπνευστον*, *ἄχραντον*, *ψυχωφέλης* etc. for the content of a manuscript may be typical, even stereotypical in many cases, and are not confined to Mount Athos, but can offer a hint of their intellectual value.

Their liturgical importance is confirmed by daily worship in the monasteries, for which a number of particular books must be available in the *katholikon*, the chapels, the refectory, and even for the individual readings by the monks. Moreover, it is for this reason that in certain monasteries during the first years of their foundation (for example Pantokrator in the second half of the 14th century⁶) we can observe organized copying in order to cover their needs, although the production of liturgical manuscripts continues (as for example in the Lavra at the end of the 13th and beginning of the 14th century),⁷ allowing them to replace worn-out or lost books. On the other hand, the value of books with lay or more specialized texts was generally accepted by scholar-monks, who possessed them in their private collections, although certain books (such as

cf. also note 21 in this paper. Vassiliki Kravari, however, used financial information from certain documents, among which were two from Mount Athos; Kravari, "Note," p. 382 nos 16 and p. 384 no. 4. On these documents nos 21, 22, and 48 in this paper. On Karakallou Monastery, see Soustal, *Makedonien*, pp. 534–535.

5 On the high cost of Byzantine books, see Melissakis, "Βιβλία ταπεινά," pp. 232–237.

6 Zisis Melissakis, "Attività scrittoria presso il monastero atonita del Pantokrator durante i primi decenni dalla sua fondazione (seconda metà del sec. XIV)," in *Griechisch-byzantinische Handschriftenforschung. Traditionen, Entwicklungen, neue Wege*, eds. Christian Brockmann et al., 2 vols (Berlin—Boston, 2020), 1:233–247, 2: 779–788. On Pantokrator Monastery, see Soustal, *Makedonien*, pp. 817–819.

7 Erich Lamberz, "Βιβλιογράφοι και βιβλιογραφικά εργαστήρια στο Άγιον Όρος κατά την εποχή των Παλαιολόγων [Scribes and scriptoria on Mount Athos during the Palaiologan era]," in *Αριστοτέλειο Πανεπιστήμιο Θεσσαλονίκης. Β' Συμπόσιο "Η Μακεδονία κατά την εποχή των Παλαιολόγων"*, Θεσσαλονίκη, 14–20 Δεκεμβρίου 1992 [Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. 2nd symposium on "Macedonia in the Palaiologan era"] (Thessaloniki, 2002), pp. 144–148; see also Boris L. Fonkitch, "Biblioteka Lavry sv. Afanasija na Afone v x-xiiii vv.," *Palestinskij Sbornik* 17 (1967), 167–175.

medical works) would also have had a utilitarian value. We realize, however, that after the monks' demise, the manuscripts would have been amassed in the Athonite libraries, probably because of the general acceptance of their knowledge value.⁸

As for the perception concerning the heirloom or money value of the books, we can seek it in various testimonies. First in property inventories, and later in contracts for *kellia* (autonomous settlements owned by a monastery but leased to a small group of monks), the liturgical and widely religious books only are noted as part of their valued movable property, which also includes sacred vessels and vestments from the church, various agricultural tools and household utensils.⁹ Of particular interest is the inventory of the movable property of Xylourgou Monastery (of the year 1142), in which there is a list of the books, most of which were probably Slavonic. The most valuable of these, which were placed in the sanctuary, are described in detail.¹⁰ This is probably the dividing line between a utilitarian church book and a valuable—but also useful—heirloom. As in the *kellia*, inventories were made on the occasion of a new superior (in this case an *hegoumenos*), who assumed responsibility of the foundation and its movable property. Yet although such inven-

8 Besides, as we can see from the phrase ἡ μὲν χεὶρ ἡ γράψασα σήπεται τάφω, ἡ δὲ γραφή μένει εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας in many scribal notes, the book is seen as an eternal holder of knowledge and is safeguarded: Gérard Garitte, "Sur une formule des colophons de manuscrits grecs (ἡ μὲν χεὶρ ἡ γράψασα)," in *Collectanea vaticana in honorem Anselmi M. Card. Albareda a Bibliotheca Apostolica edita*, 1, (Studi e Testi) 219 (Città del Vaticano, 1962, repr. 1986), pp. 359–390; Stig Y. Rudberg, "Note sur une formule des colophons de manuscrits grecs," *Scriptorium* 20 (1966), 66–67. On the gradual formation of Athonite libraries, see Zisis Melissakis, "Βιβλιοθήκες τῶν ἱερῶν μονῶν. Τεκμήρια λατρείας καὶ λογιოსύνης. Ζωντανοὶ ὀργανισμοὶ καὶ χώροι φύλαξης κειμηλίων [Libraries of the holy monasteries. Evidence of theft and scholarship. Living organizations and places for the preservation of heirlooms]," in *Λόγιοι καὶ λογιόσυνη στὸ Ἅγιον Ὄρος. Scholars and Scholarship on Mount Athos* (Thessaloniki, 2013), pp. 74–83; Boris L. Fonkitch, "La production des livres grecs et les bibliothèques de l'Athos aux xe–xviii^e ss. Quelques résultats et perspectives de la recherche," *Bollettino della Badia Greca di Grottaferrata*, n.s. 49–50 (1995–1996), 35–61.

9 See for example the post-Byzantine contract for the *kellion* of Agioi Anargyroi of Esphigmenou Monastery, dated 1697; Zisis Melissakis, *Ἀρχεῖο τῆς Ἱ. Μ. Ἐσφιγμένου. Ἐπιτομὲς μεταβυζαντινῶν ἐγγράφων* [Archives of the Monastery of Esphigmenou. Summaries of post-Byzantine documents], (Athonika Symmeikta) 11 (Athens, 2008), document 12, lines 16–17 (transcription of document at: <https://agionoros.anavathmis.eu/database/>; last visit 14.8.2022). On the *kellion* of Agioi Anargyroi near Karyes, see Soustal, *Makedonien*, pp. 212 at *H. Anargyroi* (4).

10 *Actes de Saint-Pantéléimôn*, no. 7, ed. Paul Lemerle, Gilbert Dagron and Sima Ćirković, (ArchAth) 12 (Paris, 1982), lines 5–8 (books in the sanctuary), 25–27. For this list, see also Pavlikianov, "Τιμές," pp. 283–284. On Xylourgou Monastery, see Soustal, *Makedonien*, pp. 106–1107.

tories were always drafted by a higher authority, (of a *kellion* by its mother monastery) or a public authority (in the case of Xylourgou by a committee from the Mese and *hegoumenoi* of other monasteries), the publishers of this document noted that its value was not official, because it does not bear the proper signatures, but was only intended for internal use within Athos, or most probably within the monastery.¹¹ The movable wealth of the monastery was an internal issue and was listed for safeguarding the harmony of its brotherhood. Books of higher value are noticeable only from their location, and perhaps their detailed description, should they have had bindings with valuable elements.

We find a similar testimony in 1365, when the monastery of Theotokos Spelaiotissa in Melenikon was given to Vatopedi. In the inventory of its movable property and real estate manuscripts are mentioned that were located in the church.¹² Here, the distinction between valuable books and others is made solely on their binding, while it is not known if the inventory was signed, because it is truncated.¹³ Thirty years later (1395), only the movable property of the monastery is again noted, also without signatures, on the occasion of a new *oikonomos* from Vatopedi.¹⁴ The 36 books of the first inventory had now become 47, with the addition of four scrolls (*χοντάκια*), to which other ones were added from its various dependencies. Again, the most valuable were noted based on their binding,¹⁵ although in this case they also took note of the old and worn-out ones (*παλαιόν*-old, *χωρίς σανιδίων*-without planks, *ἄγραφα*-blank, *σεσημμένα*-decayed), while the writing material (*βέβρανον*, *βαβίκινον*) is noted, so we assume, only for purposes of identification.¹⁶ Highly interesting is the specific mention of books donated to the monastery by a particular priest (*ἐπα-*

11 idem, pp. 65 and 66.

12 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 2, no. 120, ed. Jacques Lefort et al., (ArchAth) 22 (Paris, 2006), lines 13–20. On Vatopedi, see Soustal, *Makedonien*, pp. 266–269 and 267 on the monastery of Theotokos Spelaiotissa.

13 Soustal, *Makedonien*, p. 300.

14 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 3, no. 175, ed. Jacques Lefort et al., (ArchAth) 23 (Paris, 2019), lines 36–49.

15 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 3, no. 175, lines 36–37 (valuable books), 46–49 (books in dependencies).

16 We find similar characteristics in other book inventories that are not from Athos, with the addition or removal of characteristics depending on each case. Binding, however, almost always remains a common point. See for example Zisis Melissakis, “Ένας βυζαντινός κατάλογος χειρογράφων από τη Μονή τῆς Πάτμου ἐλάχιστα γνωστός [A little-known Byzantine manuscript catalogue from Patmos Monastery],” in *Λόγιοι και λογιισύνη στο Βυζάντιο. Επιστημονικό συμπόσιο προς τιμήν του καθηγητή Κώστα Ν. Κωνσταντινίδη. Πανεπιστήμιο Ιωαννίνων, 26 Οκτωβρίου 2016* [Scholars and scholarship in Byzantium. Scientific symposium in honor of Prof. Kostas N. Konstantinides. University of Ioannina, 26th October 2016], eds. Panagiotis G. Antonopoulos, Ilias A. Giarenis, and Dimitrios K. Agoritsas (Thessaloniki, 2019), pp. 47–75, 243–249.

