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# ADALYA

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# ADALYA

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## Becoming Protestant: Greek Orthodox Responses to Conversion in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Ottoman Anatolia

Merih EROL\*

### Abstract

During the nineteenth century, through American missionaries' efforts, some, albeit a small portion, of the Greek Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman sultan adopted Protestantism. This article explores various incidents of libel and violence, and the punishments of exile or banishment which the Greek Protestants faced. This study is mainly based on the official documentation at the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, and to a lesser extent, on the annual reports of the missionary organization, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. The article investigates the disputes between the Orthodox and the Protestant Greeks (*Rum*) in various parts of Anatolia, namely Izmir, Bursa, Burdur, Adana, and Ordu.

**Keywords:** Religious conversion, Greek Protestants, American Board, Protestant *millet*, 19<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman Anatolia

### Öz

Bu makalede 19. yy.'da Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda faaliyet gösteren Amerikan misyonerlerinin çalışmalarıyla mezhep değiştirerek Protestan olan Rum Ortodoksların maruz kaldıkları sürgün, iftira ve şiddet olayları incelenmiştir. Esas olarak Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşiv belgeleri kullanılmakla beraber, *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* adlı misyoner örgütünün raporları ve bazı misyonerlerin yayınlanmış anıları da kaynak olarak kullanılmıştır. Makale, Anadolu'nun çeşitli yerlerindeki Rum Ortodoks-Protestan çekişmelerini konu alır. Bu çalışmada incelenen Osmanlı arşiv belgeleri İzmir, Bursa ve civarı, Burdur, Adana ve Ordu'da yaşanan bazı olayları kapsamaktadır. Osmanlı topraklarında faaliyetler yapan Amerikan misyonerleri Rum Ortodokslardan çok Gregoryen Ermenilerin Protestanlığa dahil olmalarını sağlamışlardır. Protestan Ermeniler bu makalenin kapsamı dışındadır, ancak Osmanlı Protestanlarının ayrı bir *millet* olarak resmi mercilerce tanınması sürecinden bahsederken İstanbul'da bir Ermeni Protestan kilisesinin kurulması süreci de anlatılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Din değiştirme, Rum Protestanlar, Amerikan Board, Protestan milleti, 19. yy.'da Osmanlı Anadolu

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## Introduction

The non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire were organized into separate, officially recognized *millet*s, indicating religious community<sup>1</sup>. In Ottoman practice, as Michael Ursinus has noted, the term *millet* – when used in the meaning of religious or confessional community – referred “invariably to non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman empire” with the status of *dhimmi*s<sup>2</sup>. These religious communities were, namely, the Greek Orthodox, Armenian, Jewish, Roman Catholic, and Protestant millets, of which the last two were formed in the nineteenth century. A millet encompassed peoples of all ethnicities belonging to the same confession. For instance, the *millet-i Rum* (the Greek Orthodox millet) embraced all Christian Orthodox of Bulgarian, Serbian, Greek, and Arab ethnic origins. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century the patriarch of Constantinople represented all the Orthodox and exercised authority over the whole Orthodox community in the Ottoman realm. He was the milletbaşı or *ethnarches* (nation-leader)<sup>3</sup>.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century Christian Orthodox populations under the jurisdiction of the Orthodox patriarch began to dwindle because these peoples began to gain their independence from Ottoman rule. They founded their own national churches, namely the Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian, and Romanian churches. It took seventeen years until the Patriarchate recognized the autocephalous status of the Church of Greece in 1850. Another problem that needed to be addressed by the Patriarchate of Constantinople in those decades was the “Bulgarian Question”, which demanded decisions and even concessions on the part of the Patriarchate regarding certain issues of rite, for instance, the language of the liturgy and hymns<sup>4</sup>. In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, in addition to these issues, the Patriarchate of Constantinople faced the encroachments of the various western Christian churches into Ottoman lands. In 1848, the Greek Orthodox patriarch Anthimos IV and his synod, together with the Melkite patriarchs, rejected Pope Pius IX’s encyclical dated 8 January 1848 which called the Oriental churches to union with Rome<sup>5</sup>. They prepared a counter-encyclical which stated that the church of Rome was in heresy.

With the arrival of the British, German, and American Protestant missionaries to the Ottoman Balkans and Anatolia in the 1820s, the Orthodox Patriarchate encountered a new type of threat. In the previously mentioned challenges, the Patriarchate struggled for power against national churches, sovereign states, and in the case of Rome, an age-old ecclesiastical establishment and rival to the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Protestant missionaries, however, came to the region and began to gain converts among the Orthodox flock by successfully competing with the much older Catholic missions in the Ottoman Empire. Many of them – devoted associates of the newly founded missionary organizations – came from thousands of kilometers away, settled down in a town in Anatolia, and began to educate the local Christians about their religion. Their unpretentiousness in their life-styles and avoidance of controversy with local Christians regarding religious issues may partly explain their success. Also, the Protestant missionaries displayed and emphasized a more egalitarian treatment of the two sexes in comparison with the Greek Orthodox and Armenian Churches<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> For a comprehensive and diachronic survey of the term millet, see Braude 1982, 69-88; Konortas 1999, 169-180; Goffman 1994, 135-158; Ursinus 1962-, 61-64.

<sup>2</sup> Ursinus 1962, 62.

<sup>3</sup> Paraskevas Konortas 1999, 171-72 emphasized that it was after the Tanzimat or in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that one can speak of a “patriarch-head of a religious community”. Only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century “the Church of Constantinople succeeded in exercising authority over the whole Orthodox community of the sultan’s empire”.

<sup>4</sup> For the Bulgarian Schism, see Matalas 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Frazee 1983, 227.

<sup>6</sup> The American missionaries who engaged in missionary work in Anatolia gave particular importance to the education of girls; see Demir 2012, 1410.

In fact, some scholars have rightly argued that until the 1830s the Patriarchate remained rather tolerant towards the Protestant missionaries and their work partly due to their shared hostility toward Catholics and partly to reduce the influence of the secular, revolutionary literature which was spreading among the Orthodox flock in those years<sup>7</sup>. Also, we have to acknowledge that in Greece, Protestantism penetrated to some extent into Orthodox practices, attitudes, and religious and moral sensibilities<sup>8</sup>. Notwithstanding this flow of religious and cultural influences and the Patriarchate's flexible attitude at the beginning, by and large, the Patriarchate was very skeptical about the Protestant missionary activity which began to acquire converts among Orthodox Christians. Demonstrating this, beginning from the 1830s the patriarchs in Istanbul (e.g. Grigorios VI, 1836) issued encyclicals which officially accused the Protestant missionaries of disseminating their own interpretations of the religious dogmas, and banned Orthodox Christians from sending their children to their schools and reading their Bible translations and other printed material distributed by them<sup>9</sup>.

In the following pages, I will show that facing the Protestantization of the Ottoman Greek Orthodox, the Patriarchate increased its control and surveillance over the members of the *millet-i Rum*. Nevertheless, not all the mechanisms of "control" were in the monopoly of the Patriarchate. I will provide examples of incidents showing the responses of the local Greek Orthodox communities to the spread of Protestantism in their villages or towns. These episodes will reveal that the Ottoman Greeks who converted to Protestantism faced forms of social punishment, harassment, or even physical assault by the members of their former Greek Orthodox communities. At the same time, I will also examine how the discourse on religious freedom was used by British and American diplomats to defend the local converts against both the persecutions of their national churches and communities and the decisions of the Ottoman authorities. Ultimately, the incidents which will be scrutinized here will hopefully give us an idea about how the Ottoman state and local authorities dealt with Greek Orthodox-Greek Protestant disputes.

As mentioned above, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century a variety of Protestant churches sent missionaries to Ottoman Turkey<sup>10</sup>. Yet here our focus will be on the American missionaries' activities in Ottoman Anatolia since their share in spreading the Protestant faith among the Ottoman Greek Orthodox was overwhelmingly the greatest.

## The American Missionaries in Ottoman Turkey

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, various missionary societies were founded in the United States to spread the evangelical mission to the whole world. This had much to do with the revised approach of the so-called religious revival, the "Second Great Awakening", to an individual's role in his or her own salvation and destiny, and the new sense of social responsibility which it inculcated<sup>11</sup>. Thus, young men and women were inspired by the recent religious revival and, seized by intense religious fervor, traveled thousands of kilometers to totally foreign

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<sup>7</sup> Gazi 2009, 99; also see Clogg 1968.

<sup>8</sup> Gazi 2009, 101.

<sup>9</sup> See Mamoni 1980-81, 182. Much of this printed material, the Bible, and other religious literature were in Turkish written in Greek script, *karamanlidika*, for the Turkish-speaking Orthodox of Anatolia.

<sup>10</sup> For instance, in the late 1820s, the missionaries of the Church Missionary Society of the Church of England chose the island of Syros with Smyrna as their base and engaged in missionary activities there; see Stock 1905, 280-81. For the Church Missionary Society's activities based in Istanbul, see Özcan and Buzpınar 1997.

<sup>11</sup> Ümit 2008, 16.

environments to spread the Gospel among the nations whom they saw as the “heathen” peoples of the world. They went to Hawaii, China, India, the Middle East, and Ottoman Turkey<sup>12</sup>. The American evangelization was closely connected with the American expansion promoted by the slogan “Manifest Destiny” used in various contexts and debates since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to justify the territorial expansion of the boundaries of the United States westward and beyond the Pacific<sup>13</sup>. In September 1810, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was constituted in Bradford, Massachusetts<sup>14</sup>. The ABCFM developed into the most active and best-organized missionary organization in Ottoman Turkey.

