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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Purifying Istanbul: The Greek Revolution, Population Surveillance, and Non-Muslim Religious Authorities in the Early Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire

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Abstract

The Greek anti-Ottoman revolt in the 1820s brought increased suspicion among the empire's ruling circles toward not only Greeks but non-Muslim subjects in general. This sparked government security measures in Istanbul, home to substantial Christian and Jewish populations. This article examines such measures intended to bring non-Muslim subjects under control, and the overall impact the Greek revolt had on the Ottoman approach to its subjects. It argues that the revolt catalyzed changes in the state's attitude toward population surveillance and its treatment of non-Muslims. When the empire felt the need to bring non-Muslims under control, a major challenge was how to verify and vouch for the latter's identity, since they deemed Muslim officials incapable of doing so. Thus, though they were suspicious of non-Muslims, they actively used the religious authorities of their communities to implement various security measures, including the creation of a population record and the introduction of internal passports. At the same time, religious authorities found it essential to demonstrate their and their community's pro-Ottoman position by cooperating with the state in its efforts to find enemies within. Incorporation of non-Muslim religious authorities into imperial governance led to official recognition of the representatives of smaller non-Muslim groups, including Latin subjects, Armenian Catholics, and Jews. The result was a standardization of non-Muslim communities with officially recognized representatives before the government.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire; millet system; internal passports; population surveillance; Greek War of Independence; Catholics; Latin subjects; Armenians; Jews; counterinsurgency

Introduction

In 1823, the Ottoman capital of Istanbul was in dire straits due to an ongoing revolt of Greek subjects in the Morea, a core region of the empire, and war against the Qajar dynasty in the east. The revolt was a serious setback for the government of

Sultan Mahmut II, who sought to eliminate influential local notables and establish centralized political power. At this critical juncture for the empire, tensions emerged between the Ottoman central government and the Janissary corps over the expulsion of a Bektashi dervish who the latter had revered and protected, but the former considered a Qajar spy due to his Iranian descent. As negotiations continued between the two sides over this alleged spy, some members of the Janissary corps attempted to address the issue by creating a diversion. They stated that the "Orthodox Christian and Armenian infidels" who resided in large numbers in Istanbul could not be trusted. Referring to a rumor that European countries were rallying around the Roman Pope to support the Greek rebels, they requested that the central government expel Orthodox Christians and Armenians from Istanbul, massacre them, or give the Janissaries permission to do so. This excessively violent request to eliminate almost half of Istanbul's population was not accepted, but Mahmut II did partially agreed with the Janissaries by stating, "It is clear that none of the Orthodox Christian community is trusted."[1] The Ottomans, who for more than three hundred years had hosted people of various religions and confessions in their imperial capital—including Muslims, Orthodox Christians of mainly Greek descent, Christian Armenians, and Jews—now deemed this diversity problematic. This episode, which was recorded in correspondence between the Grand Vizier and Mahmut II, suggests that the Greek revolt in the provinces provoked among the Muslim elites a distrust of the Greek rebels, Orthodox Christians in Istanbul, and even other non-Muslim subjects. Ottoman Muslims did not distinguish between the Greeks as an ethnic group and the Orthodox Christians as a confessional community, which included people of various ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, and they used the same Turkish term *Rum* to refer to both groups. Thus, the scope of their distrust naturally extended to Orthodox Christians in general.[2] What is notable is that, despite confessional and ethnic differences, the Muslim elites were also suspicious of the Armenians. In this way, the antagonistic atmosphere during the Greek revolt affected non-Muslim Ottoman subjects other than just the Greeks.

The anti-Ottoman uprising that began in March 1821 in the Ottoman tributary states of Wallachia and Moldavia led to the Greek revolt in the Morea, which plagued the central government for nearly a decade and would later be called the Greek War of Independence or the Greek Revolution. This revolt has long been treated as part of Greek national historiography or viewed from the perspective of the involvement of the European powers and has only recently come to the full attention of Ottomanists. Their investigations of Ottoman archives have revealed the enormous impact the revolt had on the Ottoman regime, showing how it changed the power structure in

[1]Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Istanbul (hereafter BOA), HAT 17078, Grand Vizier to Mahmut II and Mahmut II to the Grand Vizier (1823). See also Huseyin Sukru Ilicak, "A Radical Rethinking of Empire: Ottoman State and Society during the Greek War of Independence (1821–1826)," PhD diss., Harvard University, 2011, 230–36; Yusuf Ziya Karabıçak, "Ottoman Attempts to Define the Rebels during the Greek War of Independence," *Studia Islamica* 114, 3 (2019): 316–54, at 352–53.

[2]For the dual meanings of *Rum* (and *millet*) in the early nineteenth century, see Karabıçak, "Ottoman Attempts." See also Paraskevas Konortas, "From Tâ'ife to Millet: Ottoman Terms for the Ottoman Greek Orthodox Community," in Dimitri Gondicas and Charles Issawi, eds., *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism: Politics, Economy, and Society in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1999), 172–75.

Istanbul and allowed Mahmut II to finally make drastic changes that had long been considered necessary. In 1826, this triggered the abolition of the Janissary corps, which had been the main obstacle to reform, and reorganization of the imperial governance that prepared the Tanzimat reforms. The latter brought a mid-nineteenth-century reorganization of the taxation system, the military, the judiciary, and the central and local administrations.[3] Based on information collected from the Ottoman archives, this article further explores the overlooked impact the Greek revolt had on non-Muslim Ottoman subjects other than the Greeks, and argues that the revolt heightened security concerns in Istanbul and catalyzed changes in the state's attitudes toward population surveillance and its treatment of non-Muslims in general.

Even before this, in the mid-eighteenth century, the upper echelons of the empire had grown increasingly concerned with preserving order and security in Istanbul.[4] As Betül Başaran and Cengiz Kırlı have demonstrated, in the late eighteenth century security concerns led to the introduction of periodic inspections and the registration of certain population groups that imperial ruling circles perceived to be potential threats to Istanbul's security. This situation was a precursor to "the evolution of the empire into a 'statistical' state similar to its contemporaries in Europe."[5] The Greek revolt of 1821 dramatically heightened such concerns because unlike recent revolts in the empire's peripheral regions—including the Serbian revolt in the northwestern border region and the Wahhabi in the Arabian Peninsula—Orthodox Christians of Greek descent were numerous in the empire's core regions. This population group was concentrated in the Morea and the Aegean Islands, the main battlegrounds that were easily accessible by sea from Istanbul, and there were also many in Thrace and Western Anatolia. Most importantly, they constituted more than 20 percent of Istanbul's population.[6] Moreover, since a former Ottoman Greek in the Russian military service initiated the revolt in the region bordering the Russian Empire, Ottoman rulers

[3]Hakan Erdem, "'Do Not Think of the Greeks as Agricultural Labourers': Ottoman Responses to the Greek War of Independence," in Faruk Birtek and Thalia Dragonas, eds., *Citizenship and the Nation-State in Greece and Turkey* (London: Routledge, 2005), 67–84; Christine M. Philliou, *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Ilicak, "Radical Rethinking"; Will Smiley, "War without War: The Battle of Navarino, the Ottoman Empire, and the Pacific Blockade," *Journal of the History of International Law* 18, 1 (2016): 42–69; Karabıçak, "Ottoman Attempts"; Karabıçak, "Making Sense of an Execution: Patriarch Gregory V between the Sublime Porte and the Patriarchate," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 47, 1 (2023): 85–102; Ozan Ozavci, "The Ottoman Imperial Gaze: The Greek Revolution of 1821–1832 and a New History of the Eastern Question," *Journal of Modern European History* 21, 2 (2023): 222–37.

[4]Madoka Morita, "Neighborhoods of Ottoman Istanbul: Politics of Order and Urban Collectivity, 1703–54," PhD diss., University of Tokyo, 2021.

[5]Betül Başaran, *Selim III, Social Control and Policing in Istanbul at the End of the Eighteenth Century: Between Crisis and Order* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), esp. 4. Also see Betül Başaran and Cengiz Kırlı, "Some Observations on Istanbul's Artisans during the Reign of Selim III (1789–1808)," in Suraiya Faroqhi, ed., *Bread from the Lion's Mouth: Artisans Struggling for a Livelihood in Ottoman Cities* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015), 259–77.

[6]For the population of Istanbul, see the 1844 census data. Yoichi Takamatsu, "Ottoman Population Registers of Late 18th- and 19th-Century Istanbul as a Source for the Study of the Greek Orthodox (*Rum*) Population," in Hidemitsu Kuroki, ed., *Human Mobility and Multiethnic Coexistence in Middle Eastern Urban Societies 1: Tehran, Aleppo, Istanbul, and Beirut* (Tokyo: ILCAA, 2015), 71–84.

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suspected a Russian conspiracy. Distrust of the Greeks, combined with fears of a Russian military intervention, led the central government to undertake diverse measures to ensure the security of the imperial capital, including introduction of an internal passport and a census.