φήκεν ὁ παπᾶς κυρ Διονύσιος). Such references are also found in inventories beyond Mount Athos, as, for example, on Patmos, and are an indication that after the donation, although we do not know for how long, the manuscripts were accompanied by the name of their previous owner and donor.¹⁷

The aforementioned donation of Dionysios leads us to the second issue, that of book ownership on Mount Athos. In theory, each manuscript used for daily worship or for the spiritual education of the monks belonged to the monastery,¹⁸ while erudite monks would own private collections with books on particular topics. It appears, however, that in practice the boundary between a personal and monastery book was rather vague, something certified by the existence of many previously Athonite books in monastic collections outside Athos.¹⁹ In the years 1270 to 1274 the monk Theodosios or Theodoulos Skaranos left in his will, among other things, the books of the church of Theotokos in Ormylia, which he described mentioning only their material and content, and in one case the cover (μετὰ ἐνδύματος μαύρου).²⁰ He also mentioned 11 liturgical and theological manuscripts that were kept by Isaakios as collateral for a debt of ten hyperpyra, and he demanded that the debt be paid in full in order for them to be returned. The heir in the will appears to be for the most part Xeropotamou Monastery, where Theodosios probably dwelt, and its *hegoumenos* was named responsible for executing the will.²¹ Thus, in this case, the church, although outside Athos, and, consequently, its books, were considered to be the private property of a monk and are used as collateral for his debt.

We find specific terms of ownership by a monk in a document dated 1444 from Vatopedi.²² Here, the monastery of Agios Georgios of Mangana in Con-

17 Melissakis, “Ἐνας βυζαντινὸς κατάλογος,” pp. 55–56. The donation of Dionysios is mentioned in lines 45–46 of the Vatopedi document.

18 This applies to the cenobitic monasteries, and not the idiorrhythmic ones after the 14th century.

19 For a first record of the manuscripts that were taken from Athonite libraries to collections outside Mount Athos see: https://kripis2.anavathmis.eu/βασεις-δεδομενων/db_4--4/ (last visit 14.8.2022).

20 *Actes de Xéropotamou*, no. 9, ed. Jacques Bompaire, (ArchAth) 3 (Paris, 1964), lines 11–12. On Ormylia see Soustal, *Makedonien*, pp. 477–480 and 1104–1105.

21 *Actes de Xéropotamou*, no. 9, lines 59–60. On this document see also Kravari, “Note,” p. 382, no. 16. Lond. Add. 39602 was also given as collateral (for a debt of 24 nomismata), which, although later bought by Robert Curzon from Karakallou Monastery, had been pawned before his arrival there; see also footnote no. 4. On Xeropotamou Monastery, see Soustal, *Makedonien*, pp. 1102–1104.

22 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 3, no. 228.

stantinople, with the unanimous acceptance of the brotherhood,²³ sold a Tetraevangelion to the priest-monk Matthaïos, who was beginning a *taxidion* (ταξίδιον, a trip to collect alms), for the price of 35 hyperpyra, in order to cover urgent needs of its church. Matthaïos would be the sole proprietor of the book. Were he to die at the monastery or during the *taxidion*, the book would be returned to the monastery in his memory. If, however, after returning from the journey, he wished to leave the brotherhood and to settle elsewhere, he could keep it as his own and pass it on to whomsoever he wished after his death, since he had bought it openly and legally. We assume that eventually Matthaïos settled at Vatopedi, where the document is found (possibly the Tetraevangelion as well), to which we will return in order to examine the book's sale by the monastery and its situation before Matthaïos.²⁴ At this point, the important thing is that the private ownership of the codex is clearly stated, thus securing to some degree both the interests of the monastery of Agios Georgios, and, in the future, those of the monastery that Matthaïos went to settle. Even in cases of manuscripts that were dedicated to Athonite monasteries by monks, we realize that they express their requests for the future of the donation, such as cod. Karakallou 20, a Tetraevangelion with introductory texts of Kosmas Indicopleustes and Ammonius, copied on Athos in 1289/90 at the expense of the monk Isaak, who later dedicated it to the monastery, requesting in a note that the book not be given, sold, traded, appropriated, or altered by anyone. Despite his note, the book was found in 1492 in Constantinople and was returned to the monastery by its buyer in his memory.²⁵

The third issue is that of the economic—but also utilitarian and heirloom—value of manuscripts for the monasteries, which is evident from mentions of their repurchase after they were lost. The only known such example from Athos

23 An analogous case of the sale of a manuscript by Gennadios, the *hegoumenos* of Ypomem-niskontos Monastery, with the consent of its brotherhood, to the *hegoumenos* of another monastery is mentioned in an undated note (post 1440) in cod. Lavra Ω 63; Evangelatou-Notara, Χορηγοί, note no. 366Δ. On the Ypomemniskontos Monastery, probably in Thessa-loniki, see Soustal, *Makedonien*, pp. 154.

24 See below, p. 275 and n. 48.

25 ... ἵνα ἐν ἀναφαίρετον τῇ μονῇ τὸ βιβλίον μηδενὸς βουλευθέντος προφάσει τινὶ στερῆσαι αὐτὸ τὴν μονὴν ... χαρίσαι ἢ πωλῆσαι ἢ ἀλλάξει ἢ ἰδιοποιήσασθαι λάθρα ἢ τὰ παρόντα γράμματα ἀφανίσαι ὡς ἔλεγχον ὄντα ἢ τὸ φύλλον τοῦ χάρτου κόψαι μὴ θέλων ταῦτα ὁρᾶσθαι ἐνταῦθα ...: Evangelatou-Notara, Χορηγοί, note no. 77 and p. 70; eadem, *Συλλογὴ*, note no. 477. A similar case outside Mount Athos is mentioned in a note in the *sticherarion* cod. Patm. 218, in which the dedicating monk forbids its donation, its change of ownership, and even its allocation to a dependency of Patmos Monastery, giving an analysis of the expenses he made for its crafting in 1166; Evangelatou-Notara, *Σημειώματα*, note no. 420.

comes from a note on cod. Esphigmenou 14.²⁶ It describes the double looting of the monastery in 1533 by Agarene pirates, during which, apart from the depredations and the abduction of monks, its books were also stolen. Later, a monk—perhaps the *hegoumenos*—of the monastery of Saint Nicholas of Kochliaras at Karyes (ὁ κύρ Ἀκάκιος ὁ ἐκ τῆς μονῆς τοῦ Κωχλυσάρᾳ) bought from the Agarenes 100 of the manuscripts and a certain number of chrysobulls and returned them to the monastery. From the inventory that followed we realize that they were all liturgical or were used for the spiritual training of the monks, which would explain why they were bought back. What is not clarified, however, is whether the buyer, who came from another Athonite establishment, returned them to the monastery as a donation or in exchange for something. Their detailed inventory, although without noting their qualitative aspects, (e.g. μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα, small or big), was probably related to a document which is now lost.²⁷

The information gathered until now shows that manuscripts were considered an important part of the wealth of an Athonite monastery, although not as important as the movable property and other main means of income. The difference is that the manuscripts were valuable for worship, a fundamental aspect of the monk's life. Therefore we will examine their potential contribution to the income and even the expenses of the monasteries, and particularly their involvement in financial transactions. First, we shall begin with the generally-accepted view that Mount Athos was a large center of manuscript production and export, which superseded the older perception of Albert Ehrhard that up until the 16th century most manuscripts were imported onto Mount Athos. Indeed, the studies by Linos Politis and more recently by Erich Lamberz have revealed continuous copying activity in the monasteries, which until the end of the 13th century appears as sporadic, but only as a result of the incomplete information from the notes in the manuscripts. During

26 Spyridon Lambros, Κατάλογος τῶν ἐν ταῖς βιβλιοθήκαις τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὁρους ἐλληνικῶν κωδίκων [Catalogue of the Greek codices in the libraries of the Holy Mountain], 1 (Cambridge, 1895), p. 172. On Esphigmenou Monastery, see Soustal, *Makedonien*, pp. 419–421.

27 On the monastery of Kochliaras, see Soustal, *Makedonien*, pp. 583. A similar case, but not from Athos, concerns cod. Vat. gr. 436, which, according to a note dated 1074, was bought after it was plundered from the burned-down dependency of an unidentified monastery (... πρὸς τὴν δεσποτείαν τῆς Λαύρας τοῦ κυρ [...] κατὰ τὸν [...] ...). It is interesting that the book was bought for three nomismata by the royal notary Ioannis from the looter of the dependency and handed over to the monastery, under unknown conditions, perhaps as a dedication; Evangelatou-Notara, *Σημειώματα*, note no. 247. On the possible identification of this monastery and the subsequent presence of the manuscript in Cyprus, see Jean Darrouzès, "Autres manuscrits originaires de Chypre," *REB* 15 (1957), 155.

the Palaiologan period, manuscript copying activity was initially found in the monasteries of the eastern side of the peninsula (Lavra, Vatopedi, Pantokrator, Koutloumousiou, Esphigmenou, Philotheou) and during the mid-15th century we also find it in the remaining ones (Docheiariou, Xeropotamou, Gregoriou, Dionysiou), as well as in Iviron, with a noticeable disruption during the difficult years between 1380 and 1415.²⁸ Based on the content of the manuscripts that were written and kept on Mount Athos, it is evident that this activity was undertaken mainly for covering the wants of the monasteries, primarily their liturgical needs and correspondingly the spiritual education of their monks. These needs were covered almost in full in the monasteries of Lavra, Vatopedi, Pantokrator, Philotheou, and Esphigmenou, judging by the correlation between locally-copied and imported manuscripts during the Palaiologan era. We also witness the fact that the manuscripts produced were humble in make and appearance, particularly after 1320, when paper was introduced to Mount Athos, and differed significantly from the luxurious books of the Athonite collections that usually came from important external donations.²⁹ We must thus accept that the production of manuscripts within the peninsula aimed at and succeeded in saving money for the monastery, as long as the copying was done by monks.