Malta was one of the first stations of the British and American missionaries in the Mediterranean where they conducted their translation and publication activities<sup>15</sup>. Not surprisingly, however, due to their symbolic importance for the history of Christianity, the Christian missionaries were drawn to Jerusalem, Syria, and Anatolia which were under Ottoman rule. Sent by the ABCFM to Palestine, the two missionaries Levi Parsons and Pliny Fisk changed their destination and settled down in Izmir on their way in 1820<sup>16</sup>. In the 1820s, the arrival of the first American missionaries to western Turkey and Greece coincided with the Greek War of Independence (1821-1830). They saw the Greek struggle to throw the “yoke” of their Muslim rulers as a favorable situation for their work. They expected that in Greece national independence would be accompanied by a moral and spiritual rejuvenation<sup>17</sup>. Jonas King, the first missionary sent by the ABCFM to Greece, began pursuing missionary work in the late 1820s<sup>18</sup>.

The nature and priorities of the American expansion and dominance intrigued the missionaries themselves. Leaving the outspoken expectations of territorial and economic gains to statesmen, the missionaries asked themselves whether their mission was to Christianize the natives or to educate them along western ideals, in other words, to evangelize or to civilize them<sup>19</sup>. In many places, including Ottoman Turkey, where they could not convert the locals in impressive numbers, they remained satisfied with bringing them closer to the educational and philanthropic ideals of the West<sup>20</sup>.

Regarding Ottoman Muslims, even after the abolishment of execution as punishment for apostasy, the missionaries could convert only a few Muslims<sup>21</sup>. As Selim Deringil suggested,

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<sup>12</sup> See Doğan – Sharkey 2011.

<sup>13</sup> See Ümit 2008, 1. The phrase was first used in 1845 by John L. O’Sullivan, the editor of a magazine of the Democrats (<https://www.history.com/topics/manifest-destiny>).

<sup>14</sup> Hereafter, it will be denoted as the ABCFM. The new colleges founded in New England in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, such as Williams, Bowdoin, and Union, played an important role in the establishment of the ABCFM. These colleges promoted the traditional teachings of the Congregationalist Church and the doctrines of Calvinism. For the formation of the ABCFM, see Ümit 2008, 18-21. For an analysis of conceptual metaphors in the texts produced by the missionaries of the ABCFM in 1820-1898, see Gümüş 2017.

<sup>15</sup> Malta was part of the British Empire as a protectorate. On the missionaries’ printing activities at Malta, see Layton 1971.

<sup>16</sup> For a detailed examination of the American missionaries’ activities targeting the Greek Orthodox populations in Asia Minor in the early stages of their work, see Augustinos 1986.

<sup>17</sup> Saloutos 1955, 155.

<sup>18</sup> For the history and activities of the American missionaries in Greece between the years 1820-1850, see Papageorgiou 2001.

<sup>19</sup> Hutchison 1987, 63.

<sup>20</sup> For the educational activities of the American Protestant missionaries in the Ottoman Empire, see Alan 2015.

<sup>21</sup> For the so-called “Apostasy Affair” which ended with the execution of an Armenian apostate (*mürted*) in Istanbul in 1843 and the subsequent process that led to the decision of the Ottoman cabinet in 1857 that punishment for apostasy was to be exile, see Deringil 2012, 69-76.



this might have been due to the strength of Muslim solidarity and the fear of ostracism and loneliness on the part of a would-be convert<sup>22</sup>. However, the American missionaries' educational efforts had a significant indirect impact on public education in the Ottoman Empire. Especially during Sultan Abdülhamid II's reign, public education at state schools was improved in order to compete with the modern curricula of the foreign schools, hence to prevent the Muslim children from going to those educational institutions<sup>23</sup>. Their foreign education was seen as potentially weakening one's attachment to Islam and the Ottoman nation<sup>24</sup>. Similar to the Ottoman Muslim authorities, the leaders of the Rum milleti often saw these schools as dangerous for their potential of "denationalizing" the Greek Orthodox children, especially by weakening their ties to their religion. Nevertheless, the missionaries' schools were seen – and rightly so – by the lower strata Christians of the Armenian and Greek Orthodox Churches as a channel for upward social mobility.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century and before, various Christian churches and orders sent missionaries to the Jews of the East to convert them to Christianity. Focusing on the ABCFM's missionary work among the Salonican Jews and *dönmes* (Jewish converts to Islam), Cengiz Şişman has argued that even though the American mission to the Ottoman Jews and *dönmes* failed from a conversion point of view, it was in a way successful because it contributed to the transformation and modernization of those communities<sup>25</sup>. Ultimately, however, in 1855, the ABCFM decided to stop working among the Ottoman Jews. But this was not the end of the Christian missionary activities targeting the Ottoman Jews. It seems that establishing schools and hospitals were seen as the most effective methods by Christian missionaries to draw non-Christians to their faith. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, missionaries from the Church of Scotland sought to convert the impoverished and marginalized Jews of Izmir. To do this along with other means of reaching out to them, they founded a hospital to offer their medical service to the local Jews<sup>26</sup>.

## The Conversion of the Ottoman Christians: The Formation of the Armenian Evangelical Church in Istanbul

The ABCFM's missionary work focused mainly on the Christians of the East whom the American missionaries saw as "nominal Christians"<sup>27</sup>. They believed that these "Christians" would be enlightened religiously and spiritually and be salvaged if they overcame their ignorance, read the Bible, and understood its message. We do not know to what extent it reflected their genuine intentions but in defending their work against the representatives of the local Christian churches, they often emphasized the fact that they wanted to make the Holy Scriptures understandable to the ignorant masses. Not only the American missionaries but other Christian missionaries of various churches stated in their own accounts that when they

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<sup>22</sup> Addison 1942, 300 cited in Deringil 2012, 79.

<sup>23</sup> Somel 2001, 202-204.

<sup>24</sup> For the political implications of foreign schooling, see Deringil 1998, 117-118.

<sup>25</sup> Şişman 2015. The same point could be asserted regarding the missionaries' impact on the Ottoman Muslim populations. Especially, the schools founded by the American missionaries contributed to the westernized and scientific education of the future elites of Turkey.

<sup>26</sup> Bolel 2017. Likewise, regarding the orphanages founded by the American missionaries to "save" the Armenian orphans, Nazan Maksudyan has drawn attention to the close relationship between benevolence and proselytizing. Here, the missionary work targeted not only evangelization but also rescuing the Armenian orphans from conversion to Islam. See Maksudyan 2014, 126-27.

<sup>27</sup> See Doğan 2013, 14 and 34.

first arrived in the East and were introduced to the eastern churches, their primary goal was to influence the religious hierarchies of those churches to take the initiative to do internal reform, rather than to proselytize their flocks<sup>28</sup>.

The American missionary William Goodell began to reside in Istanbul in 1831 and was joined by H. G. O. Dwight the following year. In the 1830s Goodell established a school for Armenian boys in Pera and a Lancastrian school among the Greeks of Büyükdere<sup>29</sup>. In his memoirs he mentions that in those years in the Pera chapel on Sundays there were six religious services lasting about eight hours in total. These were conducted in four different languages – English, Greek, Turkish, and Armenian<sup>30</sup>. Goodell gained converts to Protestantism among the Armenians and Greeks of the city, the former more numerous by far than the latter. Actually, throughout the whole 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Protestantism spread with much more success among Ottoman Armenians than Ottoman Greeks. Regarding why Protestantism was welcomed by some members of the Ottoman Armenian community in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century when it was undergoing significant social and economic changes, Roderick Davison claimed that Protestantism appealed to the Armenian Gregorians because it introduced to them representative institutions and an emphasis on lay control<sup>31</sup>. A 20<sup>th</sup>-century narration written from a Protestant-Armenian perspective presented the emergence of Armenian Protestantism not as an outsider intervention of the American missionaries to the Armenian community but as part of an internal reform process within the Church. In this narrative, the American missionaries in Istanbul collaborated with certain reformist and learned clerics within the Armenian Apostolic Church, such as John Der-Sahakian and Minassian<sup>32</sup>.

In the 1840s, the Armenian Gregorian patriarch Matteos II began to persecute the converts, including the excommunication of an evangelical-minded Armenian Apostolic priest named Vertanes on 25 January 1846<sup>33</sup>. In his memoirs, Goodell mentions an Armenian convert to Protestantism, a former priest from Izmit who had been severely persecuted and eventually came to Istanbul to become one of his most devoted helpers<sup>34</sup>. When pressure and excommunications soared, the Armenian Protestants wrote a petition to the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs, Reşid Pasha, and the diplomatic corps of the Protestant states in Istanbul. In June 1846, Sultan Abdülmecid interfered with the Armenian patriarch's persecutions and bestowed government protection to his Armenian subjects who had embraced the Protestant faith<sup>35</sup>. On 1 July 1846, the Armenian Evangelical Church was founded in Istanbul/Pera with a constitution prepared with the counsel and aid of the missionaries in the city<sup>36</sup>. Initially, this first Armenian Evangelical Church had forty members. A year later, the total number of members of the Armenian evangelical churches in Istanbul, Izmit, Adapazarı, and Trabzon was about one hundred and forty<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> Stock 1905, 271.

<sup>29</sup> Kocabaşoğlu 1989, 59.

<sup>30</sup> Goodell 1853, 57-58.

<sup>31</sup> Davison 1963, 122-23.

<sup>32</sup> Arpée 1946, 7-8.

<sup>33</sup> Stone 2006, 73. For the declaration of the patriarchal anathema on Vertanes, see Arpée 1946, 22-24.

<sup>34</sup> Goodell 1853, 54.

<sup>35</sup> Arpée 1946, 32-33.

<sup>36</sup> Arpée 1946, 36-39.

<sup>37</sup> Arpée 1946, 39.

