

THE TOBACCO CONTROVERSY IN EARLY MODERN OTTOMAN CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM DISCOURSE

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Abstract: The tobacco controversy in the Early Modern Ottoman society has attracted the attention of many scholars. Social and legal aspects of the consumption of coffee and subsequently of tobacco depicted new forms of sociability that would become the hallmark of the Early Modern Period. Despite rulers' ban and oppression from above, the new habit is to spread rapidly and transcend social, religious and confessional barriers. Albeit these important developments, the effort of ottoman elites Muslim and non-Muslim alike to restrain and manipulate social behaviour has received little attention. A comparison of Akhisari's treatise against smoking and Nikolaos Mavrokordatos' admonition against tobacco depicted that Muslim and non-Muslim ottoman elites shared the same ideas on the ban of tobacco consumption and uncontrollable sociability. It is thus to no surprise that in their quest for social control the ottoman elites employed even the same argumentation.

Key words: Tobacco, risale, fatwa, Akhisari, Nikolaos Mavrokordatos, Kadizadelis.

Yeni Çağ Başlarında Osmanlı İslam ve Hristiyan Dinî Söylemlerinde Tütün Tüketimi

Özet: Erken Yeni Çağın Osmanlı toplumunda sigara veya tütün tüketimi konusunda ortaya çıkan tartışma pek çok uzmanın dikkatini çekmiştir. Önce kahve sonra da tütün tüketiminin sosyal ve hukuki veçheleri erken modern döneme damgasını vuracak sosyalleşmenin yeni biçimlerini gösterir. Yöneticilerin yasaklamasına ve yukarıdan aşağıya uygulanan baskılara rağmen bu yeni alışkanlık hızla yayılacak ve sosyal, dini ve mezhepsel engelleri aşacaktır. Bu önemli gelişmelere rağmen, Osmanlı müslim ve gayri-müslim eliti tarafından ortaya konan kısıtlama girişimi ve vaziyeti ustaca idare etme çabası çok az uzmanın dikkatini çekmiştir. Tütün tüketimine yönelik olarak Akhisari ve Nikolas Mavrokordatos tarafından kaleme alınan risalelerin karşılaştırılması müslüman veya gayri müslim olsun Osmanlı elitinin, tütün tüketimi ve kontrol edilemez sosyalleşme konusunda ortak bir tutum sergilediğini gösterir. Bu sebeple, sosyal kontrol arayışlarında farklı dinlere mensup olsalar da Osmanlı elitinin aynı iddialar ve argümanları kullanıyor olmaları şaşırtıcı değildir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Tütün, risale, fetva, Akhisari, Nikolaos Mavrokordatos, Kadizadeliler.

Many recent works on coffee, tobacco use touched upon the introduction of new consumption habits in the Early Modern Middle East (Hattox, 1985; Grehan, 2006, pp. 1352-1377; Kafadar, 2002, pp. 50-59; Matthee, 1995, pp. 24-52). However, the work of James Grehan on 'Smoking and "Early Modern" Sociability' discusses also the social and the legal aspects of tobacco use (Grehan, 2006, p. 1359). Grehan thoroughly debated coffee and tobacco

consumption as a truly early modern social phenomenon and if I can quote his concluding remark:

It is precisely this unabashed quest for fun and diversion that, in fully mature form, would later go on to become one of the hallmarks of modern culture. By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, these playful impulses were already beginning to assert themselves with a growing boldness and ingenuity in streets, shops, and coffeehouses across the world. Although widely reviled in our own time, and scientifically linked to malignant illnesses, tobacco was a key factor in the breakdown of old moral strictures and helped to frame a distinctively early modern culture in which the pursuit of pleasure was thereafter more public, routine, and unfettered (Grehan, 2006, p. 1357).

Nothing can be truer than these remarks with regard to the outcome of the introduction of coffee and tobacco in the Early Modern Ottoman Society. Already from the end of the 16th century the new trends in social behaviour and pastime will transform the way ottoman subjects, behaved, thought and interacted (Kafadar, 2002, pp. 22-26). The unexpected success of coffee transcended any segregation whether social or confessional. The coffee shops became a hub of equality unprecedented, as Muslims of some statute and rather poorer ones and non-Muslims, free and slaves gathered to enjoy a cup of coffee and from the 17th century a pipe of smoke. The elaborate social construction Islamic law envisaged and ottoman law attempted to implement of a pyramidal society, constructed upon differences, was under serious threat. Ibrahim Peçevi is aghast to see the riff raff sited side by side with reputable men in coffee houses filled with blue smoke to such point that those who were in them could not see each other (Lewis, 1957, p. 134).