Generally, Ottomanist scholars addressing the introduction of the internal passport and census have emphasized their connection with the 1826 abolition of the Janissary corps. Musa Çadırcı, who pioneered the study of the Ottoman internal passport, argued that it was a product of the state's intensification of mobility restrictions that had been in place since the early modern period, which were made more stringent after the abolition of the corps so as to control the movements of its former members, who were seen as potential troublemakers.[7] This argument was more or less accepted by later scholars investigating the functioning of the internal passport in the mid- to late nineteenth century.[8] Scholars have argued that the census was necessitated by the establishment of Muslim male conscription after the Janissaries were abolished.[9] I do not deny that the Ottoman government used the passport and census as measures to restrict the mobility of former Janissaries and conscript new soldiers. However, in this article I want to spotlight an overlooked shift that occurred in the early 1820s as heightened security concerns due to the Greek revolt directly triggered introduction of the passport and paved the way for the census.

It should be noted that this article, which mainly deals with state responses, examines security from the perspective of the empire's upper echelons. As Şükrü Ilıcak has discussed, some of the measures they adopted incited mob violence against the non-Muslim inhabitants of Istanbul, mainly Orthodox Christians. Although the regime did not completely ignore the security of non-Muslims, its priority was to protect itself.[10]

Scholars in the fields of sociology, political science, and anthropology have explored the essential role documents to control movement and censuses play in modern state-building. They have considered how states changed their approach toward society, how such a process affected people's identity formation, and how ruling elites dealt with the problem of the reach of state sovereignty. Rather than taking the view that the modern state penetrated society, they have argued that the state used these means to make society legible, grasp its overall picture, and control

[7]Musa Çadırcı, "Tanzimat Döneminde Çıkarılan Men'-i Mürûr ve Pasaport Nizâmnâmeleri," *Belgeler* 19 (1993): 169–81, at 170–71.

[8]Mehmet Demirtaş, "XIX. Yüzyılda İstanbul'a Göçü Önlemek için Alınan Tedbirler: Men-i Mürûr Uygulaması ve Karşılaşılan Güçlükler," *Belleten* 268 (2009): 739–54; Christoph Herzog, "Migration and the State: On Ottoman Regulations concerning Migration since the Age of Mahmud II," in Ulrike Freitag, Malte Fuhrmann, Nora Lafi, and Florian Riedler, eds., *The City in the Ottoman Empire: Migration and the Making of Urban Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2011), 117–34; Nalan Turna, *19. Yüzyıldan 20. Yüzyıla Osmanlı Topraklarında Seyahat, Göç ve Asayiş Belgeleri: Mürûr Tezkereleri* (Istanbul: Kaknüs Yayınları, 2013); İlkay Yılmaz, *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Güvenlik Politikaları, Mürur Tezkereleri, Pasaportlar ve Otel Kayıtları: Serseri, Anarşist ve Fesadın Peşinde* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2014), esp. 164–202.

[9]Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda İlk Nüfus Sayımı 1831* (Ankara: T. C. Başvekâlet İstatistik Kurum Müdürlüğü, 1943); Mahir Aydın, "II. Mahmud Döneminde Yapılan Nüfus Tahrirleri," in *Sultan II. Mahmud ve Reformları Semineri 28–30 Haziran 1989 Bildiriler* (Istanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1990), 81–105.

[10]Ilicak, "Radical Rethinking," 130–45.

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it.[11] While considering this perspective, this article does not assume that modern state-building by the Ottomans necessarily entailed the introduction of these means. Instead, I focus on the historical contingencies that led them to introduce these means of control and intensify existing measures and scrutinize their implications. Abundant documents in the Ottoman archives indicate that in the 1820s members of the empire's elites became convinced of the need to develop a comprehensive picture of the Muslim and non-Muslim male populations of Istanbul—and, by extension, of the empire—to keep them under control.

In considering the transition from indirect to direct rule in the course of modern state-building, İlkay Yılmaz revealed that the Ottoman Empire used intermediaries to achieve control over its population in the late nineteenth century, demonstrating the difficulty it faced in identifying the diverse people under its rule due to its limited infrastructural power.[12] The case of the Greek revolt shows us that the empire experienced the same difficulty when its upper echelons viewed non-Muslims as potential rebels in the early nineteenth century, and allows us to further consider how they developed mechanisms to surveil its diverse population. They chose not to penetrate non-Muslim communities directly to try to "break the political power of the various [non-Muslim] religious authorities" in the same way that they had eliminated intermediary groups "such as the Janissaries, guilds, [and] tribes."[13] As in the case of the Russian Empire, which also had many non-Orthodox Christian subjects,[14] the Ottoman policymakers chose to marshal networks of non-Muslim religious authorities for population surveillance. Their dilemma was that, while they viewed non-Muslims as suspicious and alarming, they found that Muslim officials were incapable of performing essential surveillance procedures, of verifying and vouching for the identities of non-Muslim subjects, and without proper identity verification the surveillance mechanism was meaningless. Therefore, policymakers opted to assign this responsibility to non-Muslim religious authorities, who were forced to either comply or be perceived as rebellious and suffer severe punishment. In addition, these authorities understood the importance of demonstrating their and their community's position by cooperating with those in the empire's ruling circles, who were focused on unmasking internal enemies.

[11]James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); John Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Jane Caplan and John Torpey, eds., *Documenting Individual Identity: The Development of State Practices in the Modern World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); David I. Kertzer and Dominique Arel, eds., *Census and Identity: The Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Language in National Censuses* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Radhika V. Mongia, "Historicizing State Sovereignty: Inequality and the Form of Equivalence," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49, 2 (2007): 384–411; and *Indian Migration and Empire: A Colonial Genealogy of the Modern State* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018); Radhika Singha, "The Great War and a 'Proper' Passport for the Colony: Border-Crossing in British India, c. 1882–1922," *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 50, 3 (2013): 289–315.

[12]İlkay Yılmaz, *Ottoman Passports: Security and Geographic Mobility, 1876–1908* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2023).

[13]Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700–1922*, 2d ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 63–65.

[14]Charles Steinwedel, "Making Social Groups, One Person at a Time: The Identification of Individuals by Estate, Religious Confession, and Ethnicity in Late Imperial Russia," in Jane Caplan and John Torpey, eds., *Documenting Individual Identity: The Development of State Practices in the Modern World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 67–82.

The Ottoman Empire had previous experience in incorporating non-Muslim religious authorities into imperial governance. Regarding the case of Orthodox Christians, scholars have revised our understanding of the Ottoman Empire's relationship with non-Muslim religious authorities in Istanbul in the early modern period. In depicting the historical development of this relationship, they have challenged the traditional framework of the *millet* system, through which, from the mid-fifteenth century until the end of the empire, such authorities were granted extensive power to autonomously administer the affairs of their co-religionists, and utilized to supervise the heterogeneous population.[15] These scholars have shown that, in the early centuries, the Ottomans granted the Orthodox patriarchs of Istanbul only limited powers and geographical jurisdiction in exchange for tribute. For the empire's rulers, the Orthodox prelates were merely agents for collecting revenue, not influential administrators of communal autonomy. In the eighteenth century, however, the collaboration between the empire and the Orthodox prelates advanced, and the Ottomans came to grant the Patriarchate of Istanbul increasing power and expand its domain.[16] Molly Greene has further suggested that behind the rise of the patriarchate lay the expectation among the ruling circles that the clergy would maintain order within their confessional community.[17]

In light of this understanding, I will argue here that the crisis of the Greek revolt and the growing security concerns encouraged the governing circles to further incorporate the Orthodox Christian and Armenian patriarchates into imperial governance. More importantly, I highlight the implications of this shift for the treatment of other non-Muslim communities. In the 1820s and 1830s, the government wanted to reorganize its relations with various non-Muslim communities when a move toward strict and uniform population surveillance required increased reliance on their networks. This change led to official state recognition of the representatives of relatively small non-Muslim communities and their incorporation into the imperial administration in a manner similar to the Orthodox Christian and Armenian patriarchates. It also increased the influence Istanbul's religious authorities had over their communities, to the extent that the

[15]For a traditional understanding of the *millet* system, see Alford Carleton, "The Millet System for the Government of Minorities in the Ottoman Empire," PhD diss., Hartford Seminary, 1937; H.A.R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West: A Study of the Impact of Western Civilization on Moslem Culture in the Near East*, vol. 1, pt. 2 (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), ch. 14.