In the following decades, the Ottoman state became increasingly aware of the potential political implications of the conversion of Ottoman subjects, especially the conversion of Armenians to Protestantism. The missionaries sympathized with the Ottoman Armenians whom they saw as an oppressed Christian minority. Jeremy Salt has noted that the persecution of the Ottoman Armenians during the Hamidian regime allows us to attribute responsibility to the missionaries and the statesmen of the Protestant governments who had a symbiotic relationship<sup>38</sup>. To what extent or which groups within the evangelized Armenians wished for an intervention of the Protestant governments regarding their independence from the Ottoman Empire is a question that requires further research and is not the topic of this article. It is certain, however, that as Selim Deringil has observed, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman Empire, conversion became a very socially and politically charged issue since it overlapped with the rise of romantic nationalisms in the Balkans and Anatolia<sup>39</sup>. Despite the distress and complaints of the Armenian national and Catholic churches, the American missionaries gained significant numbers of converts among the Ottoman Armenians.

### The “new” millet: The Ottoman Protestants

Unlike the other major three millets, the Armenian Catholic and the Protestant millets were later formations which emerged due to various missionary efforts on the Ottoman lands. Both were recognized by the Ottoman state as millets in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Catholic Armenians had their own millet in 1830<sup>40</sup>. The chronological information provided by the secondary literature regarding the process of the recognition of Ottoman Protestants as a separate millet is a bit confusing. Also, the nature of the recognition, whether it gave the Protestants autonomy or acknowledged them as a community (*cemaat*) or gave them full privileges as a millet like the others, is not very clear.

Some sources, referring to Sultan Abdülmecid’s imperial decree in November 1850, date the establishment and the initial recognition of the Protestant community to that year. For instance, Gülnihal Bozkurt noted that with the initiatives of the British and Prussian ambassadors, the Protestant *community* (my emphasis) was officially established and recognized on 15 November 1850<sup>41</sup>. Likewise, Bilal Eryılmaz wrote that “the Ottoman state due to British pressure, had to recognize the Protestants as a ‘millet’ in 1850”<sup>42</sup>. Other sources, however, mention 1847 as the year of the issuance of the “first imperial decree recognizing the Protestants of Turkey as a separate community and granting them freedom of conscience and worship”<sup>43</sup>. Similarly, Charles Frazee wrote: “The British ambassador, Stratford Canning, obtained a *firman* from Abdülmecid’s government in November 1847 which gave the Protestants *autonomy* (my emphasis) and thus protected the Evangelical Church [of the Armenians] from further harassment”<sup>44</sup>. Frazee, suggesting a two-step process, added that in 1850 a Protestant *millet*

<sup>38</sup> Salt 1985-86, 53-67.

<sup>39</sup> Deringil 2012, 249.

<sup>40</sup> See Beydilli 1995. For the formation of a separate *Katolik millet* and the duties of the Director of the Latin Ottoman Chancery, see Frazee 1983, 224.

<sup>41</sup> Bozkurt 1989, 178-180: “İngiliz ve Prusya elçilerinin girişimleri üzerine 15 Kasım 1850’de Protestan cemaati resmen kuruldu ve tanındı”.

<sup>42</sup> Eryılmaz 1990, 71: “Osmanlı Devleti de İngilizlerin baskısıyla 1850 yılında Protestanları bir ‘millet’ olarak kabul etmek zorunda kaldı”.

<sup>43</sup> Arpée 1946, 40.

<sup>44</sup> Frazee 1983, 264. I should also note that a contemporary, the American missionary Cyrus Hamlin stated that the *firman* of 1847 was repeated in 1850 and 1853; see Hamlin 1878, 131-134.

was created with the inclusion of Protestant Greeks and Syrians. Mentioning the first imperial *irade* of 1847, Leon Arpée clarified further that it was not until 1850 that “the rights and privileges of the Protestant community were permanently defined by imperial firman and the Protestants were authorized to elect a chancellor or civil head”<sup>45</sup>. Thus, he wrote that on 27 November 1850, the Ottoman sultan issued an imperial decree giving a separate *millet* status to his “Christian subjects who have embraced the Protestant faith”<sup>46</sup>. Also, Selim Deringil mentioned both dates and wrote that “the Ottoman Protestant *millet* was officially recognized in an imperial decree dated 15 November 1847”<sup>47</sup>. Then he too cited 1850 as the year in which British intercession won full official recognition for the Armenian Evangelical Union and the recognition of the Protestants as a completely separate civil community in the Ottoman Empire. In light of this information, it is plausible to think that the imperial decree of 1847 had the intention of reminding and enforcing one of the main principles of the Tanzimat, namely that the adherents of every religion were free to worship according to their own rites. This therefore protected the Protestant Armenians against the persecutions of the Gregorian Armenians. Yet it was with the imperial firman issued in 1850 that the Protestants were recognized as millet and given a diploma (*berat*) that concretized their status permanently.

The petition of a Protestant to the Imperial Chancery of State under the direction of the Beylikçi dated 19 September 1849 may confirm this two-stage process. The document suggests that by 1849 the Protestants in the Ottoman Empire were given some sort of official guarantee that no one would interfere with their worship<sup>48</sup>. Therefore, we may assume that the imperial decree given to the British representative in 1847 guaranteed freedom of worship to the Protestants. Here the petition-writer complained that some officials, considering them a new millet and hence not giving them importance, detained the settlement of their affairs (“*bazı me'murin cedid millet deyü ifadelerimizin icra-yı tesviyesi tevkiye bais olduğundan*”). Further, the author of the petition requested that the Protestants be granted an imperial diploma with privileges similar to the ones given other millets (“*millet-i saire tarafına ibsan buyurulan berat-ı alışan şurut-ı nizamı veçbile bu kullarının dabi yed-i acizanemde sebeb-i itibarımız olan berat-ı alışan inayet ve ibsan buyurulmak niyazı babında*”)<sup>49</sup>. So before the imperial decree of 1850, even though their recent existence was known by the Ottoman bureaucracy, the Protestants were not yet recognized as a millet. Henceforth, as mentioned in the petition, due to their undefined status they often faced difficulties in settling their matters at various state and local offices.

The Protestants certainly constituted a brand new religious community in the Ottoman domains, whose image in the eyes of both the state authorities and outsiders was yet to be determined. The petitioner’s cautious language in introducing himself suggests his effort to give an image of the Protestants as peaceful and god-fearing subjects of the sultan who engaged in innocent actions, such as reading their holy book: “This servant, being one of the

<sup>45</sup> Arpée 1946, 40.

<sup>46</sup> Arpée 1946, 41-42.

<sup>47</sup> Deringil 2012, 79. Here Deringil cited Frank A. Stone 2006, 74 who wrote that “Lord Cowley [who was acting for the Ambassador Sir Stratford Canning] obtained an imperial decree dated November 15, 1847 *granting religious tolerance* (my emphasis) to the Protestant Armenians”.

<sup>48</sup> BOA, A.DVN, 50/81, 1 Zilkade 1265 (19 September 1849). I would like to thank Prof. Dr. E. Eldem for helping me with the transliteration of the Ottoman documents used in this article.

<sup>49</sup> Gülnihal Bozkurt 1989, 179 noted that the imperial decree given to the Protestants in 1850 was different than the ones given to the other millets. It did not include privileges, hence did not give them the status of a “millet”.

praying servants who have the habit of reading the Holy Bible, designated as Protestant, the most faithful Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire” (“*Bu kulları asdaka-yı tebaa-yı reaya-yı Devlet-i Aliyye’den prodestan ta’bir olunur İncil-i şerif kıraatıyla me’luf dua-gûy kullarından olub*”). Beyond an issue of self-image, however, the mention of reading (and understanding) of the Bible in this petition reflected the evangelistic dimension of the missionary work through which the Anatolian Christians were converted to Protestantism. The American missionaries based their work on making the New Testament intelligible to the Christians of Anatolia. Hence the term “evangelical communities” can alternately be used for the Protestant communities in Anatolia<sup>50</sup>. Fourteen months after this petition was written, Sultan Abdülmecid issued an imperial decree in mid-November 1850 (Evasıt-ı Muharrem 1267) recognizing that his Christian subjects who adopted the Protestant faith were having difficulty and distress because they were not under any special supervision and that also their matters could not be settled by the religious leaders of their old faiths (“*şimdiye kadar bir nezaret-i mabsusa ve müstakile tabtında olmamaları ve terk ve tekevvün etmiş oldukları mezabib-i atıklarının patrik ve rüesası bittabi bunların işlerine bakamadıkları cibetle kendileri müzayaka ve usret çekmekte bulduklarından*”)<sup>51</sup>. Thus, the imperial decree stated that the Protestants would choose a trustworthy and respectable man from among themselves to be appointed as the “Agent of the Protestants” (“*Protestan vekili*”) who would be responsible for the worldly affairs of the Protestant community. His office would be attached to the *Zabtiye Müşirliği*, and his duties would consist of keeping the population registers of the community, recording the births and deaths, processing all applications for passports and marriage licenses, and handling all petitions on affairs concerning the community to be presented to the Sublime Porte or any other department that had to bear the official seal of the Agent<sup>52</sup>. Different than the administrative practices regarding the other religious communities, in the case of the Ottoman Protestants the Church was denied the right to participate in the administration of the millet<sup>53</sup>. The *Protestan vekili* was the civil head of the community. Stephan Agha Seropian, the brother of Patriarch Jacob, was elected as the first spiritual leader of the Protestant community<sup>54</sup>.

Due to the fact that the Protestant millet lacked a “nation-leader”, as in the case of the Ottoman Greeks, Armenians, and Jews who represented the members of the millet collectively in its relations with the Ottoman state, the Ottoman Protestants often resorted to the support of the representatives of the foreign Protestant governments when they faced persecution or harassment by the congregations of their former churches or when they felt that their right to worship was under attack<sup>55</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> Also mentioned in Blaisdell 2002, 34.

