The First Cretan Rebellion against the Ottoman Authority: Narratives and Sources*

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Osmanlı Egemenliğine Karşı İlk Girit Ayaklanması: Anlatılar ve Kaynaklar

Öz ■ Girit'teki Osmanlı egemenliğini tehdit eden ilk ayaklanma, Daskaloyannis önderliğindeki Sfakiotlar tarafından 1770 yılında başlatılmıştır. Bu çalışmada kısa sürede başarısızlıkla neticelenen ayaklanmanın tarihsel bir bağlama oturtulması amaçlanmaktadır. Bunu yaparken 1768-1774 Osmanlı-Rus savaşı esnasında patlak veren 1770 Mora İhtilali'nin (Orlov İsyanı) bir uzantısı olarak ortaya çıkan bu ayaklanmanın altında yatan siyasî, dinî ve sosyoekonomik nedenler irdelenmekte ve ayaklanmanın sonuçları incelenmektedir. Ayrıca, büyük bir felaketle neticelenmesine rağmen ayaklanmanın ve liderinin on dokuzuncu yüzyıl boyunca Yunan tarih yazımında destanlaşırken Osmanlı ve modern Türk tarih yazımında olumlu veya olumsuz bir karşılık bulmamasının muhtemel sebepleri gündeme getirilmektedir. Çalışmada isyancıların davalarını hangi dinî ve siyasî argümanlar üzerine inşa ettiği ve Osmanlı yöneticilerinin bu ayaklanmaya nasıl tepki verdiği tartışılmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Girit, İsfakiye, Daskaloyannis, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu.

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We shall never cease,
We are ready and prepared for a war and battle,
We shall never surrender.[1]

Daskalogiannis

Introduction

In his introduction to *Travels in Crete*, Robert Pashley states, with some exaggeration, "Before the outbreak of Greek revolution, Crete was the worst-governed province of the Turkish Empire."[2] Throughout the second half of the eighteenth century, as Ali Yaycıoğlu underlines, it is apparent that the Ottoman ruling elites in İstanbul had crucial administrative, fiscal, and security problems to maintain order with local notables and communities of the "well-protected" cities and provinces, which were integrated into the empire in various forms and degrees.[3] In this period, especially after the treaty of Passarowitz in 1718, relations between the center and the European provinces were even more susceptible: it was the epoch of Greek enlightenment and the early phase of Greek national awakening.[4] The island of Crete was one of these Greek-speaking Ottoman domains, but the administrative situation on the island was probably not as grave as claimed above. Crete was of great significance for the Ottomans in geo-strategic terms, and therefore required careful management.[5]

1 Turkish Archive of Heraklion (TAH), 31, p. 56/1 (13 Safer 1184 / 8 June 1770). Before renamed as Heraklion with reference to the ancient Roman port city of Heracles, the capital of Crete had long been called as Candia (Kandiye) both by Venetians and Ottomans until the end of the nineteenth century.

2 Robert Pashley, *Travels in Crete* (Cambridge; London: Pitt Press, 1837), I, p. xxii.

3 Ali Yaycıoğlu, *Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2016), pp. 19, 27-38.

4 Nicolas G. Svoronos, *Histoire de la Grèce moderne* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1964); Molly Greene, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks, 1453 to 1768: The Ottoman Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), pp. 159-61, 194-97; Thomas W. Gallant, *The Edinburgh History of Greeks, 1768 to 1913: The Long Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), pp. 42-44.

5 Nineteenth century Ottoman historians give special importance on the geographical and strategic position of the island. As an example, see Hüseyin Kami Hanyevi, *Girid Tarihi* (İstanbul: Mühendisoğlu Ohannes'in Matbaası, 1288), p. 8. For more extensive information on how the island's geography facilitates uprisings, see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1983), III, p. 163.

The Ottomans strived for complete control of the island over the third quarter of the seventeenth century. As Molly Greene states, "Ottomans spent more time and energy than they expected before their expedition in that they underestimated their enemies."[6] After more than two decades of siege, the island finally surrendered in 1669, registered as "the last conquest" by Ottoman historians.[7] Despite the effort expended, immediately after the conquest, the Ottomans established a comparably relaxed "special" administrative,[8] economic,[9] and socio-religious[10]

6 Molly Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 14. For the sea powers of the warring factions, see Molly Greene, "Ruling an Island Without a Navy: A Comparative View of Venetian and Ottoman Crete," *Oriente Moderno*, XX, 81 (January 1, 2001), pp. 193-207.

7 Greene, *A Shared World*, p. 13. For detailed information concerning the conquest of the island, see Ersin Gülsoy, *Girit'in Fethi ve Osmanlı İdaresinin Kurulması, 1645-1670* (İstanbul: Tarih ve Tabiat Vakfı Yayınları, 2004).

8 Crete was governed as a privileged province with its own *kanunname* (legal code). Gülsoy, *Girit'in Fethi*, pp. 23-24, 27. Greene claims that this clearly shows how much the Ottomans attached importance to the island. Greene, *A Shared World*, pp. 22-23.