Advocates and adversaries of smoking -as of coffee drinking earlier- were not necessarily united by the same views on the main underlining issues involved (Çavuşoğlu, 1990, p. 217). Puritans did take a more strict view on the negligent social codes associated with coffee drinking and smoking, however Katib Çelebi although he did not adhere to imposed Puritanism would join in condemnation of smoking, which he found distasteful (Lewis, 1957, p. 58). Albeit the personal reasoning lying behind support or condemnation of smoking, when we examine the discourse on the permissibility of smoking a number of larger intellectual issues come forth.

Tobacco is introduced in the Ottoman society after the battle on coffee had already been decided. Tobacco made available after the Spanish conquests of the New World would be considered as panacea for all sorts of ailments and diseases from cold sores to plague (Monardes, 1571, p. 134; Al-Nabulusi, 1924, pp. 26-28). Ibn Cani el-Israili a third generation Andalusian physician translated in the beginning of the 17th century the work of Monardes into Arabic. Ibn

Cani's commentary clarified several points and includes the translators' own objections. The commentary on tobacco of Ibn Cani influenced many scholars including the Maliki scholar Ebü'l-İrşad Nurüddin Alî b. Muhammed b. Abdirrahman el-Üchuri el-Misri (d. 1066/1656) (Özen, 2012, p. 5). Unlike coffee, tobacco grown locally became soon an affordable item of consumption. Its success seems to have been very rapid, as it ceased being used exclusively as a panacea for a number of illnesses and it became a recreational tool. Jurisconsults and administrators faced the same issues previously discussed with regard to coffee, when the debate on the permissibility of the new habit of smoking cropped up. Tobacco like coffee is a commodity without a Quranic or Prophetic reference. They were introduced in the 16th and 17th centuries long after the founders of the madhabs could have used their legal reasoning to decide their ban or acceptance. Furthermore the discussion on their fate runs parallel to a much larger debate on sultanic prerogatives and the permissibility of custom ('örf) and practices (adet) ignited in the famous debate on cash *waqfs* between Ebussuud and Birgevi, mid-16th century (Mandaville, 1979, pp. 289-308). To add insult to injury, smoking became a favourite past time of ulema and the upper echelons of bureaucracy, the traditional models of behaviour in the ottoman society.

Jurists employ three options in categorizing the permissibility of a thing or action: 1/ *haram* (forbidden, inflicting canonical punishment) 2/ *makruh* (disliked, although its use does not inflict canonical punishment, one should abstain from doing it) and 3/ *mubah* (permissible) (J. Schacht, 1982, pp. 121-122). The discourse on smoking followed this pattern. Initially most jurists employed *kiyas* (analogy) to liken tobacco to wine in sinfulness and harm and categorized it as *haram*. The most prominent advocate of this view was Ibrahim al-Laqani (d. 1631/32) a Maliki mufti in Egypt. His risale *Nasihah al-ikhwan fi shrub ad-dukhan* became a model for other works like the one by Ahmad al-Rumi al Akhisari *Risalah fi hukm al-dukhan* or *Risalah dukhaniyyeh* (Michot, 2010, p. 9). As smoking became more popular and important people adhered to it, the opinion that smoking is *mubah* (permissible) gained ground. 'Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi's risale *al-Sulh bayn al-ikhwan fi ibahah shurb al-dukhan* (1682) highlights that smoking does not cause intoxication, does not lead to loss of intellect and does not inflict any harm on the body. To forbid it, amounts to saying what God and his Messenger did not say (Özen, 2012, p. 6). Thus, the rule is followed that, if it is not known for certain that a thing is forbidden, then that thing is permissible. Finally, opinions settled in the middle ground, namely that smoking is *makruh*. Pragmatism lies behind this choice and Ibn Abidin's views in *Radd al-Muhtar ala ad-Dur al-Mukhtar* depict the scholars' realization that as more people became addicted, they would eventually become weary of offending God and thus quit the habit voluntarily, if smoking was considered *makruh* (Michot, 2010, p. xi).

The issue of permissibility or of the ban of tobacco use is central in the legal thought and social behaviour. Categorizing tobacco and its use as *haram*, enables a woman to divorce her smoker husband, according to the Maliki judge el-Gassani (Özen, 2012, p. 8). Whereas even the advocate for permissibility al-Nabulusi argues that a husband can forbid his wife from smoking on the basis of bad mouth odour or even deny to pay her tobacco expenses as part of her *nafaqa* (ibid., p. 7). Another area of vivid discourse was the consumption of tobacco and religious duties. Those against its use argued that due to the foul smell, smokers should be banned from communal prayers and entering the mosque. Another issue of debate was with regard to smoking and fasting. Setting aside Sunullah Efendi's view that smoking does not break one's fast, the majority of the ulema advocated that smoking entails atonement (*kefare*t) (Laqani, 1993, pp. 57-58).