The manuscript book, however, whether local or imported, new or old, continued to be an expense that somehow had to be covered. Based on the notes in manuscripts from Athonite collections, we find the following cases:

1. Costs covered by the monastery for the writing material, to be inexpensively copied by the monks. This is most likely the case of Pantokrator Monastery, which in the second half of the 14th century organized the *in situ* copying of liturgical manuscripts with four of its brotherhood's members. This is revealed mostly from the common types of paper used that were obviously covered by the monastery.³⁰
2. Costs covered by the Athonite monks themselves. They reached out to Athonite scribes (e.g. cod. Karakallou 20, year 1289/90 at the expense of

28 Lambez, "Βιβλιογράφοι," pp. 149–150 and 143 (on the previous views concerning the production of manuscripts on Mount Athos). On Lavra Monastery, see Soustal, *Makedonien*, pp. 655–659; on Koutloumousiou, pp. 633–635; on Philotheou, pp. 861–862; on Docheiariou, pp. 383–385; on Gregoriou, p. 467; on Dionysiou, pp. 378–379 and on Iviron, pp. 491–495.

29 Lambez, "Βιβλιογράφοι," p. 149.

30 Melissakis, "Attività," 1:237–241; Zisis Melissakis, "Ο κωδικογράφος Ἰγνάτιος (14' αἰ.) τῆς Μονῆς Παντοκράτορος Ἀγίου Ὁρους [The scribe Ignatios (14th century) of Pantokrator Monastery of the Holy Mountain]," *Παρουασός* 37 (1995), 361–365, 384–387.

monk Isaak³¹), sometimes from other monasteries (such as the brothers Iosif and Makarios of Vatopedi, who ordered manuscripts from the scribe Dositheos of Lavra³²) or copied the manuscripts covering the expenses themselves and later dedicating the book to their monastery (such as the hieromonk Markos, who in 1315–1316 copied a series of *menaia* for Esphigmenou Monastery).³³

3. Costs covered by prominent Athonites, such as the *protos* Ioannikios, who in 1301 paid for the expenses of cod. Par. Coisl. 223 and dedicated it to a monastery which is not mentioned.³⁴ The same person, only a few years earlier (1285), “by synergy, provision, and incentive” (διὰ συνεργίας καὶ συνδρομῆς καὶ διεγέρσεως) urged the metropolitan of Thessaloniki Ignatios to dedicate two *synaxaria* to Protaton, one of them being cod. Protatou 21.³⁵ We assume that Ioannikios took the initiative, while the cost was covered by Ignatios. The same individuals, but from different positions, are likely behind a series of *martyrologia* of Lavra that were written in about the same period by the monk Ioannikios by order of the *hegoumenos* of Lavra Ignatios.³⁶ In this case, the expenses were probably covered by the monastery and not by Ignatios himself.
4. Dedications of manuscripts by prominent political figures or members of the aristocracy to Athonite monasteries or even by ordinary lay people. The best-known case is that of Emperor Ioannis/Ioasaph Kantakouzenos, who dedicated some 30 manuscripts to Vatopedi during the years 1347 to 1354, while a few years earlier (1301), the erudite Theodora Rhaoulaina Paleologina had donated cod. Par. Coisl. 128 to Lavra.³⁷ Eirene, wife of

31 See above, p. 270.

32 The two monks of Vatopedi ordered manuscripts Vatopediou 1184 (year 1446) and Pan-teleimon 727 (year 1449) to Dositheos; Evangelatou-Notara, Χορηγοί, pp. 97–98 and notes nos 471 and 474.

33 Evangelatou-Notara, Χορηγοί, p. 78 and notes nos 157 and 160.

34 Evangelatou-Notara, Χορηγοί, p. 49 and note no. 129.

35 Evangelatou-Notara, Χορηγοί, pp. 23–24 and note no. 58. On Protaton (Karyes), see Soustal, *Makedonien*, pp. 538–540.

36 Linos Politis, “Αγιορειτικά ἀνάλεκτα [Hagiorite excerpts],” *Ἑλληνικά* 16 (1958–1959), 132–136 (repr. in idem, *Paléographie et littérature byzantine et néo-grecque: Recueil d'études*, préface de D. Zakythinos [London, 1975], no. 8); Lamberz, “Βιβλιογράφοι,” pp. 146–147.

37 On the donation by Ioannis Kantakouzenos, see: Erich Lamberz, “Ἡ βιβλιοθήκη καὶ τὰ χειρόγραφα της [The library and its manuscripts],” in *Ἱερὰ Μεγίστη Μονὴ Βατοπαιδίου: Παράδοση, ἱστορία, τέχνη* [The Holy Monastery of Vatopedi. Tradition, history, art], 2 (Mount Athos, 1996), pp. 568–569, 674–675; idem, “Die Schenkung des Kaisers Johannes VI. Kantakouzenos an das Kloster Vatopedi und die Schreibzentren Konstantinopels im 14. Jahrhundert,” in *Acts XVIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies. Selected Papers*,

Andronikos II, dedicated to the same monastery around the year 1300 the Gospel cod. Lavra A 111, following a request by the Lavriote scribe, possibly the librarian, Demetrios, who also dedicated manuscripts to the monastery.³⁸ In general, Florentia Evangelatou-Notara concludes that Mount Athos during the Palaiologan era was, after Constantinople, the place with the most manuscript donations.³⁹

The books by Athonite scribes that were intended for buyers outside Mount Athos and the way that they contributed to the wealth of their monastery are less known, at least during the Byzantine period in question. The best-known case, which according to E. Lamberz is unique for the Palaiologan period, is that of the anonymous scribe, whom L. Politis identifies with Ieremias from Koutloumousiou, who during the years 1356 to 1371 copied a number of volumes for liturgical use commissioned by Elene/Elizabeth, widow of Stefan Dušan.⁴⁰ In the many notes that this scribe added in his manuscripts, he does not reveal much about his actual financial relationship with Elizabeth, as only two notes speak of her ἔλεος and εὐλογία to him,⁴¹ but rather with another person, the hieromonk Dorotheos, who is possibly to be identified with the homonymous *protos* of that period, and who appears to have been an intermediary, providing him with his salary of one ducat per month, his food (κυβέρνησιν) consisting of two *modioi* of flour, and his writing materials.⁴² Since the scribe does not appear to have been at his monastery, but at one of its dependencies on Athos, all these provisions reached him through a third person, to whom the scribe paid one ducat as a 'fare' (ναῦλος).⁴³ Apart from Elizabeth, the scribe worked for other people as well, without the mediation of Dorotheos, particularly for a bishop of Hierissos and Mount Athos, who appears to have ransomed him from

Main and Communications: Moscow, 1991, 4. Literature, Sources, Numismatics and History of Science, eds. Ihor Ševčenko, Gennadij G. Litavrin and Walter K. Hanak, (Byzantine Studies, New Series, Supplementum) 4 (Shepherdstown WV, 1996 [2000]), pp. 155–167; Evangelatou-Notara, *Χορηγοί*, pp. 89–91. On the donation by Theodora Raoulaina, see Evangelatou-Notara, *Χορηγοί*, pp. 99–100 and note no. 131.

38 Lamberz, "Βιβλιογράφοι," p. 146.

39 Evangelatou-Notara, *Χορηγοί*, pp. 158–159.

40 Lamberz, "Βιβλιογράφοι," pp. 148–149; Linos Politis, "Griechische Handschriften der serbischen Kaiserin Elisabeth," *Byzantinoslavica* 2 (1930), 288–304, pls 1–2 (repr. in idem, *Paléographie*, no. 1); idem, "Paläographische Miscellen vom Heiligen Berg," *BZ* 50 (1957), 312–316, pls 4–5 (repr. in idem, *Paléographie*, no. 5).

41 Cod. EBE 2004, ff. 352^r (... τὴν δὲ σὴν εὐλογίαν ἐδεξάμεθα) and 440^v (πέμψον καὶ ἡμῖν τὸ ἔλεός σου ...).

42 Cod. EBE 2004, f. 285^v; EBE 2049, f. 125^v; Kutlumus 324, f. 130^v.

43 Cod. EBE 2049, f. 125^v (... ἔφερέ μοι ὁ Πισσαράς ἀλεύρου μόδια δύο καὶ δουκάτον ἔν· τὸ δὲ ἕτερον ἀπῆρε ναῦλον).

captivity at a certain point.⁴⁴ He also copied manuscripts for other Athonite monasteries, mainly his own, at the expense of its *hegoumenos* Theophilos.⁴⁵ In a manuscript of Xeropotamou dated 1387 or 1397, the cost was covered by a woman, a member of the aristocracy.⁴⁶ All the aforementioned information paints a picture of an Athonite copyist who worked as a freelancer, albeit through the mediation of a superior, and addressed both the internal market of books on Athos as well as the external one.