[16]Paraskevas Konortas, "Les Rapports juridiques et politiques entre le patriarcat orthodoxe de Constantinople et l'administration ottomane de 1453 à 1600: D'après les documents grecs et ottomans," PhD diss., Université de Paris, 1985; Halil Inalcık, "The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans," *Turcica* 21–23 (1991): 407–36; Macit Kenanoğlu, *Osmanlı Millet Sistemi: Mit ve Gerçek* (Istanbul: Klasik, 2004); Paraskevas Konortas, "Relations financières entre le patriarcat Orthodoxe de Constantinople et la Sublime Porte (1453–fin du XVI^{e} siècle)," in *Le Patriarcat Œcuménique de Constantinople aux XIV^{e}–XVI^{e} siècles: Rupture et continuité* (Paris: Centre d'Études Byzantines, Néo-helléniques et Sud-est Européennes, 2007), 299–318; Elif Bayraktar Tellan, "The Patriarch and the Sultan: The Struggle for Authority and the Quest for Order in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire," PhD diss., Bilkent University, 2011; Tom Papademetriou, *Render unto the Sultan: Power, Authority, and the Greek Orthodox Church in the Early Ottoman Centuries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Hasan Çolak and Elif Bayraktar-Tellan, *The Orthodox Church as an Ottoman Institution: A Study of Early Modern Patriarchal Berats* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2019).

[17]Molly Greene, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks, 1453 to 1768: The Ottoman Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 175–83.

Ottoman government in the late nineteenth century would come to view them as an obstacle to political integration and try to curtail their privileges.[18]

Overall, this article explores how security concerns contributed to the introduction of a census and surveillance network and to the state's reliance on the religious authorities of non-Muslim communities in the Ottoman Empire. To consider the impact of the Greek revolt on the Ottomans' attitude toward the surveillance of their diverse population, the article's first two sections discuss the security measures the government took in the early years of the revolt and examine how the empire's leaders incorporated non-Muslim religious authorities into imperial governance. I will then turn to the Latin subjects and Armenian Catholic converts—groups that were strongly affected by the Greek revolt and growing security concerns—and discuss how their treatment changed during the Greek War of Independence.

Security Measures

When the Greek revolt erupted in Wallachia and Moldavia in March 1821 and expanded to the Morea, the Ottoman government attached great importance to security and order in Istanbul and its suburbs. Their cautious approach was a result of assumptions that the revolt was not self-fueled but instigated by Russia, which intended to use it as an opportunity to wage war against the Ottomans. They also assumed that the phanariots (Orthodox Christian notables based in Istanbul who produced the governors of Wallachia and Moldavia) were at the heart of the rebellion and that the Orthodox Christians in Istanbul would revolt in response to the Russian move.[19] Fearing Russia, the Ottoman policymakers believed that maintaining Istanbul's security was crucial for the empire's survival. The measures that the government took in this direction included mobilizing Muslims, executing and expelling phanariots from Istanbul, investigating inns, enforcing surety requirements, confiscating arms, creating population records, and imposing travel bans.

One of the first measures they took was to incite Muslim subjects to unite and arm themselves. The government framed the conflict as one of Muslims versus the Greeks (or "infidels") and ordered all male Muslim inhabitants in Istanbul to carry arms when they went out; in other words, it created a clear enemy and sought Muslim unity at the risk of alienating Christian and Jewish subjects.[20] This decision was based on the suspicion that Muslims might also cause problems due to Greek instigation. Several documents mention that Greek agents in disguise were infiltrating Muslims in Istanbul, spreading rumors, and trying to turn them against each other. The documents propose that the government's top priority should be to eliminate such instigations to prevent conflicts among Muslims. After hearing of Muslims spreading

[18]Masayuki Ueno, "In Pursuit of Laicized Urban Administration: The *Muhtar* System in Istanbul and Ottoman Attitudes toward Non-Muslim Religious Authorities in the Nineteenth Century," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 54, 2 (2022): 302–18; and *Managing Religious Diversity in the Ottoman Empire: Experiences of Istanbul Armenians in the Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2025).

[19]Ilicak, "Radical Rethinking," 171–82; Philliou, *Biography of Empire*, 65–74. See also BOA, C.DH 13650, previous Kethüda to the Grand Vizier (25 Recep 1236/28 Apr. 1821).

[20]See, for example, BOA, A.DVNSBUY.İLM.d 1, pp. 35–36, order to the Chief of the Scribes (4 Şaban 1236/7 May 1821).

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rumors in coffeehouses and on the streets, the government announced that anyone caught doing so would be punished.[21] Meanwhile, it executed and expelled phanariots and those with ties to them, and after the executions publicly displayed the corpses as an example. The government's call to arms and executions of phanariots spurred Istanbul's Muslims to violence against Orthodox Christians and other non-Muslims. That non-Muslims other than the Orthodox Christians were targeted suggests that Muslims already held negative views of non-Muslims in general.[22] Not until June 1821 did the government take strict measures to stop mob violence and restore everyday life in Istanbul.[23]

At the beginning of the Greek revolt, the Ottoman government followed an earlier approach to security measures. The government had inspected inns in Istanbul since the eighteenth century when urban rebellions with migrants from the provinces had caused political crises. Because of these rebellions, the regime came to see migrants as a potential threat to itself. They demanded that in order to stay in Istanbul migrants had to present a reliable person to act as a surety. Inns were where migrant workers were likely to be found, along with bachelors' quarters, shops, religious seminaries, and soup kitchens. In the late eighteenth century, Sultan Selim III targeted these places to detect "vagrants, unemployed and unemployable bachelors (*serseri ve başıboş ve bekār*), beggars, mendicant dervishes, idle students at religious seminaries, and other people who, according to government officials, did not have legitimate business in Istanbul." This was done in an attempt to establish regular inspections of workers and laborers to achieve security and order.[24] In 1821, the government of Mahmut II, inheriting the approach of Selim III, investigated all inns in Istanbul, created a list of not merely Orthodox Christians but all non-Muslims in these inns, and required them to find a surety; those who could not were expelled from the city. Moreover, a superintendent was appointed to each inn to prevent admission of any weapon or any unknown newcomer who lacked a surety. When these appointments were proposed, Mahmut II specifically instructed that the superintendents be Muslims.[25] Two registers survived the inn inspection endeavor, listing thousands of Orthodox Christians, Armenians, and Jews and reflecting that the government suspected not just Greeks but also other non-Muslims.[26]

The government also sought to exploit the ties among Orthodox Christian guild members by making members of each guild jointly liable for each other's wrongdoings. To achieve this goal, it turned to the Orthodox Patriarch of Istanbul and instructed him to summon each guild individually and to have its members

[21]BOA, A.DVNSBUY.İLM.d 1, pp. 35–36, 38, order to the Chief of the Scribes (24 Zilhicce 1236/22 Sept. 1821); HAT 44138, Grand Vizier to Mahmut II (n.d.).

[22]As for the negative view of non-Muslims in the early nineteenth century, see Yusuf Ziya Karabıçak, "Between Submission and Fidelity: Ottoman Muslim Elite's Changing Perceptions of the Greek Orthodox Populations, 1768–1821," *Dimensioni e Problemi della Ricerca Storica*, 1/2020 (2020): 89–111.

[23]For the developments in Istanbul in 1821, see Ilicak, "Radical Rethinking," 130–50; Philliou, *Biography of Empire*, 65–74; Maria Arvaniti, "Some Observations on the Violent Episodes against the Greek Orthodox Population of Istanbul in 1821," in Antonios Ampoutis *et al.*, eds., *Violence and Politics: Ideologies, Identities, Representations* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018), 192–208.

[24]Başaran, *Selim III*, 106–7.

[25]BOA, C.AS 159 (11 Şaban 1236/14 May 1821); HAT 51281, Grand Vizier to Mahmut II and Mahmut II to the Grand Vizier (n.d.).

[26]BOA, A.DVNSTZEİ.d 29 (11 Şaban 1236/14 May 1821); NFS.d 8 (21 Cumadelahire 1236/26 Mar. 1821).

vouch for each other.[27] As Yusuf Ziya Karabıçak has suggested, the Greek revolt did not stop the Ottoman government from relying on Orthodox Christian religious institutions in its security measures; it actively used them.[28] It needed the cooperation of some members of the Orthodox Christian community, even if they were suspicious of them. The registers of each guild's members were compiled and submitted to Mahmut II. Yet, he found them useless because they omitted several major guilds that did not come to the patriarchate, such as the carpenters, butchers, and tavern keepers.[29]

When confiscating arms, the government targeted not only Orthodox Christians but also Armenians, who constituted 20 percent of the city's population and included many wealthy financiers, while they ignored Jews, who made up 5 percent of the population. They determined to collect "any kind of weapons and instruments of war in the possession of Orthodox Christians and Armenians in Istanbul and its suburbs," anticipating that they might take up arms if Russia declared war. While calling on Muslims to arm themselves, the government instructed the Christian communities to, within ten days, bring their weapons to their respective patriarchate of Istanbul, where state officials would be stationed to receive and record them; the government said it would offer monetary compensation to those who brought weapons. It also informed the Orthodox Christians and Armenians that they would be punished mercilessly if weapons were found during house inspections that would take place ten days later.[30] While no evidence of such inspections of Armenian houses has been found, it has been confirmed that the government did order a search of all Orthodox Christians' houses in Istanbul in April 1821. Parish priests, agents of the patriarchate, state servants, and scribes of the sharia court were assigned the task of searching each house for weapons.[31]

In the order regarding weapons, the government also instructed officials to make a record of the Orthodox Christian men in "every neighborhood and every house," make them find a surety, and expel from the city any who could not provide one.[32] In general, Istanbul's residents could be broadly divided into longtime residents of neighborhoods, and migrants living in commercial districts and other areas. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the main target of inspection and registration was the migrants, who were likely to be found in places like inns, bachelors' quarters, and shops. While those in governing circles saw them as a potential threat to Istanbul's security, they considered the neighborhood dwellers as less so, assuming their behavior would be constrained by the ties and gaze of their local community.[33] When the Greek revolt broke out, the Orthodox Christians were added to the list of potential mischief makers, and since not all were migrants and they did not concentrate in the same places, the scope of inspection and registration was expanded to include those living in houses in ordinary neighborhoods.[34] Two

[27]BOA, HAT 51301, Grand Vizier to Mahmut II (n.d.).