Albeit the advocates' and adversaries' legal and social comments on smoking, scholarly work has not paid attention to the cultural milieu that produced common argumentations on tobacco and its use. In the fierce fight over tobacco, a common ideology permeating class and religious affiliation took shape. Two texts from mid-17th century and early 18th century depict this common elite attitude on smoking and put forth what the ottoman elites Muslim and non-Muslim considered as offensive and dangerous to public order. To explore this common elite attitude I will utilize the treatise of Ahmad al-Rumi al-Akhisari *Risala fi hukm al-dukhan* and the *Admonition on Smoking* of Nikolaos Alexandrou Mavrokordatos (Michot, 2010; Mavrokordatos, 1710).

The information we have on Ahmad al-Rumi al-Akhisari is very scarce. Michot, the editor, has pointed out that the date of death of the author is not known and that he is misidentified with the Bosnian scholar from Prusac, Hasan Kafi Akhisari (Michot, 2010, p. 1). Ahmad Akhisari was born a Christian in Cyprus. He was taken away as a child after 1573 and was raised as a Muslim (ibid.). From his condemnation of the veneration of tombs and his commentary on the *al-Durr al-yatim fil-tajwid* (The Unique pearl, concerning the recitation of the Quran) of Mehmed al-Birgivi, we understand that Ahmad Akhisari is a great admirer of the puritan movement represented by Birgivi and he was influenced by Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim (ibid., p. 3). According to Michot in Turkish libraries, a number of *mecmua* binds together Birgivi's *Vasiyyetname*, the *Risale* of Qadizade Mehmed (d. 1635) and al-Akhisari's *Vasiyyetname* or *Risala* leaving no doubt that the religious views of all three were considered pivotal (ibid., 2). Akhisari living in a period of a financial crisis and chaos (the Celali revolts) endeavours to analyze the reasons of disintegration. He places the blame on corrupt elites and questions the authority of the sultan to provide cure (Michot, 2010, p. 16). In another book of his, the *Majalis*, after attacking singing in mosque, the *teravih* prayers during Ramadan

and clerical mercantilism in accepting payment for the recitation of the Quran, he asserts that in his time the spiritual physicians, the ulema are seriously sick, unable to treat themselves let alone others (ibid., p. 15). Among the measures he proposes for cure is the appointment of knowledgeable clerics in villages and *mahalles* who would prevent people from innovating. Unlike Katib Çelebi though who considers this the sole duty of the Sultan, Akhisari prefers to resort to the imam (Katib Çelebi, 1957, p. 134). Akhisari's rejection of the role of the Sultan emanates from his assertion that the path of *Sharia* is the only way to curb despotism and injustice (Michot, 2010, p. 17). For him the authorities failed to provide a remedy to the ills of society because they were inclined to employ custom rather than the *Sharia*. Unlike Katib Çelebi's comment on the failure of Birgivi's puritanical injunctions, who in Katib Çelebi's words "achieved nothing, as they were opposed to custom ('*örf*) and practice (*adet*)" (Katib Çelebi, 1957, p. 229), Akhisari considers that this custom is the main cause of injustice of rule (*hükümet*) and of the policies (*siyaset*). According to Akhisari:

This being so, one must know that many of the authorities (*vali*) of our time and of *kadis* of our age have gone out of (*hajara*) the Muhammadan Law (*Sharia*) and invented (*ahdatha*) an unsatisfactory path, which they call 'custom' ('*örf*). Acting on its basis has so spread among them that the Law (*sharia*) is almost refused. Indeed, they do not decide a case by simply [following] the Law (*b' mahd al-shar'*), without mixing custom [with it]. And they believe that, by simply following the Law (*Sharia*), order (*nizam*) will not be achieved and the situation of the humans will not be made right. They say so openly and they do not consider it reprehensible (Michot, 2010, p. 21).

These ideas of Akhisari are in accordance with the general framework Zilfi discussed with regard to the puritan movement of the *kadizadelis* (Zilfi, 1988, pp. 30-31, 90-91). Akhisari in his *Risale* on tobacco is not merely discussing whether the usage of a newly introduced substance is permissible or not. He also places the discourse into the general framework of who is *ehli* (capable of offering a solution) and whether custom is the only sure path to order (*nizam*).