<sup>51</sup> For the full text of this firman in original (Turkish in Latin letters), see Tuğlacı 1991, 371-372. According to Tuğlacı, this firman is located at the Archive of the Armenian Patriarchate of Turkey (Istanbul) under the category “Firman Registers”. Tuğlacı 1991, 316 wrote that the imperial decree dated 16-26 November 1850 recognized “the Protestant Armenians to establish an *independent religious community* (my emphasis)”.

<sup>52</sup> Tuğlacı 1991, 372; Arpée 1946, 42.

<sup>53</sup> Bozkurt 1989, 178.

<sup>54</sup> Tuğlacı 1991, 316.

<sup>55</sup> The fact that the Protestant subjects of the sultan were not a collectively recognized member of the *millet* system was seen as highly problematic by the Ottoman authorities; see Deringil 2011, 125.

## The Ottoman Authorities between Two Fires: The Conversion of the Priest Hatzı Konstanti in Söğüt

The Reform Edict (*Islabat Fermanı*) was proclaimed on 18 February 1856, a month before the Paris Peace Treaty signed after the Crimean War by Russia, Britain, France, and the Ottoman Empire<sup>56</sup>. Confirming one of the basic articles of the Tanzimat edict, the equality of the sultan's non-Muslim and Muslim subjects, the 1856 edict further granted explicit rights to non-Muslims regarding their education and freedom of worship. Non-Muslims were granted the right to establish their own schools<sup>57</sup>. Regarding religious spaces, permission would be given not only for the reparation of churches, as it was limited to before, but also for the construction of new churches. There is no doubt that Ottoman bureaucrats had a sincere wish to secure the loyalty of the non-Muslims to the state by giving them a sense of security for their lives and property. Yet at the same time, the Reform Edict was the product of a conscious effort to receive the approval of the European Christian powers, as well as a strategy to deny them any excuse to meddle with the internal affairs of the Empire in the future<sup>58</sup>. From the perspective of the European powers themselves, as Christos Hadjiiosif noted, "the reform effort of the Porte was the main argument used by Western politicians to sell the new alliance [in Crimean war] to their publics"<sup>59</sup>. In reality, however, both sides had different understandings of their supposedly shared values, including religious freedom.

The missionaries insisted on an all-encompassing religious liberty that would be granted to all the subjects of the empire without distinction. The ABCFM attempted to provide the interference of the ambassador of the United States at Istanbul for the abrogation of the law punishing apostasy from Islam with death. The following excerpt from the Annual Report of the ABCFM of the year 1856 indicates how the Board sought to mobilize the highest-ranking American statesmen to push for what it considered as religious liberty in Ottoman Turkey:

In accordance with a resolution adopted at the last annual meeting of the Board, a Memorial was prepared, duly signed, and forwarded to the President of the United States, requesting him, through the United States Minister at Constantinople, to use such influence as he consistently could with the Turkish Government, in favor of granting entire religious liberty to all the subjects of the empire without distinction<sup>60</sup>.

In his response on 23 February 1856, forwarding a copy of the *Hatt-ı Şerif* to the Board, Carroll Spence, the Minister Resident in Turkey, wrote with satisfaction: "You will doubtless be gratified to learn, from a perusal of the copy of a Hatti-Scheriff of the Sultan, (which I herewith forward you,) that perfect freedom of conscience has been accorded to the subjects of this Empire"<sup>61</sup>. The prospect for reform to remedy the disadvantaged position of the Ottoman non-Muslims displayed in the Tanzimat and the Reform edicts raised the hopes of the foreign

<sup>56</sup> On the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* of 1856 and its reception, see Davison 1963, 52-80.

<sup>57</sup> Somel 2001, 42.

<sup>58</sup> Roderick Davison 1963, 52-53 wrote that it was the magnum opus of Lord Stratford, the British ambassador. See also Hanioglu 2008, 85.

<sup>59</sup> Hadjiiosif 2015, 93.

<sup>60</sup> Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions presented at the 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Boston (1856), 77.

<sup>61</sup> Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions presented at the 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Boston (1856), 77.



missionaries and diplomats, and they assumed that a full freedom of religion and conscience came to the empire. In fact, the Ottoman statesmen who drafted the Reform edict of 1856 refrained from putting a statement in the text resolving the debate regarding the punishment for apostasy, an issue which had been causing much pressure from the Christian states of the West. In 1857, the fear of Muslim reaction from inside and fear of isolation from the European concert of states from outside were resolved with the decision to punish apostasy not by execution but by exile<sup>62</sup>. Hence, the abolishment of execution as punishment for denouncing Islam was received with joy by the foreign states and their representatives. Yet, neither the new rights granted to non-Muslims nor a much milder punishment for change of religion (for Muslims) meant that the missionaries could freely spread their religions in the Ottoman lands. Proselytization remained banned until the end of the empire.

The imperial decree recognizing the Protestants as a separate community in 1850 mentioned that no interference by the other millets into their worship, and religious and worldly affairs would be allowed (“*kendülerinin milel-i saire taraflarından ayinlerine ve mesalib-i diniyelerine velbasıl dini ve dünyevi hiç bir işlerine kat’a müdabale ettirilmeyüb*”). The recognition of this new religious community meant that even though proselytization was banned, the Ottoman state did not ban change of religion (*mezheb*) among its Christian subjects. Having said this, petitions coming from various parts of the Empire complaining about the disruption of public order or conveying the local Greek Orthodox or Armenian community’s distress about being pressured to convert, even sometimes by their own priests who adopted Protestantism, urged the state and local authorities to be cautious about the activities of the Protestant missionaries. Sometimes, a dispute between the two Christian sides was taken to the British or American ambassador who sided with the convert, defended him against his own fellow townsmen or local Greek bishop, and asked from the Ottoman authorities the protection of the individual’s right to choose his religion. They referred to the principal of “freedom of religion” as mentioned by the Ottoman sultan himself in his decrees. Thus, the Ottoman authorities often found themselves caught between two fires. In 1859-60, such a case of conversion caused a protracted dispute in Söğüt (south Marmara region) and subsequently the intervention of the British ambassador.

Sometime at the beginning of January 1859, the Turkish-speaking Orthodox inhabitants of the town of Söğüt in the sancak of Hüdavendigâr wrote a petition to Iosif, the Greek metropolitan of Iznik, complaining that their priest Hatzi Kostanti was going against their church and that he wanted to win some ignorant and poor Christians over to his side (“*Söğüt abalisinden papazımız bulunan Hatzi Kostanti eklisiamızın muayiri bulunduğunu ve dahi Hıristiyanların cabil ve fukara buldukları için [bunların?] birazlarını kendisine arkadaş yapmak sevdasında yikan*”)<sup>63</sup>. The metropolitan forwarded their petition to bishop Meletios, and the latter came to Söğüt on 21 January and took the priest with him on a boat to Istanbul. Just as the boat was about to reach its destination, some Protestants from Bursa came and, saying that the priest was Protestant and that he had a signature<sup>64</sup>, they took him to Bursa with them (“*Bursa tarafından bir kaç kişi Protestan gelip bu papaz protestan ve bizim adamımızı imzası var deyip alıp Bursa’ya götürüyorlar*”). This episode is narrated in the petition sent by the Rum community of Söğüt to the Ottoman sultan on 31 January 1859 (Fig. 1). The fifty-six

<sup>62</sup> See fn. 19 in this article.

<sup>63</sup> BOA, HR. MKT. 282/93, the petition of the Christian subjects living in Söğüt written in *karamanlidika* is dated 31 January 1859.

<sup>64</sup> Probably the priest signed a libel in which he denied the teachings of the Orthodox Church.

signatories, comprising the Rum notables of Söğüt headed by Murat Iordanou Agha and the “*ekzarhos*”<sup>65</sup>? Anastas Ioandreou, requested that the priest Hatzi Konstanti not be permitted to come to their town again if he attempted to do so. They wrote that if he came, being a crazy and destitute man, he would behave against their religion, molest the people, and all would be stripped of their comfort (“*eğer papaz bu tarafa geldiği halde divane ve sefi?[] bir adam olup ve aynimizin muayiri harakette bulunacağından başka şuna buna da tesellüt? [tasallut] edeceğinden cümlemizin rahatlerimiz meslup olup*”). Two months later, the Greek Orthodox patriarch Kyrillos sent a petition to the Sublime Porte requesting that the governor of Hüdavendigâr be ordered not to allow priest Konstanti to go to Söğüt<sup>66</sup>.

Indicating that the priest eventually returned back to Söğüt and was persecuted by the Greek Orthodox there, Henry L. Bulwer, the British ambassador at Istanbul, wrote a letter on 18 April 1860 to the Ottoman Foreign Minister Fuad Pasha expressing his concern about the on-going persecution of the Greek priest in Söğüt who had become Protestant. This occurred despite the vezirial letter sent to the governor of Bursa, Süleyman Pasha, and the promises made thereafter. Not surprisingly, Bulwer reminded him that the government of the sultan had “so constantly and so nobly pledged itself to maintain perfect freedom of Religion amongst all His Majesty’s subjects”, and wrote that this “injustice and intolerance inflicted disgrace” on both the Greek Community and the Government of the Sultan<sup>67</sup>.

Now, before we examine specific incidents from Anatolia indicating the responses of the patriarch and the local Greek Orthodox communities to converts, some information on the population and geographical distribution of Ottoman Greek Protestants is in order.

## The Geographical Distribution of the Greek Protestant Population in Ottoman Anatolia

The existing Ottoman official documentation of the period between the late 1840s and 1910s points to the existence of Greek Protestants in the following vilayets, cities, and districts (*kaza*): Istanbul (city and suburbs); vilayet of Aydın in Izmir, Manisa, Saruhan, Akhisar, and Ödemiş; vilayet of Bursa /Hüdavendigâr in Bursa, Adapazarı, Bandırma, Söğüt; district of Izmit; vilayet of Trabzon in Ordu (Çambaşı, Semen), Samsun, Bafra (Alaçam), Fatsa; vilayet of Ankara in Kayseri (especially Talas and Zincidere); vilayet of Adana; vilayet of Konya in Burdur; vilayet of Sivas in Sivas, Merzifon; and vilayet of Selanik.