[28]Karabıçak, "Making Sense."

[29]BOA, HAT 51301, Mahmut II to the Grand Vizier (n.d.).

[30]BOA, HAT 50258, Grand Vizier to Mahmut II (n.d.).

[31]BOA, A.DVNSBUY.İLM.d 1, pp. 89–90, order to officials (4 Recep 1236/7 Apr. 1821).

[32]BOA, A.DVNSBUY.İLM.d 1, pp. 89–90.

[33]In 1803, a state official proposed to Selim III that the government investigate non-Muslim neighborhoods and register their inhabitants. Karabıçak, "Between Submission," 103.

[34]The registration of whole neighborhood's population was not unprecedented. Morita, "Neighborhoods," 130–31.

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registers I have found in the Ottoman archives, dated April 1821, were likely produced by this inspection.[35] They recorded Orthodox Christian men living on the European and Anatolian sides of the Bosporus. The scribes wrote down each resident's place of residence, name and father's name, and, at the end, his surety. They often did not record residents individually but instead grouped those whose residence and surety were identical. Thus, the purpose of these registers was to record the presence of sureties rather than provide an information base about residents. The government found these registers, and others lost or unfound, insufficient. In the fall of 1821 it resolved to create more comprehensive records of the Orthodox Christian subjects in greater Istanbul. This time, again, both state officials and Orthodox clerics jointly conducted the population survey.[36]

I found five registers that likely came from this population registration—four dated in the fall of 1821 and one undated. Compared with the registers from April 1821, those from the fall had a different aim. While the former aimed to indicate the surety for each resident and detect and expel those who failed to provide one, the later registers included no such information; instead, they reported the individual's place of origin, occupation, and marital status, along with his name, father's name, and place of residence. At the end of each register was recorded the total number of male residents, and two of them also included information about men's physical appearance. This time, the scribes did not group residents but recorded them individually. These changes in registration methods indicate state officials' growing interest in the identification and number of Orthodox Christian residents. One register listed 1,687 Orthodox Christian male residents in Istanbul's Samatya and Yedikule districts. Residents were listed separately by neighborhoods or streets, including those who lived in dwellings and workplaces.[37] Another register was likely compiled from inspections of workplaces, and lists 711 Orthodox Christians, most of whom were single and lived in their workplaces.[38] These two registers contain information about physical appearance, including height, eye color, and facial hair. Two of the registers were dedicated to Beşiktaş (including Ortaköy) and Kasımpaşa (mainly the adjacent village of Tatavla), and included 1,158 and 1,560 Orthodox Christians, respectively.[39] Another similar, undated register listed 1,815 Orthodox Christians grouped by church affiliation.[40] As counterinsurgency studies have emphasized, gathering information about a population is crucial for detecting insurgents who might blend in with civilians and for distinguishing between rebels and potential collaborators.[41] Ottoman policymakers decided to record all Orthodox Christian male residents in greater Istanbul to prepare an information base for a

[35]BOA, A.DVN.d 867 (11 Recep 1236/14 Apr. 1821); MAD.d 21645 (9 Recep 1236/12 Apr. 1821). I also found a register that recorded the Orthodox Christians in Eyüp in a manner similar to these two registers but that had been created five months later. BOA. C.DH 8430 (25 Zilhicce 1236/23 Sept. 1821).

[36]BOA, NFS.d 9 (2 Muharrem 1237/29 Sept. 1821), 10 (2 Muharrem 1237/29 Sept. 1821).

[37]BOA, NFS.d 10.

[38]BOA, NFS.d 9.

[39]BOA, D.CRD.d 39880 (1 Muharrem 1237/28 Sept. 1821), 39881 (1 Muharrem 1237/28 Sept. 1821).

[40]BOA, NFS.d 11 (n.d.).

[41]David Galula, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Praeger, 1964), 115–20; Yuri Zhukov, "Examining the Authoritarian Model of Counter-Insurgency: The Soviet Campaign against the Ukrainian Insurgent Army," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 18, 3 (2007): 439–66, at 448, 452; Ceren Belge, "Civilian Victimization and the Politics of Information in the Kurdish Conflict in Turkey," *World Politics* 68, 2 (2016): 275–306, at 278, 282–90.

counterinsurgency campaign. This was one step forward from recording specific population segments, such as immigrants, to an empire-wide census that began in the late 1820s. And at the same time that the government changed its method of population registration in the fall of 1821, it also implemented its most comprehensive security measures.

The Prohibition of Travel and Introduction of the Internal Passport

Discussing the birth and development of the passport, John Torpey argues that the development of modern states entailed "depriv[ing] people of the freedom to move across certain spaces" and "render[ing] them dependent on states and the state system for the authorization to do so."[42] This characterization applies to the most comprehensive measure that the Ottoman Empire took to ensure security in Istanbul: it prohibited people without an internal passport from traveling to and from the city. As noted earlier, scholars have generally viewed this measure as an extension of measures that had existed since early modern times. Although some have briefly touched upon the influence of the Greek revolt, they have overlooked the shift of 1821.[43] Documents in Ottoman archives attest that policymakers saw travel bans and the introduction of the internal passport in 1821 as a new measure and part of their counterinsurgency campaign.

As the revolt dragged on, the ruling circles determined to implement new measures. In the fall of 1821, the government ruled that Orthodox Christians were forbidden either to go to the Morea and join the rebels or to come to Istanbul and instigate residents. The government felt it needed to restrict their movements to prevent the situation from deteriorating. The government also wanted to prevent soldiers fighting the rebels from deserting and so blocked highways and roads and prohibited Orthodox Christians from passing through without internal passports. Passports would be given to Orthodox Christians for legitimate business or trade purposes and included information regarding the grantee's place of origin, physical appearance, and reason for travel.[44] However, policymakers soon found it insufficient to impose travel bans only on Orthodox Christians. In November 1821, they extended the scope of travel bans and the internal passport requirement to all Ottoman subjects:

> Although other countries, even Iran, do not allow anyone to come to and go from their domains, especially their capitals, without certificate and notice, and pay extreme attention to protecting their internal orders, the Exalted [Ottoman] Sovereignty has paid no regard to such matters. Thus, so many unidentified individuals are coming and going through the Gate of Felicity [Istanbul], and no official knows who they are or whether they are spies or not. This state of disorder is inappropriate. From now on, no individual, whether they are from people of Islam or the three [non-Muslim] communities (*milel-i*

[42]Torpey, *Invention of the Passport*, 4.

[43]Çadırcı, "Tanzimat Döneminde"; Demirtaş, "XIX. Yüzyılda"; Herzog, "Migration and the State"; Turna, *19. Yüzyıldan*, 37–71; Yılmaz, *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde*, 164–73.

[44]BOA, AE.SMHD.II 3084, judge of Kapıdağı to the central government (12 Muharrem 1237/9 Oct. 1821); C.AS 25723, garrison commander of Misivri to the central government (5 Muharrem 1237/2 Oct. 1821); HAT 44138, Grand Vizier to Mahmut II (n.d.).

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> *selase*), will leave Istanbul for the provinces or come to Istanbul from the provinces unless they have a permission certificate (*izin tezkiresi*).[45]

Ottoman policymakers considered the internal passport requirement as a novelty that became a necessity, along with the travel prohibition, and felt the need to justify it by referring to the same requirements in other countries rather than to the Ottoman past. This view was expressed in the terms state officials used for the internal passport; they did not refer to the passports using previous terms for travel documents such as *yol hükmü* and *yol emri*, but with new terms: *tezkire* (certificate) or *izin tezkiresi* (permission certificate).[46] While it is clear from the context that these terms, which were used interchangeably, meant internal passports, such general terminology suggests that state officials may not have anticipated their continued use. However, as the Greek revolt dragged on, they maintained the system to restrict movement, and by 1824 they began using a specific term, *mürur tezkiresi* (passage certificate), which became the established term for internal passports across the Ottoman Empire.[47]

In addition to the generally heightened security concerns, one reason for the expansion of the scope of travel bans mentioned in the documents was that Greek agents were traveling to and from Istanbul in disguise. Investigations conducted during the earliest phase of the Greek revolt reported finding Muslim clothing in addition to weapons in Orthodox Christians' houses in Beyoğlu and other quarters in greater Istanbul.[48] Until the 1829 abolition of "the old social markers based on wearing apparel," and following a period of adaptation, in Ottoman society social class and religious affiliation were indicated by the types and colors of headgear and clothing people wore, which made it easy to disguise oneself and evade government surveillance.[49] Thus, to prevent the movement of Greek agents the government had to do more than monitor only Orthodox Christians; it had to keep close watch over everyone traveling to and from Istanbul and require them all to carry documents proving their identity.