Finally, concerning the financial aspects of manuscript trading on Mount Athos, three other aforementioned cases could be mentioned again, although at least two did not take place inside an Athonite monastery. In the testament of Skaranos (1270–1274) we witness manuscripts being given as collateral,⁴⁷ while in the document of 1444 on the sale of the Tetraevangelion from the monastery of Agios Georgios of Mangana in Constantinople to one of its monks, who later appears to have settled in Vatopedi, it is mentioned that: a) the manuscript was given to the monastery of Mangana by one of the members of its brotherhood for the acquisition of a part of an *adelphaton* for his subordinate (ὕποτακτικός) and b) the sale of 1444 took place in order to cover urgent expenses of the church.⁴⁸ The testimonies concerning these two financial uses of books, in my view, remain unique, but we should not rule out the possibility that they also applied on Mount Athos. The last reference resembles the analogous, subsequent case of the document of 1654 (in Dionysiou), with which the *hegoumenoi* of the Athonite monasteries declared that they have delivered to Arseniy Sukhanov “our old books” because of their impoverishment, so that they could ask the Czar for alms. From another document of the same period extant only in Russian we learn that they received from Sukhanov a certain sum of money.⁴⁹

In summary, manuscripts on Mount Athos, apart from their religious value, never ceased to have an economic value as well. This is the reason why they were included in the wealth of the cenobitic monasteries or individual monks and contributed to their income or expenses in a variety of ways without visi-

44 Cod. EBE 2422, f. 91^r (τὸν ἐξαγοράσαντα ἐμοὶ τῷ ξένῳ μέμνησθε φιλόχριστοι μητροπολίτην Ὅρους).

45 Cod. Kutlulus 324, f. 129^v (προσετέθη καὶ ὁ παρὼν Μάρτιος μὴν τὸ μηναῖον ἐν τῇ ἱερᾷ τοῦ Κουτλουμούση μονῇ διὰ συνδρομῆς καὶ ἐξόδου τοῦ ταύτην ἡγουμενεύοντος Θεοφίλου ἱερομονάχου).

46 Cod. Xeropotamou 234, f. 399^r (... συνδρομῇ τῆς παντακαλῆς καὶ [...] ἀνένης, τῆς καὶ δούκενας καὶ φιλανθρωπηνῆς ...).

47 See above, p. 269.

48 *Actes de Vatopédi*, 3, no. 228, lines. 5–6 and 14. See also above, pp. 269–270.

49 Michel Lascaris, “Arsène Suchanov et les manuscrits de l’Athos. Un nouveau document (10 juin 1654),” *Byz* 28 (1958), 543–545.

ble restrictions, as long as the relevant exchanges were reasonable. Therefore, as a part of communal or private wealth, sometimes without distinctive borderlines between them, they were active components of the economic life of Mount Athos.

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OpenAtlas: An Open-Source Application to Map Historical Data with CIDOC CRM

Stefan Eichert, Nina Richards and Alexander Watzinger

1 Introduction

The present article aims at discussing various aspects of software development and collaboration with scholarly projects and researchers from all fields of humanities in the scope of OpenAtlas.¹ Its purpose is thus not primarily as a scientific or scholarly contribution, but instead as a report on experiences with interdisciplinary collaboration. It is therefore written in a different way than other contributions in this edited volume—not focusing on prosopographic data or historical events but from a technical perspective by IT specialists.



FIGURE 13.1 OpenAtlas logo, designed by Jan Belik and released under a CC-BY SA 4.0 license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>).

¹ OpenAtlas is currently hosted at the Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities and Cultural Heritage (ACDH-CH) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW). The development of the software by the small OpenAtlas team is also made possible by collaborations with various third-party funded projects, such as MAMEMS and their respective funding agencies. For an overview see below or <https://openatlas.eu/projects>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

2 OpenAtlas in a Nutshell

OpenAtlas² is an open-source database software developed especially to acquire, edit, and manage research data from various fields of the humanities, such as history, prosopography, and archaeology.³ It provides a user interface that can be accessed via any common web browser and allows the respective researchers to work with their data via customizable forms and categories to record complex relations as simply as possible.

The software automatically maps information entered to CIDOC CRM⁴—an official ISO standard (ISO 21127:2014).⁵ This ontology defines rules how a data model can be built by using classes and properties and is referred to within the Digital Humanities as an Ontology. Using it allows for up-to-date data management against the background of current standards in Digital Humanities and is in compliance with today's requirements regarding data standards. OpenAtlas is developed and maintained by a small, interdisciplinary team of specialists. For more information on team members, please visit <https://openatlas.eu/team>.

3 What Is OpenAtlas Used For

As prosopographical projects work with historical written sources, information derived from these can be obscure, unstructured, and imprecise. Therefore, using tools such as prosopographical databases can be beneficial by uncovering, labelling, and structuring the data in a standardized form. Additionally, these systems give researchers opportunities to further process, analyze, and visualize the included information.

OpenAtlas is one of these tools. Information, derived from historical sources, can be entered into the database via a user-friendly interface by using any common web browser. In addition, the database can store information on various

2 <https://openatlas.eu/>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

3 Roland Filzwieser and Stefan Eichert, "Towards an Online Database for Archaeological Landscapes. Using the Web Based, Open Source Software OpenAtlas for the Acquisition, Analysis and Dissemination of Archaeological and Historical Data on a Landscape Basis," *Heritage* 3/4 (2020), 1385–1401; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/heritage3040077>.

4 <https://cidoc-crm.org/>. Accessed 28 February 2022; Martin Doerr, The "CIDOC Conceptual Reference Module. An Ontological Approach to Semantic Interoperability of Metadata," *AI Magazine* 24/3 (2003), 75–92; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1609/aimag.v24i3.1720>.

5 <https://www.iso.org/standard/57832.html>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

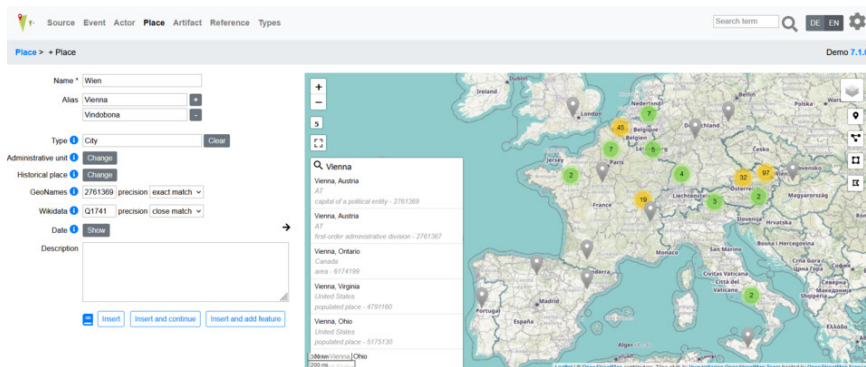


FIGURE 13.2 OpenAtlas user interface—entering Vienna as a new place into the demo version of the OpenAtlas system (available via <https://demo.openatlas.eu/>)

entities, e.g. actors, events, and places which can be linked, such as when an actor has a relationship to another actor, an event happened at a place and so on.

In order to map entities and their links to each other, the CIDOC Conceptual Reference Model (CRM),⁶ which is developed by the International Council of Museums (ICOM), is used. It provides a common and extensible semantic framework. As CIDOC CRM mappings can be complex, the user interface is designed for easy usage without prior knowledge of the framework. Therefore, mapping of the data to the underlying model is completely taken care of in the background of the application.

Aside from the creation of new datasets in the OpenAtlas system, it is also possible to import already existing structured information into the database. This data is also mapped according to the specifications of the CIDOC CRM and linked to the existing data records.

In addition, OpenAtlas provides an Application Programming Interface (API) that can be used to access the data entered in a machine-readable way. This allows for further processing and visualizing of the included data. This includes possibilities to e.g.

- Run statistical tests
 - Analyze the data with other specialized tools, e.g. social network analysis
 - Present the projects results with a presentation site to a broader audience
 - Start or enrich other projects
- and thereby answer specific research questions.

⁶ <https://www.cidoc-crm.org>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

4 Let's Be Open—About CIDOC CRM, FAIR Principles and Linked Open Data within the Scope of OpenAtlas

OpenAtlas and the team members involved in the project put great emphasis on the FAIR principles.⁷ These aim to make data findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable.

Being open wherever possible is a key value of OpenAtlas. Software developed by the team is provided as open-source and therefore freely available. This allows other researchers and software developers to adapt the code to their needs and guarantees that work on it can continue even in the case that now involved key personnel or institutes are not available anymore.

In addition to providing code as open source, OpenAtlas has a transparent and open workflow. For example, newly-developed code is available in a dedicated GitHub repository⁸ on the same day. In addition, with Redmine,⁹ a publicly-accessible issue tracker is used. Here bugs can be reported and new features requested by any user or even interested individuals. Furthermore, meeting protocols and the road map—with further planned development steps—are published on the same platform in a freely-accessible manner.