Akhisari in his fatwa-like text admits that there is no clear Quranic or Prophetic prohibition on the use of tobacco, as there was none for coffee, opium and cannabis before. The text borrows freely from Laqani's *Risale* (Michot, 2010, p. 35). At first Akhisari employs Quranic verses against amusement, or caprice and futility, to comment that smoking is also prohibited, as it is subsumed under

the three vices (Michot, 2010, p. 46)¹. His distaste on the recreational character of smoking is more than apparent in this comment.

Akhisari then employs the opinions of experts on smoke and its bad influence on the body. Avicenna and Galen's exhortations against the use of smoke are employed for Akhisari's argument that since tobacco use results to smoke therefore it will desiccate bodily humours and result to sickness (Michot, 2010, p. 47). Although, according to the author, consuming tobacco might, in the first instance, produce strength in the body and sharpness in vision and a good digestion, if one uses it permanently, the opposite effects would occur (ibid., p. 48). Even if there were some benefit to ailments from smoking, he concludes, one would have to cease taking medicine after his cure 'as harmfulness stands opposite to usefulness' (ibid.).

The opinion of the physicians led the argument to legal proof. On this point, Akhisari admits that smoking is among the things whose status is legally unclear. Abstaining for its use is thus safe for one's religion (ibid., p. 51). As for those who claim that smoke is a remedy for every malady, this is again fallacy since repetition causes sickness.

One of the most interesting arguments against smoke is the one related to its price. According to Akhisari, tobacco's expensive price would incur a waste of one's wealth and since prodigality (*israf*) is prohibited, therefore smoking should be prohibited (ibid., p. 52)².

Akhisari will employ even a suspect *hadith* to convince his audience about prophetic prohibition³. Finally, he quotes Prophetic proof on stinking smell and eating garlic and onion to equate their prohibition to the ban on smoking: 'Someone eating anything having an abominable smell by which one is offended shall not at all come near to our mosque because he would offend us with its abominable smell' (ibid., p. 53). A *hadith* in the *Sahih* of Muslim narrating the expulsion of a man to al-Baqi, who smelled of onion or garlic, is proof enough for Akhisari to expand the punishment to any abominable smell. He concludes that:

In this time, it is consequently obligatory to expel from the mosques –the small ones (*masjid*) and the great ones (*jami`*) - many of the imams and muezzins on whom there is an abominable smell because of the constant use of this [tobacco] smoke with its abominable smell. Sometimes, they

¹ The logic of Akhisari is that since futility, amusement and caprice are mentioned in the Quran in a blameworthy way, they are prohibited.

² In the Qur'an, *al-An'am*, sura 6:141: 'Be not prodigal. Lo! Allah loveth not the prodigal (Pickthall, 2005, p. 139).

³ "Every obnoxious individual will be in the Fire", according to the editor this is a *hadith* that is neither canonically preserved nor well known.

even use it inside the mosques small and great; the abomination, in that case, being more intense and greater.

Akhisari's exertion is by no means unique in ottoman intellectual circles. The *şeyhülislam* Yahya Efendi's fetva as a response to a question about the expulsion of smokers, entertaining a *makruh* habit forbidden by the Sultan, not only sides with the persecutors but also considers smokers carrying their pipes to the mosque as adherents of bad behaviour (Çavuşoğlu, 1990, pp. 219-220).

In his *risale* Akhisari employs non-hanafite sources too. The final argument is based on Maliki argumentation against tobacco. The Maliki mufti Laqani's disputation is plagiarized extensively; or rather it is constructively borrowed in this respect (Michot, 2010, pp. 35-37). According to this argument, the use of tobacco smoke is prohibited since smoke is prescribed in the Qur'an as one of the torments sent to people (ibid., p. 56)⁴. Laqani and Akhisari then equate the use of smoke to eternal torment in Hell.

Furthermore, in those who use [tobacco] smoke, you see it coming out of their noses and their throats, [a condition] in which there is a resemblance to the people of the Fire and to those of the evil doers who will perish at the end of time; just as it is said in the *hadith* that, at the end of time, there will be a smoke which will fill the earth, will dwell forty days over the humans and because of which the believer will be afflicted by a kind of catarrh; as for the infidel, it will come out from his two nostrils, his two ears and his two eyes in such a way that the head of each of them will become like a roasted head (ibid., p. 57).

The final argument is nicely combining all the different points made by of Akhisar. Thus, smoke is detested because it is mixed with particulars of fire that forsakes no other effect but a blackening of the clothes, of bodies and the abomination of its stink and smell.