At the end of 1821 or start of 1822, the government prepared detailed instructions on the travel ban, comprising eight articles, and indicated that the prohibition aimed to ensure security and order in the imperial capital.[50] Accordingly, sharia court judges would be responsible for issuing internal passports in Istanbul and the provinces, and no issuance fee would be charged. All highways and roads would be closed on both the Balkan and Anatolian sides of Istanbul. Officials who were trustworthy and capable of reading passports would be appointed to man

[45]BOA, HAT 51243, Grand Vizier to Mahmut II (n.d.); A.DVNSBUY.İLM.d 1, p. 38, order to Istanbul customs officer (20 Safer 1237/16 Nov. 1821).

[46]Turna, *19. Yüzyıldan*, 44–59; Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu, "Mürur Tezkiresi," in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 32 (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2006), 60–61.

[47]İstanbul Şeriye Sicilleri, İstanbul Mahkemesi 154, 26a, order to the judge of Istanbul (22 Rebiülevvel 1240/14 Nov. 1824).

[48]BOA, A.DVNSBUY. İLM.d 1, p. 42, order to the director of imperial powder mill (25 Cumadelula 1237/17 Feb. 1822); C.DH 5138, judge of Bolu to the central government (15 Cumadelahire 1237/9 Mar. 1822); C.DH 13650.

[49]Quataert, *Ottoman Empire*, 148–51; Quataert, "Clothing Laws, State, and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720–1829," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29, 3 (1997): 403–25.

[50]BOA, A.DVNSBUY.İLM.d 1, pp. 39–42 (n.d., recorded between the orders dated 3 Rebiülevvel 1237/28 Nov. 1821 and 25 Cumadelula 1237/17 Feb. 1822).

checkpoints close to Istanbul, such as Küçükçekmece, the Yarımburgaz bridge, the Şamlar bridge, the Bostancıbaşı bridge, and Beykoz. The governors of provinces neighboring Istanbul on the Balkan and Anatolian sides were instructed to appoint officials to close roads and stop any unidentified individual without an internal passport from passing. Rafts at Terkos Lake would be removed to prevent people taking a detour through the lake. As for the sea route, the commander of the Dardanelles was instructed to appoint officials to stop the passing of any unidentified person without an internal passport, and the travel ban order was sent to all places around the Marmara Sea and the Balkan and Anatolian sides of the Black Sea. All ships and boats arriving in Istanbul were inspected to verify that everyone had a passport, and those without were to be interrogated and investigated. Three boats were assigned to Kumkapı, Fenerbahçe, and Sarayburnu to patrol the nearby waters.

When Ottoman policymakers expanded the scope of the internal passport requirement to all subjects and needed to express the quasi-totality of its subjects in Istanbul, they used the expression "people of Islam and the three communities" (*ehl-i İslam ve milel-i selase*), since the previously used expression "people of Islam and *reaya*" was thought insufficiently clear.[51] *Reaya* originally referred to taxpaying subjects in general, regardless of religion, but in the eighteenth century it also came to mean non-Muslim subjects.[52] Nonetheless, this term was ambiguous since it did not always mean all non-Muslim subjects; it could refer to a particular non-Muslim group, especially the largest one: Orthodox Christians.[53] Therefore, when policymakers sought to impart the entirety of Istanbul's religiously diverse population (Muslims, mostly Greek Orthodox Christians, Armenians—including yet to be officially recognized Catholic converts—and Jews), they adopted the term *milel-i selase*, which had come into use in the 1800s along with the gradual increase in the use of *millet* for non-Muslim groups.[54]

In 1824, the government made an important change to the internal passport system. After discovering that some Greeks in rebel areas had somehow obtained internal passports and were traveling to and from Istanbul, it added a new step to the passport application procedure: Orthodox Christians and Armenians now had to obtain a certificate of identity from their patriarchate before applying to the sharia

[51]For example, BOA, A.DVNSBUY.İLM.d 1, p. 38; HAT 51243.

[52]Aleksandar Fotić, "Tracing the Origin of a New Meaning of the Term *Re'āyā* in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Balkans," *Balcanica* 48 (2017): 55–66; Suraiya Faroqhi, "Ottoman Guilds in the Late Eighteenth Century: The Bursa Case," in *Making a Living in the Ottoman Lands, 1480 to 1820* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1995), 95–96; Baki Tezcan, "Ethnicity, Race, Religion and Social Class: Ottoman Markers of Difference," in Christine Woodhead, ed., *The Ottoman World* (London: Routledge, 2011), 165–67.

[53]For example, see BOA, A.DVNSBUY.İLM.d 1, pp. 89–90; A.DVN.d 867; AE.SMHD.II 3084.

[54]BOA, C.DH 8940, judge of Edirne to the central government (11 Cumadelula 1236/14 Feb. 1821); C.MF 6347 (2 Muharrem 1224/17 Feb. 1809); C.ML 14932, draft of an edict addressed to the judge, bostancıbaşı, and notable of Edirne (27 Rebiülahir 1218/16 Aug. 1803). In one document dated 1794, a scribe took the trouble to paraphrase it as "Orthodox Christian, Armenian, and Jewish communities" (*milel-i selase ki Rum ve Ermeni ve Yahud taifesi*), suggesting that its use had been uncommon. BOA, AE.SSLM.III 17632 (25 Rebiülahir 1209/19 Nov. 1794). For the recent works on the meaning of the term *millet*, see Karabıçak, "Ottoman Attempts"; Nikos Sigalas, "'And Every Language that Has Been Voiced Became a *Millet*': A Genealogy of the Late Ottoman *Millet*," *Die Welt des Islams* 62, 3–4 (2022): 325–59; Markus Dressler, "Tracing the Nationalisation of *Millet* in the Late Ottoman Period: A Conceptual History Approach," *Die Welt des Islams* 62, 3–4 (2022): 360–88.

court.[55] Imposition of this method, which was applied to Muslims and Jews at least by 1829, shows how important it is for surveillance mechanisms to be able to verify identities, and how difficult it can be to do so. Muslim sharia court judges were generally strangers to Istanbul's Orthodox Christian and Armenian residents and had no way to verify their identities. Only locals who knew someone could vouch for their identity. Thus, the government had to turn to local clergymen who interacted with the laity and to patriarchates that supervised those clergymen from atop the church hierarchy. Patriarchates were made responsible for guaranteeing the identities of Christian subjects.[56] In the early days of the revolt, the government had held the Orthodox patriarch responsible, and executed him. Thereafter, in a situation hostile to Christians, the clergy were unlikely to defy government orders. The patriarchates had to display their cooperation with the empire so that they and their community would not be considered rebels.

A few months after abolishing the Janissary corps in 1826, the government established a Bureau of Market Inspection responsible for population surveillance. Most of this bureau's duties explained in the regulation were related to the treatment of immigrants and visitors to Istanbul. It would be responsible for checking their internal passports and keeping a record of them. The regulation also said the government was going to conduct a census of Istanbul's neighborhoods.[57]

The internal passport also appeared in the 1829 regulation in regards to demographic record-keeping in Istanbul. This regulation was prepared when the Istanbul census was resumed after being interrupted by the war with Russia in 1828–1829, and it concerned the procedures for keeping a record of the population, including people's births and deaths, and who moved in and out of the city. The regulation decreed that a Muslim leaving Istanbul who sought an internal passport had to first obtain a certificate stamped by his neighborhood imam, and then apply to the sharia court with this certificate. Non-Muslims' certificates had to be stamped by a patriarch or rabbi. Movement within the city required a certificate issued by a Muslim imam, Christian priest, or Jewish head of congregation. A person moving to Istanbul had to apply to the Office of the Commander in Chief, and the presence of a guarantor was required for acceptance of settlement; non-Muslims needed theirs confirmed by the patriarch or rabbi. The workload of imams increased with the introduction of the census and internal passports and the delegation of tasks related to them, so the government also stipulated that the Muslim residents of Istanbul would appoint officials called *muhtar* in each neighborhood to assist them.[58] For non-Muslims, the government delegated the appointment of the *muhtar*s and tasks related to population control to the patriarchs and the Chief Rabbi.[59] Thus, it incorporated non-Muslim religious functionaries deeply into its population surveillance mechanism. But what happened to non-Muslims, who had no clerical structure comparable to those of

[55]İstanbul Şeriye Sicilleri, İstanbul Mahkemesi 154, 26a.