Open source and open access are not only in the foreground during the development of OpenAtlas. When incorporating or using third-party code, great emphasis is placed on only using open-source code. The team follows current standards and best practices in software development, such as the official style guide for Python¹⁰ or official HTML standards.¹¹ In addition, tools to test and improve the quality of the software are used. Software developed is automatically tested before publication.

As part of this open-source/open-access strategy, OpenAtlas only cooperates with projects and researchers that commit to making their data freely accessible under an open data license online during the project or after it is concluded.

7 <https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/>. Accessed 28 February 2022; see also: Mark D. Wilkinson et al., “The FAIR Guiding Principles for Scientific Data Management and Stewardship,” *Scientific Data* 3 (2016); published online: 15 March 2016; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1038/sdata.2016.18>.

8 Code is freely available on GitHub: <https://github.com/craws/OpenAtlas>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

9 <https://redmine.openatlas.eu/>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

10 <https://www.python.org/dev/peps/pep-0008/>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

11 <https://dev.w3.org/html5/spec-LC/>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

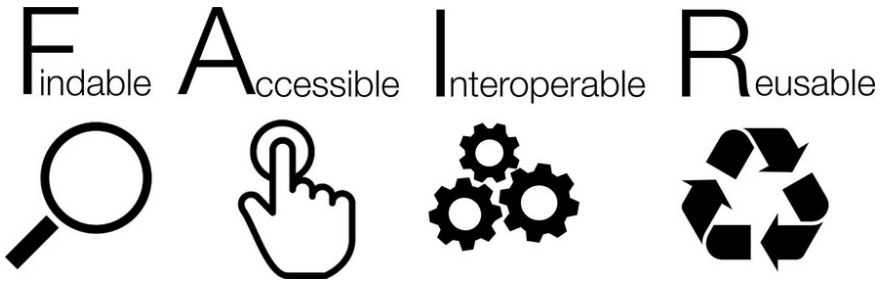


FIGURE 13.3 Fair Principles (Graphic by SangyaPundir published under a CC-BY 4.0 license, see also <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)

From a technical point of view, the OpenAtlas users, respectively the hosts of the server, have full control over their data and can decide whether or not to freely provide them. However, OpenAtlas provides the technical prerequisites in order to select e.g. Creative Commons licenses for the content, to link it to controlled vocabularies and to provide machine readable data and metadata via an open API.

Using a commonly-used ontology to structure data makes information interoperable and reusable—two key aspects of the FAIR principles. By mapping information to the latest official version of the CIDOC Conceptual Model developed by the ICOM,¹² OpenAtlas employs a framework that is widespread in the Digital Humanities.

It specifies entities that are linked together by properties. Rules on how to combine entities via these properties are given in the documentation.¹³ In order to guarantee data integrity, the whole specification is integrated within OpenAtlas. It can be browsed in a web application and every link is automatically checked for validity when created. So even if design errors occur, the application will inform the user immediately. Additionally, the web interface provides check functions for CIDOC CRM validity which can be useful, for instance in cases in which data was imported from other systems.

¹² As of February 2022, this is Version 7.1.1, released in April 2021. For more information, see: <https://www.cidoc-crm.org/version/version-7.1.1>. Accessed 28 February 2022; Chryssoula Bekiari et al., *Definition of the CIDOC Conceptual Reference Model v7.1.1 (Version v7.1.1). The CIDOC Conceptual Reference Model Special Interest Group* (online, 2021); <https://doi.org/10.26225/FDZH-X261>.

¹³ One can also consult <https://demo.openatlas.eu/overview/model> to check for valid links between entities and properties. Accessed 28 February 2022.

5 Linked Open Data

Interoperability and findability, key aspects of the FAIR principles, can be achieved by creating linked open data (LOD). In order to link data entered into OpenAtlas to research topic-specific, controlled vocabularies and gazetteers, the system uses external reference systems, such as Wikidata,¹⁴ GeoNames,¹⁵ or Viaf.¹⁶ By using these links, it is possible to identify entities and link them to additional information provided on the web outside of OpenAtlas. This is also beneficial when comparing or merging data of different projects by preventing duplicates and similar issues.

6 Long-Term Archiving

To make sure data created within a project is not lost after the end of the said initiative, OpenAtlas further provides long-term archiving in cooperation with ARCHE,¹⁷ which is hosted at the Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities and Cultural Heritage (ACDH-CH)¹⁸ of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW).¹⁹ It is part of the CLARIAH-AT infrastructure and primarily intended to be a digital, data-hosting service for data derived from Austrian projects within the scope of digital humanities.²⁰

After the end of a project and a certain hosting period, data can be handed to the repository and made accessible on their website. The deposition process includes several data-curation steps.

Long-term archiving allows for data to be reused even after the end of a project and prolongs the data lifecycle of a specific data set.

7 Collaborating with OpenAtlas

While OpenAtlas is currently affiliated with the Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities and Cultural heritage (ACDH-CH)²¹ of the Austrian Academy of

14 https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Wikidata:Main_Page. Accessed 28 February 2022.

15 <http://www.geonames.org/>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

16 <https://viaf.org/>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

17 <https://arche.acdh.oeaw.ac.at/>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

18 <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/acdh/acdh-ch-home>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

19 <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/oesterreichische-akademie-der-wissenschaften>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

20 <https://arche.acdh.oeaw.ac.at/browser/collection-policy>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

21 <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/acdh/acdh-ch-home>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

Sciences (ÖAW),²² major parts of the software development are financed by collaborations with numerous projects via grants, institutes, and departments. Although—as stated above—the software is freely available online and can be used by anyone interested, not every project has the internal resources to cover all the aspects needed for a successful research project. Therefore, OpenAtlas also offers the possibility to collaborate and to provide support/solutions for some or all of the following aspects:

- Software development: Due to differing research design and research questions, the development of new features or adaptations regarding the user interface might be needed. Once these new features are implemented, they are published on GitHub and can be used by all OpenAtlas projects. This allows for shared costs and synergies between projects.
- Provision of infrastructure: OpenAtlas is not a stand-alone software but meant to be installed on a server. Furthermore, experienced personnel are needed to keep the server running and to install OpenAtlas, update the software, doing security and server updates regularly. By collaborating with OpenAtlas, team members experienced in such processes can provide and take care of all the infrastructure needed as well as implementing a backup strategy for all entered data and troubleshooting if necessary.
- Additional support: even if infrastructure is already in place, additional support by the OpenAtlas team members might be needed and can include, among other things: the adaptation of the existing CIDOC CRM model to fit the research data, data import, training sessions, and workshops, support in organizing or cleaning-up data as well as answering all OpenAtlas-related questions and requests.
- Presentation website: the team can also find solutions on how to present the data entered into the database online in an up-to-date way. This way, the data will be easily available to other researchers and the broader public and in compliance to the FAIR principles.
- Long-term archiving: data and metadata can be handed over to ARCHE for long term-archiving after the end of the project and therefore preserved for future research.

By making the development process transparent and providing newly-developed features to all projects at the same time, synergies between the participating research projects are enhanced and costs for each project kept as small as possible.

22 <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/oesterreichische-akademie-der-wissenschaften>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

8 Existing and Concluded OpenAtlas Collaborations

The following examples are intended to illustrate the broad, interdisciplinary application possibilities of OpenAtlas and include some of the ongoing as well as completed project collaborations. For reasons of space, not all participating projects can be listed here. A comprehensive list of all collaborations can be found at <https://openatlas.eu/projects>.

- Mount Athos in Medieval Eastern Mediterranean Society: Contextualizing the History of a Monastic Republic (MAMEMS, PI: Zachary Chitwood):²³ as a prosopographic project carried out by an interdisciplinary team of researchers, MAMEMS focuses on sources concerning the monastic communities of Mount Athos in medieval eastern Mediterranean society and its widespread connections. The project covers a time frame starting with the first surviving written sources until the founding of Stavronikita—the last major Athonite house (ca. 850–1550).
- Mapping Medieval Conflicts (MEDCON, PI: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller):²⁴ the project uses networks to analyze and visualize political conflicts in medieval societies. In doing so, the discussion about the (in)stability of political structures in the past can also have relevance for the present. Scholars from various disciplines have worked on the project, which has already been completed. In addition, the MEDCON project provides sample data for the OpenAtlas Demo version available under <https://demo.openatlas.eu/>.
- The Anthropological and Archaeological Database of Sepultures (THANADOS, PI: Stefan Eichert, Nina Richards):²⁵ within the THANADOS project, available archaeological and anthropological information as well as results of scientific analyses on early medieval burial grounds in Austria are gathered and presented online. The project was concluded in Winter 2021 and has widened its scope to other times and places in the future.²⁶
- The Inventory and Dissemination of Graffiti along the Donaukanal (INDIGO, PI Gert Verhoeven, Norbert Pfeifer):²⁷ the latest OpenAtlas collaboration also works with the most modern data. The project, located in the area of Cultural Heritage, deals with the recording of graffiti along the 13 km-long

²³ <https://discover-mamems.openatlas.eu/>. Accessed 20 March 2024.

²⁴ <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/imafo/das-institut/detail/mapping-medieval-conflicts>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

²⁵ <https://thanados.net/>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

²⁶ Stefan Eichert, “Digital Mapping of Medieval Cemeteries: Case Studies from Austria and Czechia,” *Journal on Computing and Cultural Heritage* 14/1 (2021); 10.1145/3406535.

²⁷ <https://projectindigo.eu/>. Accessed 28 February 2022.