Finally, if these reasons are not enough, then the fact that smoking was a custom of the infidels introduced into Islamic countries to harm the people of faith, should be proof enough for the intelligent individual to avoid it (ibid., p. 59). In the margin of the manuscript the editor noted the story of Laqani from his *Nasihah*. According to Laqani, the English when they found out that a man who used to smoke continuously had a blackened bone marrow, a grilled liver and a

⁴ Akhisari uses the *ad-Dukhan* sura 44:10-12. 'But watch thou [O Muhammad] for the Day when the sky will produce visible smoke. That will envelop the people. This will be a painful torment. [Then they will say]: Our Lord, relieve us of the torment! Lo! We are believers (Pickthall, 2005, p. 441).

heart that resembled a dry sponge forbade their people to use tobacco and ordered to be sold to the Muslims⁵.

The rest of the treatise discusses other innovations like coffee, hashish and opium, all equally condemned by the author (Michot, 2010, pp. 62-67)⁶.

Akhisari's treatise is more than an admonition to the use of tobacco. The author's opinion on law is of equal value. He admits that substances are an innovation and he does not eschew using independent legal thinking (*ijtihad*).

Independent legal thinking has indeed no connection with a [particular] age, as has been made clear in its place. For somebody speaking about the questions that have been mentioned, it is thus possible to lay claim to thinking independently, on the basis of the right to pursue independent legal thinking even if some people forbid it (ibid., p. 69)⁷.

He finally concludes that even if one admits the extinction of independent legal thinking, his argumentation against tobacco is not a result of analogic syllogism (*kiyas*) but rather of a deduction (*takhrij*) from a universal rule.

Notwithstanding Akhisari's eagerness to prohibit a vice, an innovation, an intention nearing to those of the *kadizadelis*, Akhisari flirts dangerously with disobedience. This side of his Puritanism distinguishes him from the mainstream *kadizadelis*. In Şolakzade's account, Kadizade effendi declared smoking illegal, supporting thus Murat IV's strict ban. For the preacher, tobacco and coffee were innovations (*bid'at*)⁸, pronounced illegal on the basis of rational (*akl*) and traditional (*nakl*) evidence. Kadizade fully supported the harsh

⁵ Katib Çelebi will also mention the Englishmen as the source for the spread of the use of tobacco and will date its introduction in the Orient to 1601-1602 (Lewis, 1957, pp. 50-51).

⁶ Akhisari utilizes the fetva of Ebussuud Efendi to argue that if tobacco was introduced in the latter's life, he would have forbidden it on the same grounds.

⁷ Akhisari gives the example of Abu Yusuf and Shaybani, the disciples of Abu Hanifa who 'they indeed emulate Abu Hanifa in many questions and think independently in some'. For Akhisari, only absolutely independent legal thinkers are no longer found (*mujtahid mutlaq*).

⁸ Katib Çelebi identifies tobacco use as an innovation too. However his attitude towards innovation is that no age is untainted by innovation, therefore the role of the ruler is to protect Muslim order and maintain the principles of Islam among its people (Lewis, 1957, pp. 90-91). Al-Nabulusi on the other hand was more advocated against those who fought against innovation: 'the conditions of this time are changed by its ignoramuses, who command and forbid things about which they have not got a clue. They call themselves ascetics and advisers, and see other neither as Muslims nor as virtuous...They forbid and declare lawful what they want...They are inwardly foxes and outwardly sheep...they appeal for justice but they are not just..' (al-Nabulusi, 1924, p. 2).

measures of Murad IV arguing that on matters the unlawfulness of which is not clearly proven, it is necessary to obey the ruler (Şolakzade, 1879, p. 753). For Vani effendi, it is clear that tobacco is an abomination, exercised by mischievous people (*ehl-i fesad*) (Çavuşoğlu, 1990, pp. 222-223). Obedience to the ruler Vani establishes through Quranic verses and Islamic treatises, to conclude that 'it is clear as the sun that good and pious people find tobacco detestable' (*ibid.*, p. 223).

The transition from characterizing smoking *makruh* in a fetva of Yahya effendi (d.1641) to *mubah* in the famous fetva of Bahai effendi (d.1654) that probably led to his expulsion from the office of the *şeyhülislam*, is just an example of the evolution in the Muslim discourse on smoking. An evolution that entails the following arguments: a/ smoking is harming to the health of the users b/ it is addictive c/ it harms the wealth of the people d/ it can only be associated with mischievous individuals who disobey the dicta of the ruler e/ it is a representation of punishment in Hell.