The records of the Protestant missionaries reveal that in 1834, almost simultaneously with Istanbul and Izmir, Protestant missionary work reached Bursa and its environs in northwestern Anatolia<sup>68</sup>. For some reason, however, conversion among the Greek Orthodox remained restricted. Arguably, this was due to the strict control of the Orthodox Patriarchate and its local clergy on their communities. In Bursa, the local Greek bishop did not give a warm welcome to the Protestant missionaries. In August 1834, right at the beginning of their labors Mr. Schneider, the Protestant missionary in Bursa, stated that the Greek bishop commanded the local Greek Orthodox not to provide him with a house until he wrote to the patriarch about it<sup>69</sup>. Despite

<sup>65</sup> The correct spelling is “*exarhos*”, but they were not good at orthography so it is transliterated incorrectly.

<sup>66</sup> BOA, HR. MKT. 282/93, patriarch Kyrillos’s petition is dated 22 Şaban 1275 (28 March 1859).

<sup>67</sup> BOA, HR. SYS. 1774/15, 18 April 1860.

<sup>68</sup> Schneider 1846.

<sup>69</sup> Schneider 1846, xi.



opposition and persecutions, the mission towards the Greek Orthodox – the Armenians were more receptive – continued in Bursa. The annual report of the ABCFM of 1842 stated that the missionary Mr. Van Lennep, who was learning the Greek and Turkish languages at that time, engaged in missionary work (e.g. sold translations of the New Testament in the local vernacular) in Izmir, Bursa, Istanbul, and Edirne, while Mr. Riggs preached in Greek at his house in Izmir to about ten to twenty persons<sup>70</sup>. Throughout the years, the number of Protestants in Izmir increased and reached a sufficient number in 1851 to form a separate community. The ABCFM's annual report of the year 1852 noted that after the ensuing persecution, the numbers of the Protestants increased even more<sup>71</sup>. Also, in 1852 the district of Akhisar/Izmir had a tiny Protestant community composed of six Greeks and two Armenians<sup>72</sup>. In Istanbul in the 1850s, the American missionaries continued their religious services in Greek for the small Greek Protestant groups – eighteen to twenty people – in Pera and Bebek. (There were Protestants also in Yenikapı, Balat, and Hasköy)<sup>73</sup>.

In the following decade, along with Istanbul, Izmir, and the existing stations in South Marmara, the Protestant missionary work extended to the inner parts of Anatolia: to Merzifon, Kayseri, Sivas, and Yozgat<sup>74</sup>. After the 1870s, Protestantism began to spread among the Greek Orthodox who lived in the above-mentioned cities and the Black Sea towns. Highlighting the effectiveness of the Protestantization of the Christian populations in the region of Cappadocia, Çağdaş Lara Çelebi mentioned that towards the end of the 1870s there was a gradual increase in the sanjak of Kayseri's native Protestant population<sup>75</sup>. Also, during this period the Greek Protestant populations of the older stations increased. By the 1870s, the church in Bursa had grown so impressively that the Protestant community there gradually became independent and paid for all its institutions itself<sup>76</sup>. In the vilayet of Hüdavendigâr, the missionaries' major success was among the Armenians who lived in the Bursa-Adapazarı passage where the missionaries operated the Bithynian High School in Bahçecik (Bardezag in Armenian) and the Armenian Girls' High School in Adapazarı<sup>77</sup>. Except in Bursa, there was a small Greek Protestant community in the port town of Bandırma<sup>78</sup>. Uygur Kocabaşoğlu noted the period of 1871-1900 as the most "productive" years of the American missionary movement in Anatolia<sup>79</sup>. He stated that between 1882 and 1900, the total number of Protestants rose from about 20,000 to 45,000 with most being Armenians<sup>80</sup>. According to the estimates of the ABCFM in 1908, in the region of South Marmara the missionaries of the Board had established 140 churches with

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<sup>70</sup> 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston (1842), 102-103. As written in the report, the young men in Riggs's Bible class were from Larissa in Thessaly and in Izmir for trade or study.

<sup>71</sup> 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston (1852), 63.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>73</sup> 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston (1854), 83.

<sup>74</sup> 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston (1864), 58.

<sup>75</sup> Çelebi 2009, 308. In Talas, which constituted the second largest congregation after Kayseri, the numbers of Greek and Armenian Protestants were almost equal (313). For the missionary activities and the genesis of the Protestant Greek communities in the region of Cappadocia in the late Ottoman Empire, see also Göktürk 2015, 211-240.

<sup>76</sup> Hamlin 1878, 256.

<sup>77</sup> The small town of Bahçecik located near the Gulf of Izmit had a Protestant church since 1856; see Stone 2006, 85.

<sup>78</sup> Gingeras 2009, 22.

<sup>79</sup> Kocabaşoğlu 1989, 119.

<sup>80</sup> Kocabaşoğlu 1989, 132.

16,000 members, mission colleges and high schools enrolling 23,000 students, and 305 Sunday schools<sup>81</sup>.

The population census of 1881/82-1893 provides us with the numbers of Protestants (Armenians and Greeks) in each Ottoman vilayet and their distribution at the district level: 2,240 in the vilayet of Ankara; 1,553 in the sanjak of Kayseri; 753 in the vilayet of Hüdavendigâr / Bursa with 1,108 in the district of Izmit; 845 in the vilayet of Trabzon with 288 in Ordu<sup>82</sup>; 153 in the sanjak of Izmir; 559 in Merzifon; 283 in the vilayet of Selanik; 279 in the vilayet of Edirne; and 819 in Istanbul<sup>83</sup>. According to the same population census, the total number of Protestants in all the provinces of the empire and Istanbul were 36,238<sup>84</sup>. A table provided by Kemal Karpat containing the populations of the religious communities in the Ottoman Empire in 1897 designated the total number of Protestants as 44,360, which constituted 0.24% of the whole population<sup>85</sup>. Indicating an increase in the population of the Protestants also in the later period, another source has noted that, based on the population census in the eve of World War I, 66,000 Protestants lived in the Ottoman Empire, most of whom were Armenians<sup>86</sup>.

### The Patriarchate's Response to the Converts and the Protestant Missionary Work

In the eyes of the Greek Orthodox clergy and laity, the Protestant Greeks disrupted the unity of the millet/nation. Religious conversion and the subsequent breakaway from one's community was seen as equal to refusal or loss of one's nation<sup>87</sup>. In February 1836, Patriarch Grigorios VI approved the establishment of an ecclesiastical committee in Izmir to control the Orthodox clergy and the lay community there. On 22 May 1836, the committee contacted Reverend Jetter and requested the removal of a teacher who was of a different faith (not Greek Orthodox) from the Lancastrian school in the Greek quarter of St. George. The Protestant missionary rejected this request, saying that he was only accountable to the Ottoman state<sup>88</sup>. Furthermore, the English and American missionaries in Izmir published a booklet in which they rejected the charges of the Greek ecclesiastical committee that the missionaries were trying to proselytize<sup>89</sup>. As in this case, the Patriarchate in Istanbul exerted its control over the remote communities often by setting up central or local committees for the surveillance of the Christian Orthodox. Also, sometimes the patriarch intervened into individual cases of conversion.

In the following incident, the patriarch sent a lay person into exile on account of his "acting contrary to the Orthodox faith". In a petition dated 4 October 1849, the Greek Orthodox patriarch Anthimos IV (first term 1840-1841; second term 1848-1852) requested permission from the sultan for the one-year exile of Nikola, an oil-seller from Bandırma, to Simonopetra Monastery

<sup>81</sup> ABCFM 16.9.3, vol. 27, doc. 156: "Needs of the Turkey Missions", 23 Nov. 1908, cited in Gingeras 2009, 22, 190.

<sup>82</sup> A Greek source from the beginning of the 20th century mentioned that about 120 Protestant families lived in Ordu and its villages, of which 70 had previously been Orthodox Christians with the rest Armenians; see Papamihalopoulos 1903, 296.

<sup>83</sup> The respective numbers of Protestants in each province are taken from Karpat 1985, 123-149.

<sup>84</sup> Karpat 1985, 149.

<sup>85</sup> Karpat 1985, 198.

<sup>86</sup> McCarthy – Turan – Taşkiran 2014, 72.

<sup>87</sup> For denationalization, see Deringil 2012, 249.

<sup>88</sup> Augustinos 1986, 134.

<sup>89</sup> Regarding the same incident, and the booklet and arguments of the missionaries, also see Doğan 2013, 87-90.

in Mount Athos<sup>90</sup>. Unfortunately, the petition is not clear about the offense committed by Nikola. In the patriarch's words, Nikola with his evil character and disposition was behaving contrary to religion and church. He was displaying abominable behaviour not appropriate to be revealed, and did not refrain from religious punishment and become devoted to God ("*su'-i tıynet ve cibilliyet ile müteballık olan Nikola nam yağcı mugayir-i ayin ve mezheb ve keşf ü ifşa itmek caiz olmayan harekât-ı şeniaya itibar ve bir dürlü mücazat-ı diniyeden mütebaşi ve müterebbib olmayub*"). The fact that an offense committed by a lay Christian subject of the sultan caused the involvement and complaint of the Patriarchate indicates that this was an issue related to religious belief and worship. Furthermore, the expression "contrary to religion and church" probably suggests that the accused adopted a heterodox teaching against the dogmas of the Orthodox church. At that time, Orthodox theology faced criticisms not only from Protestant and Catholic teachings but also from a number of religious movements. The impact of the so-called Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment on the one hand and the debates over the formation of a national autocephalous church on the other created an environment in Greece from the 1830s to the early 1850s in which several religious and philosophical movements (e.g. the scholar Theofilos Kairis's theological system "*Theosebeia*") emerged that criticized the dogmas of Orthodox theology<sup>91</sup>. Having said this, given that in those years Protestantism in particular was spreading significantly among the Christian inhabitants in the south Marmara region, namely in Bursa, Iznik, and Bandırma, it is more possible to claim that the oil-seller Nikola, whose exile was requested by the patriarch, had adopted the Protestant faith. What is interesting here is the patriarch's wording of the offense. If my interpretation of the petition is correct, his omission regarding Nikola's conversion to Protestantism possibly indicates that the patriarch did not have the authority to send a lay member of the millet-i Rum into exile for conversion to another Christian sect. But he could do so – at least request a permit from the sultan to do so – for misbehavior regarding the Orthodox faith. As evidence from the previous centuries attests, the exile of sinful clergymen, monks, and even lay Christians by the patriarch was quite common. Typically, the patriarch would write a petition to the Sublime Porte and request an order from it concerning the exile<sup>92</sup>.