Vienna Danube Canal. Graffiti are particularly short-lived art objects, which are documented here and preserved for posterity.

9 The Development of OpenAtlas

There are some essential differences when developing for academic research projects compared to, say, developing a webshop for a small business where it is possible to provide detailed specifications beforehand. Various projects with different needs, workflows, and agendas are involved in the process. Furthermore, requirements and needs within individual projects may change over time and the software employed has to be adapted to accommodate these developments. This lies in the nature of every research project and if the outcome of a project would be known already at the beginning, we would not need a research project in the first place.

But, after all, it is important to clarify and define research goals at the beginning of each project, and to comprehend the needs of every research topic. To accommodate the dynamic nature of scholarly research, the workflow used by the OpenAtlas team has to be just as flexible as well. This includes the following steps (Created by A. Watzinger and provided under a CC-BY 4.0 license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>):

- Planning: after a version²⁸ was released and feedback was given by users, planning on the next version starts in regards to features²⁹ mentioned on the roadmap.³⁰ Features that won't be included in the next three releases are added to the wishlist.³¹ If possible, most planning happens in meetings

²⁸ Additional information on versioning: A version is a collection of various features and fixes and, for OpenAtlas, represents about a month of development work. The version-naming scheme is sequence-based and reflects the significance: “major.minor.fix”, e.g. “3.11.1”.

²⁹ Additional information: A feature is an isolated task. It can be a new functionality (e.g. an upload function for images) or added functionality to an existing feature (e.g. adding new API export formats). Ideally, it should not take more than a week to implement one feature. If it is expected that a feature takes much longer, it is advised to try and break it down into several smaller tasks. Features are either requested by users or the result of a meeting.

³⁰ Additional information: Usually three minor versions are planned ahead that will take up to a quarter of a year to complete. The list with the respective features and versioning numbers are provided on a so-called roadmap. OpenAtlas' roadmap can be accessed via <https://redmine.openatlas.eu/projects/uni/roadmap>. The roadmap is flexible to accommodate new collaborations and changed requirements of existing ones.

³¹ Additional information: The wishlist is a collection of ideas and suggestions which will be implemented in the future, often containing information and thoughts. In each new

between the collaborating project and OpenAtlas team. Alternatively, Redmine as an issue-tracking system is used for tracking bugs³² and feature requests so all members can participate in the planning process. Together new features, improvement of existing ones, and possible obstacles are discussed. Priorities may have to be adapted because of recent development.

- Development: after the planning phase, the tasks on the roadmap are implemented. Git is used as a versioning system, which makes it possible for multiple people to work on the code simultaneously.
- Testing: in contrast to a stable release, a development version represents the actual development process. In this way a new version can be tested and early feedback can be given. This helps in identifying misunderstandings as soon as possible.
- Release: after the planned features are implemented and tested, a new version is released. There is a saying: release early, release often³³ that OpenAtlas follows like a mantra. This is important because even with good planning misunderstandings can happen, expected time and effort can be misjudged, and other complications can arise. The team really wants to avoid a scenario,

version, not only critical features are included, but also features from the wishlist. Due to the roadmap being open to the public, other projects or involved members can browse through it and define features that are imperative for their needs and prioritize them. The reason and the point in time a feature is taken from the wishlist and included in a new version depends on several factors, like funding, the usefulness for the projects' majority, if features need prerequisites to be fulfilled, etc. It also can happen that features which are already planned for the next versions, are moved back to the wishlist, e.g. if it turns out to be much more time-consuming than expected or if the projects requesting the feature decide to change their own priorities. OpenAtlas's wishlist can be accessed via: <https://redmine.openatlas.eu/versions/71>.

- 32 Additional information: A bug is an unintended mistake in the software and can range from rather harmless (e.g. a spelling mistake) to serious problems that can make the whole system unstable, unusable or even corrupt the data. Within OpenAtlas, great care is taken to avoid bugs in the first place, by e.g. implementing automated tests to catch bugs during development and testing new versions by team members. Nevertheless, bugs are almost impossible to avoid in a complex and actively developed software such as OpenAtlas.

Users are encouraged to report bugs whenever they occur and have multiple ways to do so. They can use OpenAtlas's Redmine issue tracker (<https://redmine.openatlas.eu/>) and fill out the feedback form, or send an email. Once bugs are identified they get highest priority so that every released version is—at least to our knowledge—bug free. Due to the immediate fixes of bugs, it can happen that the roadmap changes and some features are postponed to a later release date.

- 33 Eric S. Raymond, *The Cathedral and the Bazaar: Musings on Linux and Open Source by an Accidental Revolutionary* (Sebastopol, Calif., 1997). Published online: 15.11.2018. URL: <http://www.catb.org/~esr/writings/cathedral-bazaar/cathedral-bazaar/aro1s04.html>. Accessed: 28 February 2022.

often seen in other projects, where software is developed for months or even years, without any feedback from the intended users. This software is then presented a short time before the development work will end, which leads mostly to disappointment for all people involved. This is why we stick to a short release cycle, which allows for a constant feedback loop.

- Feedback and communication: the monthly releases and demo versions allow for a closed feedback loop between developers and users. Communication between the project and its cooperation partners takes place on several levels.
 - Meetings between OpenAtlas and collaborating projects take place at regular intervals and are timed to meet the needs of the collaborating partners. Especially at the beginning of the cooperation, introductions to the application as well as assistance in case of problems are offered. After this initial phase where more generalized topics are discussed during the meetings, topics discussed tend to get more specialized during the duration of a collaboration. Big meetings still happen regularly and whenever needed but in less frequent intervals.
 - Another way of communication is using an issue tracker, in our case Redmine.³⁴ It is a web-based application where members can submit feature requests and bug reports via a ticket system. Since the OpenAtlas project is very open and transparent, this system is publicly viewable, so anyone interested can follow the process of the requests.
 - Of course, there are plenty of other ways to communicate, e.g. emails, phone calls, online meetings, chat, using the feedback form provided online, or browsing the public software repository, which is updated almost on a daily basis. Depending on the task, some forms of communication may be better-suited than others. The OpenAtlas team strives to find the best form of communication for the specific requirements of the collaboration project.

10 Conclusion

This article aims at presenting OpenAtlas and its background as well as how it is used for Digital Humanities' projects. It is an open-source software system for data acquisition of all kinds of data from historical disciplines (and beyond). The information is stored as a network defined by classes and properties of the

³⁴ <https://redmine.openatlas.eu/>. Accessed: 28 February 2022.

CIDOC CRM, a semantic framework developed by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and an ISO standard for cultural heritage documentation. This network, and its associated object-oriented data model, allows for complex mappings of relations between actors, events, physical things, places, and time as well as space. To reduce the complexity for the users that come from different domains in the humanities, user-friendly workflows, input forms, and an intuitive user interface are provided. Users can entirely focus on their research questions and need not (necessarily) take care of the complex network under the hood.

This approach allows for further analyses, visualizations, and queries, in order to answer these research questions from a data-centered perspective and to show relations that would not be visible from an analogue approach.

The system also offers technological solutions for researchers to provide their data as open as possible. Open licenses can be chosen for the content, controlled vocabularies can be linked to datasets, and machine readable data and metadata can be provided.

OpenAtlas is being developed actively with constant feedback loops between the technical developers and the (Digital) Humanities community. Therefore it aims at being a helpful tool for researchers to carry out projects covering all technical needs against the background of 21st century-digital humanities.

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Conclusion

Zachary Chitwood

The contributions in this edited volume have illustrated the various ways in which the dynamic between wealth and poverty on medieval Mount Athos can be explored. Rather than summarizing the contents of the articles, this conclusion outlines future avenues of research suggested by this volume, and how such future endeavors might impact Byzantine and Medieval Studies, as well as Ottoman Studies. These considerations can be divided into three categories: 1) the role of alternative monasticisms; 2) the importance of the comparative context with other Orthodox monastic centers; 3) how the Athonite example might inform broader scholarly debates about wealth and poverty in Byzantium.

Like scholarship on monasticism more generally, examinations of life on Mount Athos have focused to a considerable degree on the large, cenobitic monasteries. This observation applies to economic analyses to an even greater degree: the rich holdings of the archives of the great Hagiorite monasteries lend themselves to research on the economic potency of these institutions: their tax-free boats, their landed estates, flocks, and workers. The articles in this volume have likewise focused on the activities of these monasteries: Iviron, for instance, was the main object of interest of several contributions (those of Tinatin Chronz, Kostis Smyrlis and Apolon Tabuashvili with Vladimer Kekelia), while Hilandar was the subject of Kirill Maksimovič's contribution. Vatopedi, though not the subject of any individual contribution, frequently made an appearance in a number of articles. The importance of the great communal monasteries on Athos is also reflected by the fact that some of them have been the subject of (an admittedly small number) of monographs.¹

Yet the prominence of communal monasticism in general, especially on Mount Athos, is obscured by the fact that the twenty principal monasteries are today all fully cenobitic, even though as recently as the Fall of the Berlin Wall seven of these monasteries were idiorrhhythmic,² while at the turn of the

1 Hilandar: Slavko P. Todorovich, *The Chilandarians: Serbian Monks on the Green Mountain* (New York, 1989); Aleksandar Fotić, *Света Гора и Хиландар у Османском царству (xv–xvii век)* [Mount Athos and Hilandar in the Ottoman Empire] (Belgrade, 2000); Vatopedi: Arkadios Hierodiakonos Vatopaidinos, *Ἱστορία τῆς Ἱερᾶς Μεγίστης Μονῆς τοῦ Βατοπαιδίου* [History of the Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopedi] (Hagion Oros, 2017).