The same discord on the issue of tobacco and its use is apparent in Ottoman Orthodox theologians and lay writers. The reaction of the average ottoman orthodox subject to the prohibition of smoking, is vividly illustrated in the account of a priest Papa Synadinos. Papa Synadinos was born in Serres around the 1600s and served there as a parish priest and a scribe in the Metropolitan See of Serres. Synadinos' account best known, as the Chronicle of Serres (Odorico, 1996, p. 23) is a very vivid account of his life in Serres tinted with a number of insightful comments on both provincial and central ottoman administration. The work completed sometime after 1640, encouraged scholars like Todorova to characterize him as the Orthodox Balkan *homo ottomanicus* (Todorova, 2010, p. 90). Synadinos seems to cherish and show utmost respect to sultanic justice, while he had very little regard to local ottoman administrators (Odorico, 1996, pp. 102, 150, 176). His image of the ruler -he refers to as *basileus*- is of that of a lawful lord.

Synadinos has his own likes and dislikes. He prefers Osman who tried to disband the Janissaries, a source of many evils, according to the author (Odorico, 1996, pp. 84-85), to Mustafa whom Synadinos considered a madman rightfully removed from the throne (*ibid.*). However, his big favourite was Murad IV.

He [Murat IV] killed those who were tyrants, whether viziers or pashas, muftis or *kadiaskers*, kadis or beys, aghas or janissaries and *odabaşı*, or *çorbacı*. Not one day passed without executing one of them. Thus the Turks were dead afraid because [the sultan] would get into disguise and walk around during the day and he learned on his own all the affairs of the state. Thus, he ended injustice. Then you could see how the wolf walked side by side with the lamb.

It is a duty for us, brother, to wipe for the loss of such a *basileus* and to be sad and say ‘alas to us the unfortunate, poor, miserable and orphaned, because such a ruler we will never find again (Odorico, 2010, p. 93).

On the issue of Murad’s stern policy against tobacco and smoking⁹, Synadinos wholeheartedly praises the tough measures prohibiting both coffee shops and smoking (ibid., p. 92). Although his opposition to smoking and coffee stems from the important Christian values of moderation and sobriety, his reasoning is based on pragmatism rather than canonical decisions. Synadinos connects the use of tobacco to frequent fires devastating ottoman cities. He claims that the fire in Serres in 1630 started from a smoker in the shoemaker shop¹⁰. Being himself, part of the guilt of weavers, Synadinos places importance on safety and laments on irresponsible smokers.

The Patriarchate and the official church had not yet taken a clear stand on the issue of smoking until the time of Synadinos’ account. Only the metropolitan of Monembasia in Morea Dorotheos, makes a casual remark in his *History of the World* book with regard to the new fashion of smoking (Dorotheos, 1631, p. 342). According to Dorotheos this innovation (mark the parallelism in terms to the *bid’at*) will have to be synodically decided (ibid.). Similar to the use of coffee lay and clergymen, poor and rich adopted tobacco. Clergymen not only would consume coffee and tobacco, but would also use it as bribes to high Muslim dignitaries (Fotic, 2011, p. 94). The inventories of metropolitan debts are abundant of such information (ibid.).

Serious discourse on the pros and cons of smoking will only materialize by the end of the 17th century. Nikolaos Mavrokordatos the son of the Alexandros

⁹ ‘And he [Murat IV] destroyed the coffee shops in the entire world and he did the same to the tobacco (*tituni*). Nobody drunk them anymore, as he killed many men and women, until they gave up [smoking] (Odorico, 1996, p. 92).

¹⁰ On the 30th of September 1630, the morning of Sunday, a fire broke out and the workshops burned. In the shoemaker shop, they were smoking and they threw the *lule* without extinguishing the fire. It came upon cotton stashed away in the shop. The Devil’s work lid up the cotton and burned down the shop. All the shops selling cotton burned down totally; and then the shops making *aba* from one side to the other; and those making silk around the *bedesten*. The flames leaped from the iron windows to the wooden beams and all the shops of the jewelers, of the sword makers and of the ironmongers from one side to the other were ruined till the corner of the candle makers’ shops. Many strong men this night went in and plundered the shops. The next day one could not tell where the shops were, because they were all leveled to the ground. And you would see and hear the lamentation and the weeping of men, women and children as some lost more and others less. They borrowed money and rebuilt the shops but the expense was great as [the disaster] occur in an untimely period, and wood was scarce. Who would take it first? Many went bankrupt then and did not recover until their deaths (ibid., pp. 108-109).