Perhaps the official recognition of the Protestants as a millet marked a shift in the patriarch's use of his authority to punish a convert. After 1850, the patriarch himself would not designate the punishment in the case of a conversion anymore, but instead asked the Ottoman authorities to remove the convert from his former Rum community. In October 1852, Patriarch Anthimos was alarmed when a couple of new converts attempted to attract the local Greek Orthodox to Protestantism in Timurtaş. According to the Annual Report of the ABCFM of the year 1852, this Greek village near Bursa had fifteen Protestants who were awaiting a resident preacher and a school teacher<sup>93</sup>. In his petition to the Sublime Porte, the Patriarch condemned three inhabitants of the village – Dimitri Rençper, İstrati Hacıyorgi, and Yani Şiroğlu – for disturbing the safety and comfort of the Rum subjects there<sup>94</sup>. Furthermore, he pointed to the danger that, with the aid and support of the Protestant agents who had been living in Bursa for some time, these individuals ventured to bring forth the total repulsion and removal of

<sup>90</sup> BOA, A.MKT. 227/ 87, 16 Zilkade 1265 [4 October 1849].

<sup>91</sup> Zei 2002. For the preaching of the monk Christophoros Papoulakos, see also Gazi 2009, 102.

<sup>92</sup> See Papademetriou 2015, 173-174 and Bayraktar Tellan 2011, 119, 151.

<sup>93</sup> 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston (1852), 68.

<sup>94</sup> BOA, A.DVN. 82/ 27, 14 Muharrem 1269 (28 October 1852).

the Greek Orthodox religion (*Rum mezhebinin*) from those places<sup>95</sup>. Also, the patriarch mentioned in his petition that previously the Greek Orthodox subjects of the village complained about these individuals to the governor of Hüdavendigâr. Despite the governor's warnings, these Protestant villagers still continued their harassment of their Greek Orthodox co-villagers. Therefore, in his petition to the Sublime Porte the patriarch requested the expulsion of these converts from the village. It is also interesting to note that the patriarch mentioned that these converts, who had previously belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church, adopted the Protestant faith for the promise of British protection and exemption from various taxes and duties, as well as the promise of money.

In the 1870s and 1880s, the American missionaries expanded their educational institutions beyond their old stations in Izmir, Istanbul, and South Marmara into various parts of Anatolia, such as Kayseri, Konya, and Burdur in Central Anatolia. The following incident concerns the opening of a Protestant church and school in Burdur. The Ottoman state and local authorities were cautious about not allowing the functioning of any school without official license. Nevertheless, many of the American schools in the Ottoman Empire functioned without licenses for years, and then they were granted permission after the fact<sup>96</sup>. In Burdur, the American missionary activities began in the 1880s. A letter written from the central government to the vilayet of Konya on 21 August 1891 requested the communication of the truth of the matter regarding the attempt of the Protestants in Burdur to construct a church and school. The letter mentions that the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate sent a letter to the Ministry of Justice and Sects to demand that an official license not be granted for the opening of the Protestant church and school. In its letter, the Patriarchate claimed that there was not a Protestant community in Burdur, and that to open a church and school there for a few Greeks and Armenians who had become Protestants had in fact the purpose of attracting the simple-minded folk to Protestantism by deceiving them ("*Burdur'da Protestan cemaati olmadığı halde Rum ve Ermenilerden Protestanlığa dabil olan bir kaç kimesne için kilise ve mekteb inşasına teşebbüs olunmuş idiğinden ve bu da sadedilân abaliyi bi'l-iğfal mezheb-i mezkura celb ve imale maksadına müstenid bulunduğundan*")<sup>97</sup>. It seems that the Patriarchate intentionally understated the number of the Protestants in Burdur to prevent their receipt of an official permit for their church and school.

An incident that happened a year later may suggest how the Patriarchate came to be informed about the Protestant church and school in Burdur and why it interfered. A letter written by the Grand Vizier notified the Yıldız Palace that in Burdur, the American missionary Bartlett's house was burnt suddenly. It mentioned, however, that there was no evidence whether or not this was arson. Nevertheless, the letter provided information on the previous conflicts regarding the hostility of local Christians towards the American missionary<sup>98</sup>. At first, the Armenians and the Greek Orthodox in Burdur attempted to drive Bartlett, his wife, and his sister out of the house where they were living. Then, as they began to build a house for themselves, children threw stones and dirt at them, thus making construction difficult.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.: "...bir müddetden berü Brusa'da ikamet üzere olan Protestan me'murinin muavenet ve müzaheretiyile Rum mezhebinin ol taraflardan külliyyen def ve izalesi esbabına ictira...".

<sup>96</sup> Deringil 1998, 131.

<sup>97</sup> BOA, DH. MKT. 97/4: The letter to the vilayet of Konya, 15 Muharrem 1309 (21 August 1891).

<sup>98</sup> BOA, Y.A. HUS. 264/183: The letter of the Grand Vizier and yaver-i ekrem Ahmet Cevat Paşa on 24 Safer 1310 (16 September 1892). Regarding how the Ottoman bureaucrats dealt with the Bartlett case, the process of their decision-making, and their orchestration of local power-holders, such as the local governor, police, and judge, see Chapter 3, "Crime and Order," in Şahin 2018.

It seems that in search of influential backing against the threat of proselytization, the local Greek Orthodox in Burdur wrote to the Patriarchate about the Protestant missionary there and his attempt to build a church and school. Acting on this information, the Patriarchate intervened and wrote a letter to the Ministry of Justice and Sects to prevent the construction of the church and school in order to cast off the threat of proselytization and to prevent the tension between the local Christians and the American missionary from growing.

## Local Violence against the Greek Protestants in Anatolia

Reports of libel or acts of violence against the converts by the local Greek Orthodox are common both in Ottoman official documents and the missionaries' archives. Gülen Göktürk rightly claimed that the contestations between Orthodox and Protestant communities in Anatolia were tougher and often more violent than those between Muslims and Orthodox Christians<sup>99</sup>. The following slander took place in the sanjak of Saruhan in the province of Izmir. The official letter dated 14 May 1856 and written to the governor of Izmir reported that the local Greek bishop had a grudge and hidden enmity against Yani, the son of the merchant Sava, who was a prominent member of the Protestant millet. Yani had abandoned his former Greek Orthodox religion and was slandered by the bishop. The letter stated that, because of the bishop's defamation, Yani was brought in chains to Izmir, imprisoned, and detained as an exile. Yet thanks to the statements of those from other millets who were there, it became obvious that Yani did not display any misbehavior. Mentioning that a petition would be written by the Agent of the Protestants (*"protestan vekilî"*) on this issue, the letter requested that the matter be settled at a court. If no fault would be found in Yani, his honor was to be restored by the bishop<sup>100</sup>. Two months later, the Agent of the Protestants did not fail to mention in his petition that the reason for the bishop's slander was the spitefulness of his religion<sup>101</sup>.

The following violent incident in Adana may reveal that, especially in Ottoman cities with multi-ethnic and multi-national populations, an Orthodox-Protestant dispute could involve adversaries with many different ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, and allegiances. On 25 April 1871, a resident of Tahtakale (in Istanbul) named Tibon delivered a memorandum to the American Embassy which bore the summary of an event in Adana written to him by Adams, the American missionary in Tarsus<sup>102</sup> (Fig. 2). On 16 March 1871 a convert to Protestantism, who had previously been an adherent of the Greek Orthodox religion (*"Rum mezhebi"*), during his conversation with a person from the Greek Orthodox community mentioned a Greek Orthodox bishop. He said that the latter's spiritual services were of no use and benefit (*"bir Rum piskoposundan babs açılarak şahıs-ı mezbur bu ademin hidemat-ı rubaniyesinden biç bir hayr ü faide me'mul değildir demiş"*). Even though this affected the Orthodox person very much, at that time he ignored it. Yet three days later on Sunday during the religious service in the church, the priest of Adana's Greek Orthodox community began using provocative

<sup>99</sup> Göktürk 2015, 227.

<sup>100</sup> BOA, HR. MKT 145/96, İzmir Valisi'ne tahrirat-ı samiye, 9 Ramadan 1272 (14 May 1856): "İzmir eyaletinde kain Saruhan sancağı sakinesinden protestan milleti muteberanından tüccar Sava oğlu Yani Rum mukaddema mezhebini terk eylediğinden dolayı mahalli despotunun kendisine garaz ve nefsanıyyeti olup bazı güne afik ve iftirası hasebiyle bilâ-sebeb muhakeme der-zencir olarak İzmir'e ihzâr ve menfi gibi habs ve tevkif olunmuş ve merkumun mugayir-i usul bir güne hâl ve hareketi bulunmadığı orada bulunan milel-i sâ'ire tarafından beyan olunarak hakkında hüsn-i şahadet olunmakda bulunmuş..".