2 Todorovich, *Chilandarians*, pp. 21–22.

20th century they were almost evenly split between communal and idiorrhythmic monasteries,³ and, if one goes back to the 18th century, then all the major Hagiorite monasteries seem to have been idiorrhythmic. Though the Athonite iteration of idiorrhythmic life first appeared in the 14th century and ceased to exist in the large monasteries after Pantokrator became the last monastery to revert to cenobitic life in 1992, eremitic monasticism—the original expression of ascetic life on the Holy Mountain—has always held an important place on Athos.⁴

Alternative monasticisms—forms of monastic life other than the communal variety, which historically has had pride of place both in the popular understanding of monasticism as well as in the scholarship on it—was underlined in Alice-Mary Talbot's recent overview of Byzantine monasticism, in which she devoted two of four chapters to non-communal forms of ascetic life.⁵ Nor is Byzantium the only place in the Eastern Christian world where the preponderance of communal monasticism has been questioned, as demonstrated by the late Nina Garsoïan's refutation of the existence of large cenobitic monasteries in the Armenian tradition during the Early Middle Ages.⁶ Moreover, Mount Athos is perhaps the only place in the Eastern Mediterranean where the development of eremitic, communal, and in-between forms of ascetic life like idiorrhythmic monasticism can be compared in detail.

How might we gauge the economic importance of non-communal monastic communities on Mount Athos? An interesting starting point comes well into the Ottoman period, namely Patriarch Sylvester of Alexandria's (1569–1590) Athonite Visitation of 1574. After being alerted to deviant monastic practices on Mount Athos while celebrating Christmas at Thessalonike in 1573 with Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople (1572–1579; 1580–1584; 1587–1595), the Alexandrian patriarch conducted an extensive inquiry into the state of monasticism on the Holy Mountain.⁷ On the basis of his visitation, in September

3 Benjamin Laurès, "Les monastères idiorrhythmiques de l'Athos," *Échos d'Orient* 4/5 (1901), 288 (eleven communal monasteries and nine idiorrhythmic).

4 Zachary Chitwood, "Eremitic Monasticism," in *Handbook on Mount Athos*, ed. Graham Speake (Routledge, forthcoming).

5 Talbot, Alice-Mary, *Varieties of Monastic Experience in Byzantium, 800–1453* (Conway Lectures in Medieval Studies) (Notre Dame, Ind., 2019), pp. 101–132 ("Hermits and Holy Mountains") and pp. 133–188 ("Alternative Modes of Monasticism").

6 Nina G. Garsoïan, "Introduction to the Problem of Early Armenian Monasticism," *Revue des Études Arméniennes* 30 (2005–2007), 177–236 (repr. in eadem, *Studies on the Formation of Christian Armenia* [Farnham, Surrey—Burlington, VT, 2010]).

7 On the visitation, see Zachary Chitwood, "Idiorrhythmic Inquest: Sylvester, Patriarch of Alexandria, Jeremiah II, Patriarch of Constantinople, and the Mission to Restore Commu-

of 1574 a synod was held in Constantinople with both Sylvester and Jeremiah present that attempted to restore communal monasticism.⁸

The era of Sylvester's visitation to Holy Mountain was one of great economic hardship for the monastic communities, coming as it did after the so-called Confiscation Affair of 1568–1569, when the legal status of endowments made to Orthodox churches and monasteries within the European half of the Ottoman Empire was called into question.⁹ Though a sort of accommodation was eventually reached, monasteries were forced to repurchase their lands from the state, resulting in the ruin of poorer or middling monasteries and the impoverishment of richer ones. We thus find the monks of this era, judging by the prohibitions mentioned in the patriarchal letter of September 1574, engaged in a variety of small-scale economic activities: animal husbandry (beyond the allowance made for male beasts of burden); the distillation of spirits (*raki*); the harvest and sale of chestnuts beyond one's personal needs; and the cultivation of wheat and barley.¹⁰

It seems that these regulations were aimed at curtailing the economic exploitation of Athos, especially by hermits and idiorhythmic monks. A further indication of how these non-communal monks earned a living is a prohibition on monks or priestmonks seeking financial support outside of Athos: in

nal Monasticism on Mount Athos in the 1570s," *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai Theologia Orthodoxa Journal* 68/1 (2023): 79–97; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24193/subbto.2023.1>.

- 8 On the textual transmission of the patriarchal letter in question, see Giuseppe de Gregorio, "Un intervento patriarcale del 1574 contro la idiorritmia: I documenti di Hieremias II Tranos," *JÖB* 46 (1996), 343–378.
- 9 The Confiscation Affair is discussed in: John Alexander, "The Lord Giveth and the Lord Taketh Away: Athos and the Confiscation Affair of 1568–1569," in *Mount Athos in the 14th–16th Centuries*, (Athonika Symmeikta) 4 (Athens, 1997), pp. 149–199; Eugenia Kermeli, "The Confiscation and Repossession of Monastic Properties in Mount Athos and Patmos Monasteries, 1568–1570," *Bulgarian Historical Review* 28/3–4 (2000), 39–53; eadem, "Το νομικό καθεστώς της αγιορείτικης μοναστηριακής περιουσίας το 15ο και το 16ο αιώνα [The legal status of Hagiorite monastic property in the 15th and 16th century]," in *Το Άγιον Όρος στον 15ο και 16ο αιώνα. Πρακτικά 6ου Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου, Θεσσαλονίκη 25–27 Νοεμβρίου 2011* (Thessalonike, 2012), pp. 87–105.
- 10 Edition of the letter (reprint of Meyer's edition as well as an abbreviated version in Vat. Gr. 2646) in de Gregorio, "Un intervento patriarcale," 370–376, at 372–373, lines 20–21, 22–23: ζῶα ἐργατικά κοσμικῶν προσώπων, ἢ καὶ ἱερομονάχων ἢ μοναχῶν, ἔνδον τοῦ Ἀγιωνύμου τούτου Ὅρους ὅλως μὴ νεμέσθωσαν, διὰ τὰ ἐπισυμβαίνοντα οὐ συμφέροντα τοῖς θείοις μοναστηρίοις, πάρεξ μέντοι τῶν ζώων τῶν ἀρσενίων τῶν εἰς χρεῖαν αὐτοῖς, ῥακίον τε παντελῶς μὴ κατασκευάζεσθαι ἐν παντὶ τῷ Ἀγίῳ Ὁρει τούτῳ, οὔτε πίνεσθαι παρὰ τῶν ἐνασκουμένων, ὡς κακῶν μόνον αἴτιον, οὐδεμιᾶς δ' ὠφελίας πρόξενον, ὁμοίως τε καὶ κάστανα ὅλως μὴ συλλέγεσθαι εἰς πράσιν παρ' οὐδενός, ἀλλ' εἰς ἰδίαν χρῆσιν. [...] οὐδόλως δὲ σίτον ἢ κριθὴν ἔνδον τοῦ Ἀγίου τούτου Ὁρους μὴ σπεῖρειν, πλὴν ὅσπριων διαφορῶν, ἵνα μήτι συμβῇ.

the future this activity was to be restricted to the communal monasteries, thus to the detriment of the many hermitages and small monasteries on Athos.¹¹ This short digression on the economic activities of non-communal monks on Athos in the 1570s shows the range of economic functions that these monastics might perform: although quantifying their economic impact is difficult, it does seem clear that they constituted an essential part of the Hagiorite economy.

Focusing on non-communal forms of Athonite monasticism would also allow us to explore a key question regarding the very nature of ascetic life, namely the vow of Apostolic Poverty. For it is clear that throughout Byzantine history monks and nuns possessing private property were not unusual, a fact underlined by the numerous examples of testaments of monks and nuns.¹² For Mount Athos we have a veritable treasure-trove of legal acts documenting the sale, exchange, and gifting of small monasteries and hermitages.¹³ In fact, this rich Hagiorite documentation allows us to trace, as in the case of large monasteries, the fortunes of small monasteries and hermitages over an extended period of time. The scale of economic activity was, for these smaller monastic dwellings, less than that of the great Athonite monasteries—a garden and a few fruit-bearing trees around a hermitage rather than vast and far-flung *metochia*—but collectively was probably more significant than scholarship has hitherto accounted for.

A second avenue of research that might enrich the future scholarship on wealth and Mount Athos is the comparative context. Scholarship on Mount Athos tends still to be a rather (pen-)insular undertaking: this is partially

11 Gregorio, “Un intervento patriarcale,” 373–374, lines 25–26: ἱερομόναχοι δὲ καὶ μοναχοὶ οἱ ἐν τοῖς κελλείοις εὕρισκόμενοι, μὴ πορευέσθωσαν ἐν ταῖς τοῦ κόσμου ἐπαρχίαις, αἰτεῖν ἀδελφάτα ἢ σαραντάρια, ἢ ἄλλα τινὰ πρὸς ἰδίαν χρῆσιν, μόνοις γὰρ τοῖς καθολικοῖς μοναστηρίοις ἐδόθη, εἰς τὸ βοηθεῖσθαι διὰ τὰς πολλὰς καὶ μεγάλας, ἃς ἔχουσι χρεῖας.