[56]For the approach taken by the Government of India in the early twentieth century, see Singha, "Great War," 299–300.

[57]BOA, A.DVNSBUY.İLM.d 2, pp. 20–33 (Muharrem 1242/Aug.–Sept. 1826); Turna, *19. Yüzyıldan*, 64–69.

[58]BOA, HAT 48256 (n.d.); 1667/25 (n.d.). Although the exact date is unknown, by 1841 at the latest internal passports were required not only for travel to and from Istanbul but also travel not involving the capital. Çadırcı, "Tanzimat Döneminde," 174.

[59]For the *muhtar*s among non-Muslims, see Ueno, "In Pursuit of Laicized Urban Administration."

the Orthodox Christians and Armenians? Did they go unnoticed? Let us turn our attention to the Catholics.

The Latin Subjects

The growing anti-Christian sentiment among Muslims and the increasingly important distinction between friend and foe affected the situation of Catholic Ottoman subjects.[60] Their presence in the Ottoman Empire has received less scholarly attention than that of Christians of other denominations. However, from their early centuries of territorial conquests of the Balkans, Hungary, and the islands of the Aegean Sea, the Ottomans brought in many Catholics, allowing them to maintain their confession and religious institutions.[61] Moreover, the Ottomans recognized the status of Catholic clergy in the Aegean Islands at their request, and granted them a charter of appointment in exchange for payment of tribute, as they did for Orthodox Christians, Armenians, Syriac Christians (Süryani), and Assyrians of the East (Nesturi).[62] Meanwhile, propagation activities by Western European missionaries led to the emergence of Catholic converts among Christians belonging to different denominations. At the turn of the eighteenth century, the Ottoman government began to take a strict stance against the conversion to and propagation of Catholicism.[63] Except for the Maronites, though, the descendants of those who had been Catholic upon entering Ottoman rule became known as "Latin subjects" and were allowed to maintain their confession. They included Catholics who lived in the Aegean Islands, those of Croatian and Bosnian descent in the Balkans, and descendants of migrants from Western and Southern Europe, known as Levantines. The late nineteenth century census shows that 18,240 Latin subjects lived in the empire, mostly in the provinces of Kosovo, Jerusalem, and Beirut, and in the cities of Izmir and Istanbul.[64]

[60]For the legal importance of this distinction, see Will Smiley, "Rebellion, Sovereignty, and Islamic Law in the Ottoman Age of Revolutions," *Law and History Review* 40, 2 (2022): 229–59.

[61]For the Catholics in the Ottoman Empire, see Charles A. Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans: The Church and the Ottoman Empire, 1453–1923* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

[62]Radu Dipratu, *Regulating Non-Muslim Communities in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire: Catholics and Capitulations* (London: Routledge, 2022), 172–76; Paul Rycaut, *The Present State of the Greek and Armenian Churches, anno Christi 1678* (London, 1679), 108–9; BOA, D.PSK 4/89, petition of the French ambassador (26 Safer 1124/4 Apr. 1712). For the records of the appointment charters and orders addressed to diverse Christian religious authorities, see thirty-four registers held in the Ottoman archives. BOA, KK.d 2540, 2542, 2542-1–32.

[63]Ueno, *Managing Religious Diversity*, ch. 1. See also Cesare Santus, "Sheikh ül-islam Feyzullah Efendi and the Armenian Patriarch Awetik': A Case of Entangled Confessional Disciplining?" in Tijana Krstic and Derin Terzioğlu, eds., *Entangled Confessionalizations?: Dialogic Perspectives on the Politics of Piety and Community-Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–18th Centuries* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2022); Ensar Köse, "İstanbul Ermeni Patrikliği'nin Osmanlı Hükümeti'yle Münasebetlerine Tesir Eden Dinamikler (18. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısı)," *Osmanlı Medeniyeti Araştırmaları Dergisi* 5 (2017): 1–24.

[64]Kemal H. Karpat, *Ottoman Population 1830–1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 122–47. The Ottoman category of the Latin subjects (*Latin reayası*) has not been elaborated sufficiently. Gabriel Doyle claims that the Ottoman Empire did not recognize their *millet* status. "The Latin Vekil of Istanbul: Local Representation, Intermediary Work and Communal Politics in the Late Ottoman Capital," in Vanessa R. de Obaldía and Claudio Monge, eds., *Latin Catholicism in Ottoman*

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Among these Latin subjects, those of the Aegean Islands who lived alongside Greek Orthodox Christians experienced firsthand the effects of the Greek War of Independence.[65] Thus, they found it crucial to actively express their position to the empire's rulers. In March 1822, the Latin subjects of Syros Island, accounting for most of the population, sent a letter to the newly appointed Kapudan Pasha (commander in chief of the Ottoman navy) after learning about his appointment from Natali, "our resident representative" (*kapıkethüdamız*) in Istanbul. The Ottoman archives hold its Turkish translation. In this letter, they repeatedly expressed their allegiance to the Ottoman Sultan and contrasted themselves with the Greek rebels, whom they called "treacherous, rebellious infidels" (*zorba hain gavurlar*). They condemned the actions of these "infidels" who had come to Syros, seized their oxen and sheep, and demanded taxes that were to be paid to the Ottoman Empire.[66] When the neighboring Greeks rebelled against the Ottoman Empire, the Latin Syriots felt they had to seek the central government's support at their own peril and to articulate their pro-Ottoman position. Three years later, they petitioned the government and explained their deteriorated situation, writing that the "Greek bandits" (*Rum eşkıyası*) were treating them like slaves, trying to expel them from Syros, and taxing them forcibly. They asked the government for leniency in their inability to pay legitimate taxes due to their difficult situation, aiming to avoid being labeled rebels for not doing so.[67]

The Latin subjects of Chios Island, the site of the 1822 massacre of Greeks that became the subject of a famous painting by Eugène Delacroix, chose to take refuge in a nearby Ottoman port city. In 1828, shortly before the Ottoman-Russian War began, 111 of them fled to Izmir, claiming that they could not be at ease due to their conflict with the Greeks. According to their submitted list, most of the refugees were women and children, including thirty-eight women, thirty-one girls, and twenty-three boys. In response to their request for protection, the commander of Izmir allowed them to stay temporarily and made the leader of the Latin subjects in Izmir the refugees' surety. He also requested, and they received, official recognition of their stay from the central government.[68]

The Latin subjects' actions were not limited to these specific events and also included a request related to their treatment as a group. In 1827, Natali submitted a petition to the Ottoman government, which was quoted in an order written in response. In the petition, Natali acted as the representative of the Latin subjects not only in Syros but also in "Tinos, Naxos, Santorini, and Chios Islands, Izmir, Istanbul, the Balkans, and other regions." Since he needed to obtain state recognition about their allegiance to the empire and so avoid being seen as rebels, he juxtaposed the loyal Latin subjects with the Greek rebels. He claimed that conflicts between these

Istanbul: Properties, People & Missions *(Istanbul: Isis Press, 2022), 86. However, as this article suggests, the Ottoman treatment of Latin subjects did not differ much from that of other non-Muslim communities.*

[65]Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Les Levantins: Cadres de vie et identités d'un groupe ethno-confessionel de l'empire ottoman au "long" 19e siècle*, Jean-François de Andria, trans. (Istanbul: Les Éditions Isis, 2007), 141–43.

[66]BOA, HAT 40474A, translation of the petition from the Latin subjects of Syros (24 Cumadelahire 1237/18 Mar. 1822).

[67]BOA, C.DH 9564, translation of the petition from the Latin subjects of Syros (9 Şaban 1240/29 Mar. 1825).

[68]BOA, HAT 44201, garrison commander of Izmir to the central government (23 Recep 1243/9 Feb. 1828); 44265B (n.d.).

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two groups had caused difficulties for the former in traveling to and from Istanbul and dealing with various matters. Natali asked the government to appoint an official to serve as an intermediary between the Latin subjects and the government to resolve this unfavorable situation, as an imperial favor in exchange for their demonstrated loyalty. In response, the Ottoman government appointed a Muslim official as their superintendent (*nazır*) to "protect" the Latin subjects and take care of their affairs and at the same time make Natali the state-recognized representative (*vekil*).[69]

As for the established positions of superintendent and representative of the Latin subjects, scholars have vaguely explained, based on secondary sources, that the Ottoman government created them separately in the nineteenth century's second quarter.[70] An order that I found in a sharia court register shows that these positions were simultaneously created in 1827, when the distinction between friend and foe was crucial; the superintendent and representative were expected to help the state surveil the population.[71] The representative was to act as a guarantor for all Latin subjects residing in Istanbul and those traveling to and from Istanbul, and the Muslim superintendent was to grant them identity papers that would be renewed annually. The government also created a population record of Latin subjects that would include their names and physical descriptions, and entrusted the Muslim superintendent with the issuance of a one-time-use certificate needed to apply to the sharia court for internal passports. Subsequently, the position of the Muslim superintendent disappeared, and the representative remained the head of the Latin subjects, although the circumstances were unclear. The representative was someone from the community who could vouch for the identity of the Latin subjects; in contrast, the presence of a Muslim superintendent, who could only play an administrative role, might have proved superfluous. The Latin subjects' request allowed the government to pursue population surveillance by combining population records and identity papers, which would later apply to all of the empire's subjects.