<sup>101</sup> BOA, HR. MKT 145/96, 28 Şevval 1272 (2 July 1856): "...despot-u merkumun nefsanıyyet-i mezhebisinden neş'et bir keyfin olduğu ma'lum...".

<sup>102</sup> BOA, HR. SYS. 2821/59, 25 April 1871.

language to defame the Protestants. He used the pretext that Protestants were assailing Greek Orthodox priests and he preached to his congregation the necessity for their punishment and repression (“*Adana Rum cemaati papazı kilisede icra-yı ayin esnasında gayet fitne-engizâne bir lisananda Protestanların zemm ü kadbine ağaz ve bunların Rum papazlarına itale-i lisan ettiklerini serrîşte ittihaz ederek vücubu te’dib ve tenkillerini cemaatine ta’lim ve telkin etmiş*”). Because of the excitement caused by this sermon, a mob of stupid people (“*bir gürub sebükmağzân*”) led by a person named Kosti, a Hellenic subject and clerk at the Greek consulate, went after two people returning harmlessly from the Protestant church. Some time later, the mob attacked and beat them until they were severely injured (“*Protestan kilisesinden kendü ballerinde avdet etmekte olan iki şahsın güzergeblerini kollayarak esna-yı mürurlarında üzerlerine hücum ve bunları ayaklarının altına alarak fena halde darb ve cerb eyledikleri*”). The governor of the vilayet immediately sent an officer to the place of the event. In the meanwhile, the Protestant pastor named Karabet also went there. Without bashfulness and hesitation due to the presence of the officer, the Greek Orthodox mob beat the Armenian Protestant pastor under the provocation of Kosti who cried: “This is the real Satan, beat him, kill him; I will pay the blood money!” (“*asil Şeytan budur urunuz öldürünüz diyetini ben veririm*”).

The tumult ended with difficulty when some more officers who had been sent there arrested five or six of the mischief-makers. The people who gathered, however, attempted to raid the prison to set the prisoners free, and could only be totally dispersed after thirty of them were arrested. In the meanwhile, Kosti fled to the Russian or the Greek consulate in Tarsus, and thus his arrest was ordered by the authorities. Obviously, Kosti’s action caused the involvement of Mr. Kristof, the Greek consul and the Russian consulate clerk in Tarsus, who sent a petition via telegraph to the authorities in Adana requesting that the detained Orthodox prisoner be set free. Subsequently, the consul himself came to Adana and procured the release of the prisoners. This seems to have annoyed the Protestants who insisted on the punishment of those Orthodox who were detained. Thereupon, the governor ordered the interrogation of the two most accused ones among them.

Giving voice to the complaints of the Protestants, the telegraph message sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Vilayet of Adana mentioned that some of the incident’s perpetrators who had been arrested by the government were later set at liberty and demanded that the trials of those under interrogation be executed with due attention. Regarding this last point, the memorandum delivered to the American Embassy mentioned that the interrogation of the accused was carried out using the testimonies of those who did not have a clue about the incident. Furthermore, one of the Protestants who came to the court session to give his testimony was asked by the judge to which religion/sect he belonged. When he replied that he was a Protestant, the judge sent all of them away, saying, “You all clear out; dogs cannot be witnesses here!” (“*hepiniz yıkılmış gidiniz burada kelbler şebadet idemez*”), and stated that the trial would take place if there were proper witnesses. Upon this, the pastor Karabet presented a protest to the governor and said that he would be present at the court session to give his testimony, only if the session would take place free from foreign intervention, witnesses would be heard adequately, and Protestants would also be allowed to testify.

This incident suggests that local disputes over religion turned easily into communal strife and even sometimes involved foreigners who acted in the name of their local co-religionists. Perhaps, as in this event, until a warning came from the higher authorities, the governors or judges acted in favor of the members of the more influential community. It seems that the Greek Orthodox community in Adana had a prestigious position and strong international



contacts. Also, a contemporary's observation may support this. Dorothea Chambers Blaisdell, the daughter of the Armenian community's pastor in Adana in the 1900s, wrote in her memoirs that the Greek Orthodox community in Adana had good standing and a more occidental culture than the Armenian Gregorians and Protestants. She noted that they had political prestige – probably due to independent Greece – and cosmopolitan contacts<sup>103</sup>. Nevertheless, this interesting episode reveals also the wide network of contacts to which the Protestant communities in the Ottoman Empire had access. This network could mobilize the American Embassy in Istanbul to act in the name of the beaten Protestants in Adana.

As mentioned before, Izmir was the initial stop of the American missionaries in Ottoman Turkey<sup>104</sup>. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, numerous missionaries who were sent to Izmir by the ABCFM preached, held Bible classes, and established schools for the education of girls and boys<sup>105</sup>. In 1875, the Board appointed the missionary Maria A. West to serve in Izmir and to establish a girls' school there. Soon the ABCFM became so pleased with West's work in Izmir that it decided to move the central office of the Western Turkey Mission from Manisa to Izmir<sup>106</sup>. In the 1880s, the evangelical work targeting the Greek Orthodox in Izmir blossomed with the arrival of the ABCFM missionary Georgios Konstantinos (1833-1891) who was remarkable for his missionary zeal and hard work. Konstantinos was first educated in Britain, then graduated from Amherst College and Andover Theological Seminary in the United States. After his studies, he returned to Greece and worked together with missionary Jonas King in Athens. Realizing that his missionary work would be more fruitful in Asia Minor, he came to Izmir in 1880 and began to minister at the Evangelical Church there<sup>107</sup>. In 1883, under the leadership of Georgios Konstantinos, the Evangelical Church of Izmir took the initiative of uniting the Greek evangelical churches of Asia Minor and Pontus, and founded the "Alliance of Evangelical Churches" ("*Syndesmos ton Evangelikon Ekklision*"). The *Alliance* included the churches of Izmir, Istanbul, Manisa, Akhisar, Bayındır, Ordu, Semen, and Beyalan, and aimed at facilitating communication among them<sup>108</sup>. Regarding the progress of the Protestant missionary work among the Smyrniote Greeks, the principal of the Girls' school, Mary Lyon Page, wrote the following in her report to the ABCFM on 15 January 1886:

Mr. Constantine is doing a great work among the Greeks who are drawn in, in spite of themselves, to listen. Those who come out and unite with the church are very devoted. At the midnight watch-meeting last Tuesday, Mr. Constantine asked all those to rise who had decided for Christ during the year, and we numbered fifteen. Then one after another gave his testimony for Christ. It was very touching, especially when one thought of all they had to give up for Christ. One of the number has left his family and friends, and since he became a Protestant they will have nothing to do with him – will not even write to him<sup>109</sup>.

<sup>103</sup> Blaisdell 2002, 34.

<sup>104</sup> See Erdoğan 2012 for the establishment of the ABCFM's Smyrna station and its activities among the Greeks and Armenians.

<sup>105</sup> See Demir 2014 for the educational activities of the American Board in Izmir.

<sup>106</sup> Horner 2015, 10-11. I would like to thank Dr. S. Sue Horner for sharing her paper with me.

<sup>107</sup> Agapidis 1950, 26. For Georgios Konstantinos's biography, also see Kyriakakis 1985, 89-92.

<sup>108</sup> Agapidis 1950, 35. The *Syndesmos* had close relations with the American missionaries and received an annual allowance from them; see Stergellis 1993-1994, 212.

<sup>109</sup> "Smyrna – The Greek Work", *The Missionary Herald*, vol. LXXXII, Boston, 1886, 146.

M. L. Page's words tell us about the extent of ostracism that the converts usually faced. Sometimes, perhaps depending on the convert's socioeconomic status, gender, and age, the reaction went beyond the convert's close circle to the town or city's public arena and turned into mob violence incident. In March 1887 in Izmir, the conversion of a notable Greek woman to Protestantism sparked the outrage of the local Orthodox community and caused a series of violent episodes. Was the extent of the outbreak related to the fact that the convert was a woman? During the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the role of woman/mother in inculcating the foundational aspects of Greek national identity in future generations was being heatedly discussed by the educated middle-classes of Greek Orthodox society in Ottoman urban contexts. There is no doubt that Orthodox Christianity has been a very important component of Greek national identity. A month after the adoption of Protestantism by the Smyrniote notable Madam Savoni, some Greek Orthodox inhabitants of the city assaulted the coffeehouse on Izmir quay at the hour of the Protestant pastor's sermon there in a room reserved for the Protestants' worship<sup>110</sup>. According to the governor's report to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, this incident was immediately thwarted by some gendarmes and police officers being sent to the coffeehouse. Ultimately to avoid further turmoil, the coffeehouse was closed with the mediation of the British consul<sup>111</sup>. Nevertheless, a week later, some Greek Orthodox vagrants together with their families and children (*Rumlardan bir takım serseriler çoluk çocuk ile karışık olarak*) went to the Protestant church in Debbâğhane (neighborhood of Aya Nikola), the Protestant school in Çikudya<sup>112</sup>, and the house of the pastor (George Konstantinos who was preaching at the previously mentioned coffeehouse). They threw stones and broke a few windows<sup>113</sup>. Obviously, such events disturbed the public order, and the Ottoman authorities were rather cautious about maintaining it, especially in a multi-national and multi-religious city such as Izmir. Three days after the episode, as a further precaution to what might happen during the approaching Orthodox Easter (5 April), a troop of soldiers was sent to Izmir<sup>114</sup>.

The incident was the climax of growing resentment which had begun a month previously with the prominent Greek woman's conversion to Protestantism. Georgios Konstantinos, or Rev. Dr. Constantine as he is referred to in the ABCFM reports, in his letter dated 21 February to the Board mentioned the hostility that had been awakened among the local Greek Orthodox upon the conversion of the Greek woman. The related report in *The Missionary Herald* stated that the house of the Greek pastor Rev. Dr. Constantine was stoned by a mob and that "The Rest" – the club in which he preached the gospel – was closed to avoid further trouble<sup>115</sup>. Mentioning the episodes in March 1887 in Izmir, Aristeidis P. Stergellis wrote that Smyrniote Greeks protested with demonstrations against the preaching of the evangelists in their city.