Mavrokordatos, the Grand Dragoman and then *voyvoda* of Boğdan and Wallachia wrote anonymously a treatise against smoking (Mavrokordatos, 1710, pp. 75-90). His *Admonition against Smoking* will generate a reply; the *Eulogy on Smoking* published by a clergyman, Mitrofanis Gregoras. Nikolaos Mavrokordotos will angrily respond with a fuming letter to Mitrofanis (ibid.). I will concentrate on Mavrokordatos' work out of expedience and necessity. Mitrofanis' response has not survived. As Dapontes mentioned in his *Historia* Mitrofanis' treatise was thrown to the fire (Dapontes, 1754, p. 163)¹¹.

The Mavrokordatos family is a classical example of a Phanariot family. Nikolaos' father Alexandros, after studying philosophy and medicine in Italy came back to exercise his medical practice and teach in Istanbul (Dapontes, 1754, pp. 147, 160). After the death of Panagiotakis Nikousios -the first Grand Dragoman appointed by Ahmet Köprülü, another graduate of Italian Universities who had studied astronomy-, Alexandros Mavrokordatos is going to replace him to the post until 1699. His son Nikolaos would subsequently replace his father as the Grand Dragoman, before he was appointed in 1709 as the *voyvoda* of Boğdan. In 1716 following the execution of the Kantakouzenos family and of Stefanos the *voyvoda* of Wallachia, Nikolaos Mavrokordatos will replace the latter. Nikolaos will remain in his post for a few months before the Habsburgs captured him. During his captivity, Nikolaos' brother and the then Dragoman Ioannis Mavrokordatos will serve as the *voyvoda* of Wallachia until his death in 1719. Nikolaos released for prison a year earlier in 1718 will claim his former throne and remain a *voyvoda* (*hospodar*) until 1730. Nikolaos like his father and brother had received a very good education and was fluent not only in major European languages but also in Persian, Arabic and Ottoman.

Mitrofanis Grigoros the author of the treatise in favour of smoking had also received a very thorough classical education within church (Sarris, 2005, p. 31). He became the metropolitan of Dodoni and his peers accepted him as the best editor of publications in Wallachia (ibid., p. 37). He ended up in Wallachia when he was accused while collecting alms (*zeteia*) in Macedonia, that he was spying for the Habsburgs. He worked as a printer and editor under the *voyvodas* Konstantin Brancoveanu, executed in 1714 and Stephanos Kantakouzenos executed in 1716. He came to replace the metropolitan of Wallachia and another important literati, Anthimos Iviritis who was removed from the metropolitan See and executed in 1716 for his support to Kantakouzenos (Sarris, 2005, p. 48). Mitrofanis had a very powerful supporter, the late Patriarch of Jerusalem Chrysanthos Notaras who will lobby with Nikolaos Mavrokordatos for the

¹¹ Kaisarios Dapontes served as the secretary of Mavrokordatos family both of Ioannis and Konstantinos from 1734-1747. He escaped to the khan of Crimea to avoid imprisonment. From 1753 until his death in 1784 he devoted his monastic life to writing.

appointment of Mitrofanis to the metropolitan See of Wallachia. The fight over tobacco would start as a literati competition to add up to the tension between the two men (Kornoutos, 1953, p. 262).

Mavrokordatos' treatise against tobacco starts with a quotation from Isaia 5/20 "Beware of those who call the sweet bitter and the bitter sweet". In writing this treatise his aim is to free those who took up this innovation and have become addicted. Firstly, he proceeds in describing how the plant's leaves are collected, dried and smoked into a pipe. In the etymology of the word *Nikotiani* (tobacco) Mavrokordatos claims that it comes from the word *koto* that means rage. This rather false etymology is to prepare the reader for all the arguments against tobacco (Mavrokordatos, 1710, p. 77). The author describing the consumption of tobacco will borrow an analogy from the myth of Apollodorus¹² on the three *hekatocheires* the sons of Gaia and Uranus, to argue that as they had a hundred hands, the author will accrue a hundred tongues to explain the misfortunes stemming from the use of this 'poison' (ibid.).

According to Mavrokordatos smoking does not only ruin the body but also the intellect. It dries up the body from fluids and creates a bad odour in the stomach, blackening the teeth (ibid., p. 78).

Those who taste it [tobacco] even if they have a loud voice, they become effeminate and acquire an uncontrollable rage. Its effect is similar to poisons. It does not only corrupt the body but also the intellect. Tobacco removes the humidity of the body and dries it up until it finishes off life itself. Like a leach it sucks up the noble intellect. It creates a bad odour in the mouth and blackens the teeth.

The author does not fail to remind us also that smoking is a very expensive habit, ruinous to one's fortune (ibid., p. 75). This *topos* -not true at last for the end of the 17th century- is shared with the Muslim advocates against tobacco.