Armenian Catholics

While the government included Catholic Latins among its loyal subjects in 1827, the next year it adopted a completely different attitude toward Catholic Armenians and expelled thousands who had taken up residence in Istanbul. A deterioration in relations between the Ottoman Empire and Britain, Russia, and France—which had all intervened in the Greek question—provided a growing impetus to remove from Istanbul individuals from those countries and others with ties to them. In the early 1820s, Orthodox Christians were targeted for expulsion, and in 1828 the

[69]BOA, HAT 36229, Grand Vizier to Mahmut II (n.d.); İstanbul Şeriye Sicilleri, İstanbul Mahkemesi 154, 49b, 50a, edict to the newly appointed superintendent of the Latin subjects (Evahir Şaban 1242/20–28 Mar. 1827).

[70]Schmitt, *Les Levantins*, 168–75; Doyle, "Latin Vekil," 89–92; Rinaldo Marmara, *La communauté levantine de Constantinople: De l'empire byzantin à la république turque* (Istanbul: Les Éditions Isis, 2012), 81–82.

[71]İstanbul Şeriye Sicilleri, İstanbul Mahkemesi 154, 49b, 50a. According to Gabriel Doyle, the position of Latin representative was held by Georges and Othon Vartaliti, who were of Syriot origin, from 1844 to 1914. Doyle, "Latin Vekil." For the reconsideration of the Latin community's administration in the 1840s, see the documents in the Ottoman archives, BOA, İ.MSM 952 (4 Rebiülevvel 1256/6 May 1840), 953 (12 Zilkade 1256/5 Jan. 1841).

government added to this list Europeans and converts to Catholicism from other sects (but not Latin subjects). One document makes clear the antagonism toward them: "It is time to completely purify the Gate of Felicity [Istanbul] from the rogues of Europeans, Catholics, and Orthodox Christians" (*Asitane-i Saadetin gerek Frenk ve gerek Katolik ve Rum habislerinden tamamen tathir ve tenfizi sırası olduğuna binaen*).[72]

In the mid-1820s, internal strife among the Greeks and reinforcements of Mehmet Ali of Egypt turned the war's tide in favor of the Ottoman Empire. While the European powers intervened in the Greek question and pressured the Ottomans to accept Greek autonomy, the Ottoman navy nearly accidentally entered a battle with the fleets of Britain, Russia, and France in October 1827.[73] This battle of Navarino dealt a heavy blow to the empire, and seriously set back its relationship with the European powers. While the ambassadors of Britain, France, and Russia were leaving Istanbul, the Ottomans expelled from the city visitors from these countries who had no legitimate reason to be there. By January 1828, an ongoing investigation had already resulted in the arrest and expulsion of 120 foreign residents, while 618 had left of their own volition.[74]

The Ottoman government also changed in its attitude toward its own subjects who had ties to European countries. It ordered the Chief Rabbi of Istanbul to investigate Jews working as brokers for the merchants of Britain, France, and other countries, and acting as their protégés, to confiscate their certificates of foreign protection and warn them that anyone who came under the protection of a foreign country would be punished.[75] The government, in its desire to control the movement of their subjects after the Greek revolt, had become more aware of the reach of state sovereignty, and the battle of Navarino allowed them to address encroachments on their sovereignty in the form of foreign protection. The government also created a new position, the Superintendent of Galata (*Galata Nazırı*); his main task was to strictly control relationships between Ottoman subjects and foreign residents. He was expected to deal especially with Ottoman subjects becoming foreign protégés, marriages between foreigners and Ottoman women, and the conversion of Ottoman subjects to Catholicism.[76] The government had seen all of these as problems since the last century and now saw an opportunity to confront them harshly. The most drastic measure it took was the aforementioned expulsion of Armenian Catholics.

At the end of the seventeenth century, the Ottoman Empire's ruling circles had changed their attitude toward the propagation of Catholicism and prohibited missionary activities and the conversion of Ottoman subjects. Despite efforts of the Armenian clergy, thousands of Armenians nonetheless converted to Catholicism and practiced their new faith secretly or under foreign protection. They accounted for

[72]BOA, HAT 48049, Grand Vizier to Mahmut II (n.d.); Kemal Beydilli, *II. Mahmud Devri'nde Katolik Ermeni Cemâati ve Kilisesi'nin Tanınması (1830)* (Cambridge: Harvard Üniversitesi Yakındoğu Dilleri ve Medeniyetleri Bölümü, 1995), 165.

[73]Smiley, "War without War."

[74]BOA, A.DVNSBUY.İLM.d 2, p. 62, order to the Kapudan Pasha (27 Cumadelula 1243/16 Dec. 1827), pp. 64–65, order to the Istanbul customs officer (23 Cumadelahire 1243/11 Jan. 1828).

[75]BOA, A.DVNSBUY.İLM.d 2, p. 66, order to the Chief Rabbi (15 Recep 1243/1 Feb. 1828).

[76]BOA, A.DVNSBUY.İLM.d 2, pp. 73–75, regulation regarding the Superintendent of Galata (Zilkade 1243/May–June 1828).

the most significant portion of mass attendees at Galata's Catholic churches, which were supposed to serve as a place of worship for European residents.[77]

The growing push in 1828 to exclude people with foreign ties helped the Armenian clergy who, on their own, could not cope with the rise in Catholic conversions in their own community. By cooperating with this expulsion campaign, they were able to eliminate Catholic converts and also gain government recognition of Armenians as loyal subjects. In the early nineteenth century, Armenian elites in Istanbul had been feeling a growing need for such recognition as Russia established an informal relationship with the Armenian prelates of the Echmiadzin Catholicosate under Qajar rule in the Caucasus, with the aim of using this highest authority of the Armenian Church to gain the support of Armenians in the region. Since most of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire recognized the religious supremacy of the catholicosate, its relationship with Russia could be a factor in the Ottoman Empire's distrust of its own Armenians.[78] In the mid-1820s, the Armenian elites even severed traditional ties with the catholicosate and ceased to recognize its religious supremacy. They did not restore them after the Russian Empire incorporated Eastern Armenia and the catholicosate in 1828.[79] A rumor suggests that this cautious attitude was not uncalled for: according to Miroslav Šedivý's research, based on Austrian diplomatic documents, when Mahmut II asked the Armenian Patriarch if he could assume responsibility for the Armenians' allegiance after the Russian conquest of Eastern Armenia and Echmiadzin, the patriarch demonstrated the loyalty of Armenians who belonged to the Armenian Church by blaming Armenian Catholic converts.[80] Although this rumor is unconfirmed, its circulation suggests that religious affiliation was seen as linked with political allegiance.

The Ottoman government ordered the Istanbul Patriarch of the Armenian Church to proceed with a census of Istanbul's Armenians in 1828 and record Catholic converts in a separate register. Based on these records, Armenian Catholics who did not agree to return to the Armenian Church were exiled to Anatolia. Interestingly, the government did not exempt those expelled from obtaining an internal passport; the Armenian Patriarch would be their guarantor and the Bureau of Market Inspection would issue them the passports.[81] The patriarch was expected to play a role in the state's population surveillance through both the census and the issuance of internal passports, and by fulfilling this expectation he demonstrated his position and that of the Armenian community toward the imperial government.

[77]Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans*, 178–89; Paolo Girardelli, "Architecture, Identity, and Liminality: On the Use and Meaning of Catholic Spaces in Late Ottoman Istanbul," *Muqarnas* 22 (2005): 233–64, at 246–52. On the history of Armenian Catholics, see Guillaume Aral, *Les Arméniens catholiques: Étude historique, juridique et institutionnelle XVII^e–XIX^e siècle* (Nice: Les Éditions de Nicéphore, 2017).

[78]I note that the title of Catholicos had no relation to the Catholic Church to avoid confusing readers unfamiliar with Eastern Christianity.

[79]Eileen M. Kane, "Pilgrims, Holy Places, and the Multi-confessional Empire: Russian Policy toward the Ottoman Empire under Tsar Nicholas I, 1825–1855," PhD diss., Princeton University, 2005, 125–31; George A. Bournoutian, ed., *Russia and the Armenians of Transcaucasia, 1797–1889: A Documentary Record* (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 1998), 344: Baron Rosen to Counselor Butaev (10 July 1834).

[80]Miroslav Šedivý, "Austria's Role in the Constantinople Armenian Catholics Affair in 1828–31," *Middle Eastern Studies* 48, 1 (2012): 51–71, at 52.

[81]BOA, HAT 48038, Grand Vizier to Mahmut II (n.d.), 48049; Beydilli, *II. Mahmud Devri'nde*, 164–71.