<sup>110</sup> BOA, Yıldız A. HUS, 201/9, 3 Receb 1304 (28 March 1887): "...Rum muteberanından İzmirli Madam Savoni bundan bir mah mukaddem Protestan mezhebine dahil olduğundan ve bu da Rumlara giran geldiğinden geçen Pazar günü Protestanların İzmir kordonu üzerinde bir kahvehanenin yanında ibadetlerine mahsus bir odada Protestan papaz icra-yı vaaz ederken Rum milletten bir takım ahali tasallut ettiği...".

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Aya Nikola and Çikudya were the Greek neighborhoods in the district of Basmane.

<sup>113</sup> BOA, Yıldız A. HUS, 201/9, 3.

<sup>114</sup> BOA, Yıldız A. HUS, 201/22, 18 Mart 1303 / 30 March 1887. From the letter sent by the Governor of Aydın Muhammed Nazif to Grand Vizier Kamil Pasha: "...şu önümüzdeki Paskalya geçinceye kadar bir tedbir ihtiyacı olmak ve her türlü fikir ve niyete karşı temin ve tahaffuz-ı asayişden ibaret bulunmak üzere Paskalyadan evvel İzmir'e bir tabur daha asker-i şahane i'zamıyla kuvve-yi askeriyenin tezyidi...".

<sup>115</sup> "Editorial Paragraphs", *The Missionary Herald*, vol. LXXXIII, Boston, 1887, 170.



They made such an impact that the governor went to the British Consul General to demand the abandonment of preaching by the evangelist priests<sup>116</sup>.

As the 20th century drew closer, the significance of religion as a marker of national identity increased. Especially in small cities where identities were more fixed, sectarian rifts and enmities caused prolonged incidents, and these involved foreign agents. In May-June 1894, the Greek Orthodox community in the Black Sea town of Ordu sought in a very determined manner to prevent the worship of the local Protestants<sup>117</sup>. The governor of Ordu was caught in the middle of the orders of the Sublime Porte, the Foreign Minister Said Pasha who was pressured by the Ottoman ambassador in London, and the protests and demands of the local Greeks. At one point, the Greeks closed their church and gave its keys to the governor, saying that if the Protestants were allowed to hold services, then they would not hold theirs. When the governor authorized the Protestants to hold a religious ceremony on Sunday 20 May, the Greek Orthodox attacked the place where three or four hundred Protestants were holding service and tried to break the iron shutters of the building<sup>118</sup>. To vindicate themselves, the Greek Orthodox claimed that the Protestants' place of worship was too close to their church. In his letter to the Ottoman ambassador to Britain, Rüstem Pasha, Mr. Arnold, the Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance in Istanbul, noted that if Protestantism were prohibited in Ordu because another sect did not like the Protestants, this would set an example that could result in the entire destruction of religious liberty in Turkey<sup>119</sup>. Finally, Said Pasha wrote a letter to the Ottoman chargé in London, Morel Bey, to inform him that if the Protestants would choose to exercise their faith at a place far from the Greek Orthodox church, the local authorities would put at their service all the necessary facilities<sup>120</sup>.

## Conclusion

In the Ottoman Empire, religious identity became increasingly intertwined with national identity during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As Greek national identity was cultivated through education and other means into the members of the *millet-i Rum*, the concept of nation/ethnos blended the Orthodox faith with Hellenic culture. Hence, a Greek who had abandoned Orthodox belief and the church was considered by his former co-nationals and co-religionists as no longer part of the Greek nation. The incidents of persecution and violence examined in this study reveal that abandoning the Orthodox faith made the lives of converts very difficult.

Regarding the forms of punishment employed by the Church of Constantinople, a few cases that are investigated here suggest that the Greek Orthodox patriarch petitioned the Sublime Porte requesting the exile of the convert or banishment from his place of residence. Certain incidents of local violence examined in this study indicate that the local Ottoman authorities, judges, or officers sometimes decided in favor of one side, sometimes for the other – Greek Orthodox, or Protestant according to where the pressure was coming from. As the episodes in

<sup>116</sup> Stergellis 1993-1994, 217-18.

<sup>117</sup> BOA, HR. SYS. 1782/62. Letter sent by the Ottoman ambassador to Britain, Rüstem Pasha, in London to the Ottoman Foreign Minister, Said Pasha, on 18 June 1894.

<sup>118</sup> BOA, HR. SYS. 1782/62. Translation of the extract from the letter of Mr. Arnold, the Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, dated 24 May 1894.

<sup>119</sup> BOA, HR. SYS. 1782/62. Translation of the extract from the letter of Mr. Arnold, the Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, dated 2 June 1894.

<sup>120</sup> BOA, HR. SYS. 1782/62. Said Pasha's letter to the Ottoman Chargé in London, Morel Bey, dated 23 July 1894.

Adana and Ordu demonstrate, such events came to involve adversaries with different religious and ethnic backgrounds as well as national allegiances.

Also, the American missionaries and the representatives of the foreign Protestant states in the Ottoman Empire intervened in the events of harassment or violence against the converts. They defended them by reminding the Ottoman authorities of the sultan's promise of religious freedom granted supposedly by the Reform Edict of 1856.

## Abbreviations and Bibliography

### Primary Sources

A.DVN Sadaret Divan Kalemî

A. MKT Sadaret Mektubî Kalemî

BOA Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi

DH. MKT Dahiliye Nezâreti Mektubî Kalemî

HR. MKT Hariciye Nezâreti Mektubî Kalemî

HR. SYS Hariciye Nezâreti Siyasi Kısım

Y.A. HUS Yıldız Sadaret Hususî Maruzât

33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston (1842)

43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston (1852)

45<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston (1854)

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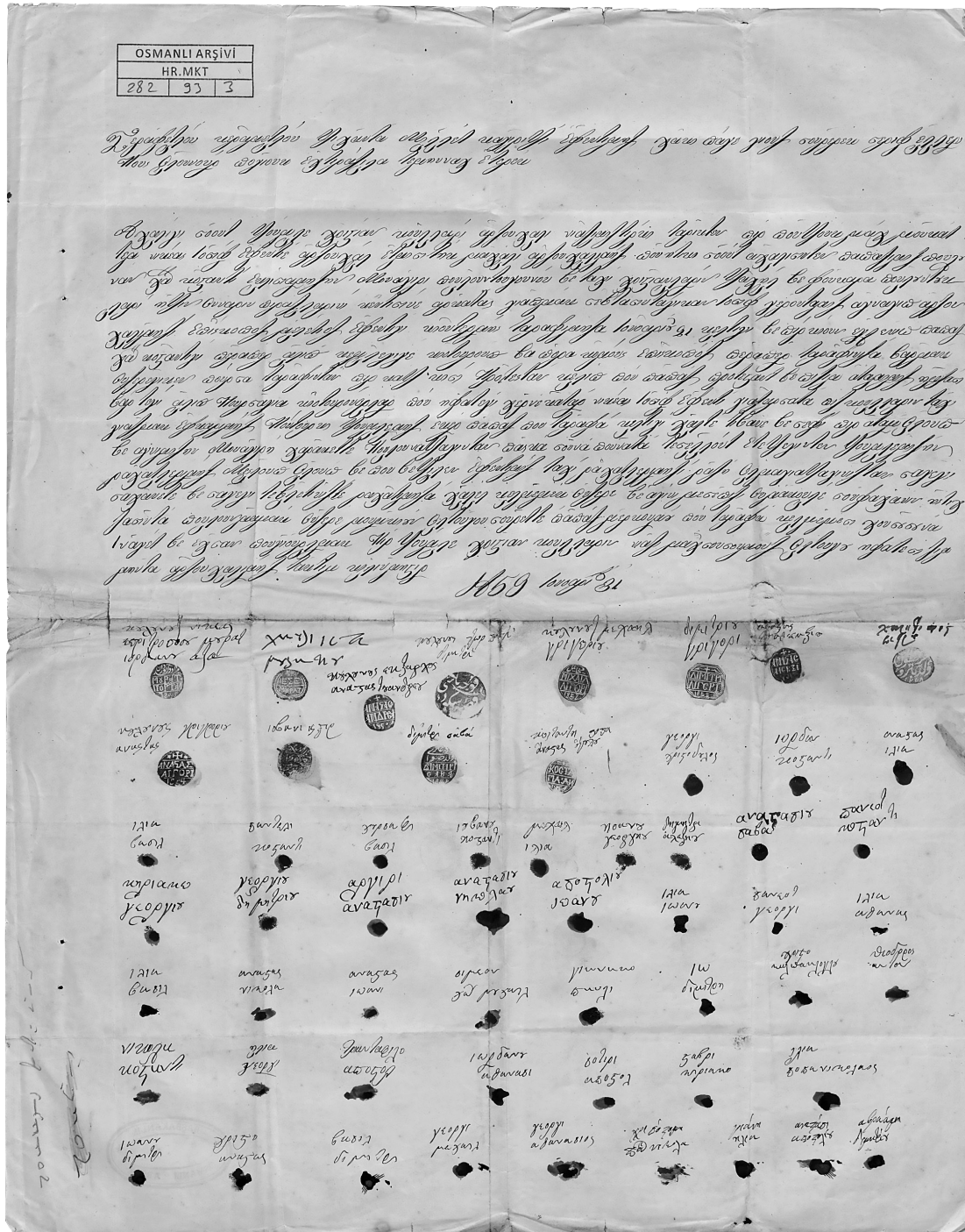


Fig. 1 Petition of the Rum community in Söğüt to the Sultan (Source: BOA, HR. MKT, 282/93)