12 For monastic testaments already in Late Antique Egypt: Artur Steinwenter, “Byzantinische Mönchstestamente,” *Aegyptus* 12 (1932), 55–64; for two recent studies on an important testament of a late 11th-century nun transmitted in the Athonite archives, see Alice-Mary Talbot, “Une riche veuve de la fin du xie siècle. Le testament de Kalè Pakourianè,” ed. Élisabeth Malamut, *Impératrices, princesses, aristocrates et saintes souveraines: de l’Orient chrétien et musulman au Moyen âge et au début des Temps modernes* (Aix-en-Provence, 2014), pp. 201–216; Zachary Chitwood, “The Testament of the Nun Maria (Kale): Commemorative Dining, *memoria* and Servitude in Byzantium at the Time of the First Crusade,” *Endowment Studies* 7/2 (2023): 97–126; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1163/24685968-20230001>.

13 Ephe Ragia, “Μονές ως περιουσιακά στοιχεία: η περίπτωση του Αγίου Όρους (10ος–11ος αι.) [Monasteries as objects of property: the case of Mount Athos (10th–11th cent.)],” Αντικίνησιν. Τιμητικός τόμος Σπύρου Τρωιάνου [Antecensor: Festschrift for Spyros Troianos], eds. Vasilike Leontaritou, Kalliope A. Bourdara and Eleutheria Sp. Papagianne (Athens, 2013), 2:1511–1541.

because the Hagiorite milieu is not easily comparable with other monastic environments in the premodern Eastern Mediterranean. Especially after the decline of the other Byzantine ‘Holy Mountains’ by the 13th century—specifically Mounts Latros, Kyminas and (Bithynian) Olympos—Athos became the premier Holy Mountain in the Byzantine world, preeminent in terms of wealth, spiritual prestige, and influence. Yet comparisons both before and after the point in which Athos became the Holy Mountain *par excellence* can be illuminating, including regarding questions of wealth and poverty.

As an example, we are relatively well-informed about conditions on the Black Mountain and other monastic sites outside of Antioch at the end of the 11th century thanks to the writings of Nikon of the Black Mountain (d. 1100), in particular on the basis of his *Taktikon*. Though Orthodox monastic life flourished there only briefly—from the Byzantine reconquest of Northern Syria in 969 before undergoing a steep decline after the Seljuk conquest in 1084, before finally being eradicated by Baybars in 1268—for around a century it was one of the major monastic centers in the Byzantine world. Regarding how the monasteries on the Black Mountain were financed, it seems that they did not receive imperial subventions, unlike the other great Byzantine monastic centers in Asia Minor and the Balkans. Indeed, although the question has never been explored, Nikon’s writings suggest that these monasteries were underfinanced and not endowed to a degree that allowed the monks to live communally without significant recourse to manual labor. One monk complained to Nikon about the excessive amount of hard labor that was expected of him and his fellow monks, including driving an ox-cart, even though Nikon thought manual labor was part of the monk’s profession.¹⁴

In particular for his monastic rule for the Monastery tou Rhodiou (“of the Pomegranate”),¹⁵ written at the very end of his life, Nikon had great difficulty in attempting to enforce Apostolic Poverty and cenobitic monasticism: the monks practiced something like an idiorrhythmic style of monastic life, inviting guests into their cells and entertaining them at their own expense.¹⁶ Moreover, the monks had some, though not excessive, personal property, which necessitated that a dying monk’s cell be locked to ensure that his worldly possessions not

14 Nikon of the Black Mountain, *Taktikon*, Logos 18, § 1, ed. Christian Hannick, *Das Taktikon des Nikon vom Schwarzen Berge*, (Monumenta linguae Slavicae dialecti veteris) 62, 2 vols (Freiburg, 2014), 1:504.

15 On the fate of this monastery, see now Daniel Oltean, “From the Monastery of the Theotokos tou Roidiou to Simanaklay?: Greek and Armenian Cilician Monks in a Changing World,” *DOP* 76 (2022), 101–116.

16 Nikon of the Black Mountain, *Taktikon*, Logos 2, § 14, ed. Hannick, 1:144.

be collected by his surviving monastic brothers or relatives.¹⁷ The introduction of idiorrhythmic life at the monastery had perhaps been prompted by the loss of its landed endowment, which Nikon briefly referenced at the beginning of the rule.¹⁸ A comparison between monastic life on the Black Mountain and Mount Athos with regard to economic resources would suggest that the fragility of communal monasticism on the former was prompted by conditions that resembled those on Athos, if ever, only during the golden age of *idiorrhythmia* on the Holy Mountain in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The Christian monastic communities on the Black Mountain did not survive Bayburs' campaign of 1268. Especially for comparisons over the *long durée*, comparing the economy of the Holy Mountain to that of other venerable Orthodox monastic centers that have survived to the present day might offer some interesting insights. These centers include Meteora, Patmos and Sinai. Of the three, Mount Athos is most similar to the monastic federation at Meteora in Thessaly.¹⁹ This is not unsurprising, given that Athanasios of Meteora (1305–1383), the founder of the Great Meteoron, himself received his monastic formation on Athos during the turbulent middle decades of the 14th century. Especially since several founders' (*ktetorika*) typika for Meteoran monasteries have survived for the first centuries of Ottoman rule, it might be possible to compare the economic provisions of these monastic rules with those of Athos: *typika* in general have proven fruitful ground for economic analysis.²⁰

At the present, it is difficult to discern whether these other monastic centers had a similar relationship to wealth and poverty like that of Athos. At least for the medieval period, a detailed examination of the economic bases of these non-Athonite monastic centers is probably not possible. The richer Ottoman material for all of these centers, might, by contrast be more promising for comparative economic analysis.²¹ For the medieval period, it is not notable that both Athos and Patmos benefited from annuity endowments: the Komnenian dynasty, which particularly after Alexios I (r. 1081–1118) stopped directly supporting Mount Athos, in the same period generously financed the new monastic community founded by Christodoulos on Patmos.²²

17 Nikon of the Black Mountain, *Taktikon*, Logos 2, § 17, ed. Hannick, 1:146, 148.

18 Nikon of the Black Mountain, *Taktikon*, Logos 2, § 2, ed. Hannick, 1:138.

19 The standard history of Meteora remains Donald M. Nicol, *Meteora: The Rock Monasteries of Thessaly*, 2nd ed. (London, 1975).

20 Konstantinos Smyrlis, "The Management of Monastic Estates. The Evidence of the Typika," *DOP* 56 (2002), 245–261.

21 For Meteora in the early Ottoman period, see John C. Alexander, "The Monasteries of the Meteora during the First Two Centuries of Ottoman Rule," *JÖB* 32/2 (1982), 95–104.

22 For annuity endowments and Patmos, see Zachary Chitwood, "Connecting Courts and

Finally, it is worth considering the question of how the Athonite example might inform broader discussions about wealth and poverty in Byzantium. In terms of questions of land ownership, taxation, and special topics like *pronoia* the evidence from the Athonite archives already plays a central role in the scholarship on the Byzantine economy, since it constitutes one of the major sources of information in the middle and late Byzantine period. Yet the Athonite contribution to Byzantine thinking about wealth and poverty has not really been explored. Did, for instance, a specifically 'Athonite' school of economic thought ever develop, along the lines of what medievalists have identified with the Franciscan Order?²³

For the Middle Ages this question is difficult to answer, and certainly deserves further investigation. At the very least, monastic landholding was viewed critically by a certain strand of monastic thought centered around the founder of the Great Lavra, Athanasios the Athonite, as well as his spiritual mentor Michael Maleīnos and patron Nikephoros II Phokas.²⁴ Yet the proponents of the necessity of monastic landholding seem to have won out, even in Athanasios' own lifetime (and indeed in the person of Athanasios himself). The variety of monastic life on the Holy Mountain did not lend itself to one-sided approaches to economic life: hermits, skete-dwellers, and the monks of large communal monasteries all might have had different views about property and the precise definition of Apostolic Poverty.

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23 E.g.: Ryan Thornton, *Franciscan Poverty and Franciscan Economic Thought (1209–1348)*, (The Medieval Franciscans) 21 (Leiden, 2023).

24 On which see the contribution of Zachary Chitwood in this volume, pp. 116–121.

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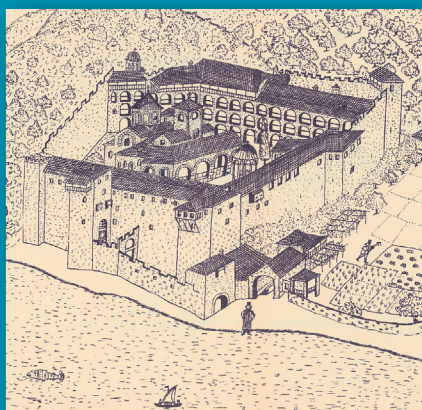
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These collected studies dedicated to the Orthodox monastic center of Mount Athos during the Middle Ages paint a compelling picture of the Holy Mountain's monastic communities as economic actors.

Mount Athos' rich archival holdings allow both for the minute scrutiny of economic activity and the tracing of long-term trends. Not only were Hagiorite monasteries major players on a local level, but they were also embedded within trans-Mediterranean networks of patronage. The unique status of Mount Athos as a semi-autonomous monastic polity also influenced attitudes towards landholding as well as wealth and poverty more generally.

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