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The expulsion of Armenian Catholics invited foreign intervention. With diplomatic relations strained by the situation in Greece and the war with Russia, the Ottoman government could not rebuff this intervention. In 1830, the Ottoman Commander in Chief and the Chief of the Scribes (analogous to a foreign minister) negotiated with the French Ambassador for the liberation and future treatment of Armenian Catholics, and Catholic expellees were allowed to return to Istanbul. Both sides agreed that the relationship between Armenians who adhered to the Armenian Church and Catholic converts had seriously deteriorated and that Armenian Catholics should be separated from the jurisdiction of the Armenian Patriarchate. This was also in the Ottoman Empire's interest since it ensured that non-Muslim religious authorities would fully control the population. Yet, what form the Catholic community would take after the separation remained unclear.[82]

Surprisingly, the nature of religious practice and the community's internal administration were not questioned, and the main point of contention was who would act as intermediary between the government and Armenian Catholic subjects. The Ottoman side proposed appointing a Muslim state official as the Catholics' superintendent, the method applied to the Latin subjects in 1827. The French side opposed this proposal and called instead for appointment of a patriarch in a manner similar to that of Armenians and Orthodox Christians. The Ottoman side was reluctant to accept this, and it was eventually agreed that a Muslim superintendent would be appointed for the time being, to be replaced later by an Armenian Catholic bishop elected by the Armenian Catholics themselves.[83] Nothing specific was mentioned concerning the Muslim superintendent's role, but because it was perceived as similar in formula to that of the Latin subjects, he too was expected to play a role in surveilling the Armenian Catholic population.

Here we must take note of the Protestant converts, most of them Armenians, who emerged in the 1830s due to American missionaries' proselytizing and who in 1850 would be similarly separated as an independent religious community. The decree announcing that separation stated that a new lay representative, called *vekil*, whom Protestants themselves would elect from among their ranks, would be appointed as the head of the Protestant community, and that his primary duties would be to maintain population records and issue the certificates needed to apply for an internal passport.[84] Several documents suggest that separate population registers were created for each denomination, establishing confession as a unit of population record-keeping in Istanbul.[85]

[82]BOA, HAT 48042, acting Grand Vizier to Mahmut II (n.d.); Beydilli, *II. Mahmud Devri'nde*, 226–31.

[83]BOA, HAT 48042.

[84]BOA, A.DVNSMHM.d 258, p. 5, no. 8, edict to the police marshal (Evasıt Muharrem 1267/16–25 Nov. 1850). Scholars have called the state's recognition of the independence of Catholic and Protestant communities "the independence as a *millet*." However, Ottoman documents related to this independence are inconsistent in how they refer to these communities and use several terms interchangeably. For the documents regarding the independence of the Catholic community, see Beydilli, *II. Mahmud Devri'nde*.

[85]BOA, C.ADL 3181 (21 Safer 1251/18 June 1835); A.DVNSGMC.d 18, pp. 5–6 (5 Cumadelahire 1262/31 May 1846). In the first empire-wide census in the early 1830s, confession was not the only unit. The criteria for dividing people differed from region to region, and often the only distinction made was between Muslims and non-Muslims, but in some cases non-Muslims were classified into several groups, and ethnicity was a criteria also. Karal, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda*; Fuat Dundar, "Empire of Taxonomy: Ethnic and Religious Identities in the Ottoman Surveys and Censuses," *Middle Eastern Studies* 51, 1 (2015): 136–58, at 146–47.

As non-Muslim religious authorities began to play roles in the empire's surveillance of the population, Jews also sought the official appointment of their Chief Rabbi by the imperial government. Istanbul's Jews had chosen a Chief Rabbi, but unlike the Orthodox Christian and Armenian patriarchs the Ottoman government did not grant him a charter of appointment. When the government announced in its newly introduced official gazette that the head of the newly independent Catholic community, who had assumed the title of patriarch in 1834, was equal to the patriarchs of Orthodox Christians and Armenians, the city's Jews petitioned it to officially recognize their Chief Rabbi, which it did in 1835.[86] This chain reaction resulted in the incorporation of Jews into the ecclesiastical tax farming system, which the Ottomans had used to arrange their relationship with Christian clergymen for centuries. To benefit from church properties and networks, the empire required them to pay tribute, and in return issued charters of appointment recognizing their rights and exemptions, including their right to collect money from their flocks.[87]

The treatment of non-Muslims' religious authorities became more standardized as they were incorporated into imperial governance both financially and administratively. A sign of this change was the creation of two registers for bureaucratic use in the 1830s, principally recording sample texts of Christian high clergy and rabbis' appointment charters. One included the old groups: Orthodox Christians, Armenians, "Franks" (Catholic bishops of Aegean Islands), Assyrians of the East, and Syriac Christians, the other included Catholics and Jews and was created in response to the state's recognition of their religious authorities.[88]

Conclusion

The field of Ottoman studies has long suffered from a division stemming from the perspectives of diverse national histories, and it has sometimes failed to adequately explain connections between events that occurred within the same periods and geography. The national historiographies of Greeks, Armenians, and Jews, the confessional history of the Catholics, and Ottoman historiography with a focus on Muslim Turks have treated separately events such as the Greek Revolution, the introduction of an internal passport and census, the appointment of the Latin subjects' representative, the independence of Armenian Catholics from the Armenian Patriarchate, and state recognition of the Chief Rabbi. This article has shown that these events were connected, taking as its starting point the Ottoman government's suspicions of Christians during the Greek revolt and its growing concern for Istanbul's security.

For the Ottomans, the Greek Revolution entailed a counterinsurgency operation that required them to draw a line between friends and foes in their empire's core region. Moreover, they perceived a new urgency to maintain the security of Istanbul, with its huge Christian population, especially Orthodox Christians of Greek descent. Concern over protecting the city had been growing since the late eighteenth century.

[86] *Takvim-i Vekayi*, nos. 94 (15 Ramazan 1250/15 Jan. 1835) and 96 (23 Şevval 1250/22 Feb. 1835). Avigdor Levy, "*Millet* Politics: The Appointment of a Chief Rabbi in 1835," in Avigdor Levy, ed., *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994), 425–38.

[87] Inalcık, "The Status"; Kenanoğlu, *Osmanlı Millet Sistemi*; Papademetriou, *Render unto the Sultan*; Çolak and Bayraktar-Tellan, *Orthodox Church*.

[88] BOA, A.DVNSGMC.d 1; KK.d 2542-32.

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These worries triggered institutional developments such as the introduction of an internal passport and census, and the expansion of government surveillance from targeted select high-risk groups to encompass Istanbul's entire population and eventually that of the empire as a whole. The presence of Orthodox Christians was so ubiquitous in Istanbul that to monitor their movements the government had to extend its surveillance to everyone, imposing an internal passport requirement on all subjects. The Greek revolt accelerated the shift toward rendering the empire's entire population more legible and controllable.

For non-Muslim subjects other than Orthodox Christians, the Greek Revolution was a crisis during which obtaining state recognition as loyal subjects became crucial. The Latin subjects succeeded in this by contrasting themselves with the Greek rebels, while the Armenians did so by cutting their traditional ties with their highest religious authority, the Echmiadzin Catholicosate, and casting blame on Armenian Catholic converts. The latter were highly suspect and suffered collective expulsion from Istanbul. As the war ended, their situation was normalized again via foreign intervention.

As the Ottomans sought to keep Orthodox Christians and other non-Muslims under ever greater surveillance, their challenge was how to verify and vouch for their identities. Their solution was to make some members of non-Muslim communities part of the surveillance mechanism. Thus, they expanded the non-Muslim clergy's official role in the empire's governance. Until the early nineteenth century, the Ottoman government had used the networks of the Orthodox Christian and Armenian patriarchates of Istanbul to collect taxes and prevent Christian subjects from converting to Catholicism. Now they needed to incorporate these and other non-Muslim representatives more deeply into imperial governance in order to construct a fuller picture of the diverse people under their rule. On one hand, they delegated to non-Muslim representatives official roles in the issuance procedure of internal passports and in the management of the *muhtar* system and census. Further, the treatment of non-Muslims in Istanbul became more standardized, with each confessional community having one official representative before the government. This resulted in the recognition of Catholics as a distinct community, the recognition of a Chief Rabbi, and the appointment of a representative for the Latin subjects. This was a significant stage in the development of what twentieth-century scholars called the *millet* system.[89] It was not, as is commonly believed, the product of imperial tolerance; rather, it resulted from rising suspicions of non-Muslims and the growing incorporation of their religious authorities into the system of imperial governance.[90]

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[89]The birth of the *millet* system as a theory dates back to 1937. Carleton, "Millet System."

[90]Note that I do not intend to revive or reinterpret the *millet* system, which many scholars have explained, in many ways, resulting in irreparable confusion. My intent is rather to enhance understandings of how the Ottoman approach to non-Muslim religious authorities changed. On the shifting arrangements between the Ottoman state and non-Muslim religious authorities in the ensuing period, see Ueno, *Managing Religious Diversity*.

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