After the physiological admonitions against smoking, Mavrokordatos borrowed heavily from Loukianos' *Erotes*, for reasons of eloquence and in order to be more convincing to his audience¹³. According to this argument, nature has bestowed us with five senses to enjoy, the smell of flowers, to see the nature, to be able to communicate. However, soon enough people started taking pleasure from unnatural habits. They defied nature and resorted to corrupt ways of entertainment like watching comedies, theatrical plays, acrobats and jugglers for the pleasing of the eye, or singing and using instruments for the pleasure of the ear (Mavrokordatos, 1710, p. 80).

¹² Pseudo-Appolodorus is a compendium of myths and heroic legends from the first century A.D.

¹³ To our knowledge today this work is falsely attributed to Loukianos (d. 180A.D.).

Similarly to those who follow these shameful activities, the smokers are worthy of scolding as they lose their taste, smell and their clear sight. According to Mavrokordatos the smokers addicted to their passion are like the damned in Hell (ibid., p. 81). They long for tobacco the way people look for food and water, drowned in ghastly smells. In their passion they become more wretched than pregnant women.

For Kantakouzenos like Akhisari the usage of tobacco is as condemned as the other recreational innovations. In his effort to convince his audience he even resorts to claiming that smokers become effeminate and their voices become thinner.

In his final argument Mavrokordatos likens smokers to those burning in Hell to conclude that smoker sin, and only riff raff, losers and thieves are hooked to this very bad habit (ibid., p. 84). Mavrokordatos used more moralistic than medical arguments to establish his attack on tobacco. In the argumentation we can trace many similarities to the discourse of Akhisari expressed within another literary and legal tradition. For a start both authors react to the innovation, they equate smoke to other promiscuous past time activities like theatre, singing, acrobats and jugglers. Their obsession with the odour and the recognition of the addictiveness of the habit will lead them to equate smoking with pictures from Hell. Most importantly they both consider that smoking in itself is not suitable to honourable people. Mavrokordatos apart from quotes from the Bible, he uses examples from ancient Greek literature.

The response of Mitrofanis has not survived however from the angry reply of Mavrokordatos we understand that Mitrofanis must have used medical sources on the benefits of the usage of the tobacco plant (ibid., pp. 84-87). Mavrokordatos accuses Mitrofanis in his angry reply, that he uses Frankish sources, whereas Mavrokordatos bases his argument only on logic.

The early 18th century produced the first Christian texts disapproving of smoking. "I'm pleading with our girls not to go for pipe smokers", says a verse in a manuscript from the Monastery of Ostrog (Montenegro) (Fotic, 2011, p. 95). In an apocryphal text Jesus Christ's Epistle to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, written at the same time, the author severely castigates smokers, "dammed be he who drinks the devil's seed, he preaches eternal torment" (ibid.). Once more it seems that the equation with Hell was very fashionable at the time.

Mavrokordatos could have read Laqani or Akhisari. His extensive library might show whether he had a copy or not. However apart from verbatim borrowing what is fascinating is to see a common ottoman elite point on smoking. Whether it is Synadinos' approval of the sultan's tough measures against smoking for safety reasons, or the discourse of a Phanariot, Mavrokordatos, an orthodox member of the high echelons of ottoman bureaucracy, who adopts the

same concerns, the fear for unruliness due to innovations in pastime activities and the belief that no decent people would choose to be like the doomed ones in Hell, is strikingly similar to mainstream Muslim discourse. This is an instance of shared culture stemming from the same concerns on ethics, piety and social control.

Ultimately despite the aspirations of the rulers and the elites, life defeated all prohibitions and social norms, like in the story of the Jew who would visit his non-Jew friend on Sabbath, just to inhale the ‘forbidden’ smoke.

One of the guest pilgrims asked me about Reuven, who was a passionate smoker of what was called in all the languages *tütün*, all the weekdays including the nights, until he fell asleep. He was deeply troubled on the Holy Shabbath, when the evil inclination tempted him to visit a non-Jew who smoked, to enjoy the fragrance of the smoke coming out of his mouth, and so he did and he was calmed. It followed that Reuven became his friend, and he noticed Reuven’s pleasure from the fragrance. Moreover, the non-Jew himself told Reuven on the Holy Shabbath to open his mouth and inhale the smoke, and to fill his mouth with smoke, and to emit it slowly afterwards. And this is what Reuven did every Holy Shabbath. It came to such a point that when the non-Jew saw Reuven approaching on Shabbath, he made an effort to light the smoking-machine in order to please Reuven, who came and sat down next to him and carried out the above-mentioned action, even though the non-Jew originally did not intend to smoke. He did so only to pay honor to his friend Reuven (Rubesova, 2008, pp. 144-45).

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