9 For land regime and taxes applied in Crete, see Ersin Gülsoy, "Osmanlı Tahrir Geleneğinde Bir Değişim Örneği: Girit Eyaletinin 1650 ve 1670 Tarihli Sayımları," Kemal Çiçek (ed.), *Pax Ottomana: Studies in Memoriam Prof. Dr. Nehat Göyünç* (Haarlem, Ankara: SOTA;Yeni Türkiye, 2001), pp. 183-203. Legal code of the island relatively brought a kind of "private property" understanding and protected the islanders' assets in pre-conquest condition. Mehmet Ali Demirbaş, "Fetih Sonrası Resmo'da Mülkiyetin El Değiştirmesi Hakkında Gözlemler," *Yeni Türkiye*, Rumeli-Balkanlar Özel Sayısı I, 66 (Mart-Haziran 2015), pp. 1016-23.

10 Developments such as conversions to Islam, flexible application of "Ottoman Millet System" among different communities, and mixed marriages inherently changed the structure of the island, and created a genuine province for Ottomans. Theocharis E. Detorakis, *History of Crete*, trans. John J. Davis (Iraklion, 1994), pp. 382-84; Greene, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks*, pp. 55-56; A. Nükhet Adıyeke, "17. Yüzyıl Girit (Resmo) Şeriyye Sicillerine Göre İhtida Hareketleri ve Girit'te Etnik Dönüşüm," in *XIV. Tarih Kongresi, Ankara 9-14 Eylül 2002, Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler* (Ankara: TTK, 2005), II, 1; Adıyeke, Nuri: "Multi-Dimensional Complications of Conversion to Islam in Ottoman Crete," Antonis Anastasopoulos (ed.), *The Eastern Mediterranean under Ottoman Rule: Crete, 1645-1840* (Rethymno: Crete University Press, 2008), pp. 203-10. For mixed-marriages, see Nuri Adıyeke, "Girit'te Cemaatler Arası Evlilikler," A. Nükhet Adıyeke and Nuri Adıyeke (eds.) *Fethinden Kaybına Girit* (İstanbul: Babıali Kültür Yayıncılığı, 2006), pp. 75-89. On the experiences living together, see A. Nükhet Adıyeke and Nuri Adıyeke, "Girit'te Millet Sisteminin Örnekleri: Kapıda İşaret Hamamda Çıngırak," *Toplumsal Tarih*, 136 (Nisan 2005), pp. 92-97.

structure in Crete: a combination of the traditional Ottoman institutions with relatively radical administrative applications. This character of the island was in part due to extensive regional transformation, i.e., the decline in population, the natural disasters, and the economic situation in Europe, which inevitably enforced the Ottomans to apply a more flexible governmental system.[11]

Moreover, against the backdrop of the long siege and of the unexpectedly determined resistance, the Ottomans felt compelled to take all measures to make its rule as bearable and tolerable as possible to prevent the threat of insurgency. In other words, the socio-political exigencies and expediencies must have convinced the Ottomans to extend a more tolerant policy to win the hearts and minds of its new subjects. However, much to the Ottomans' disappointment, these political practices failed to yield favorable consequences. Almost a century after the conquest, thousands of Sfakiots, inhabitants of Sfakia region located on the southwest of Crete, expressed their extreme discontent with the sultan's reign, initiating the century-long independence struggle**.** The Ottomans regarded the rebellion as *isyân* and *tuğyân*.[12]

11 A. Nükhet Adıyeke and Nuri Adıyeke, "Osmanlı Sistemi İçinde Girit Adasının Genel Çerçeveden Farklılıkları, Bu Farklılıkların Gerekçeleri ve Algılanış Biçimleri," *Yeni Türkiye*, Rumeli-Balkanlar Özel Sayısı I, 66 (Mart-Haziran 2015), pp. 1293-94.

12 In the early modern period, all common protest actions targeting the state or sultan himself are classified as *fitne* (unrest), *fesâd* (corruption), *isyân* (rebellion), *tuğyân* (rising against the official authority) or *vak'a* (incident), whether it is a military movement or a civil uprising. A host of Ottoman historians have noted that these terms are somewhat synonymous, but with a fine shade of difference and subtlety, as the Ottoman authorities employed them in different cases with different connotations. Besides its religious meaning, in the official Ottoman documents *fitne* expresses "the social dislocation," and points out a threat directing "the unity and solidarity of Muslim Ummah." It is frequently applied in combinations with *fesad* (depravement) as *fitne ü fesâd* in a stronger meaning. In classical Islamic thought, *fitne* and *fesâd* correspond to the anarchy – lack of authority – thus the Ottomans draw an analogy between rising against state and the unity of Muslim Ummah. For a detailed account, see Jane Hathaway (ed.), "Introduction," *Mutiny and Rebellion in the Ottoman Empire* (Wisconsin, Madison: University of Wisconsin, 2002), pp. 7-8; Richard W. Bulliet, *The Case for Islamo-Chiristian Civilization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 50; Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), Cevdet Askeriye (C. AS), 35/1597 (Evahir-i Zilhicce 1183 /16-26 April 1770).

"Rebellious" Sfakia: Daskalogiannis and Desiring Independence

The Cretan rebellion of 1770 took place in the southwestern part of the island named Sfakia (İsfakiye). The locals, called Sfakiots, are to this day renowned for their courage, valor, and fondness for their independence.[13] Sfakia lies on the southern slopes of the White Mountains. Its harbor is well adapted to trade and piracy. In addition, it has an impressive environment, as portrayed in Sakavelis's poem, "Sfakia's lemon and flavor gardens excite the attention of many travelers and its hills are covered with pine and juniper trees."[14] The absence of suitable roads to the cities in the north is one of the critical features of this region allowing guerilla bands to move freely over its steep ridgeways. Compared to the rest of the island, the people in Sfakia enjoyed greater prosperity due to their commercial and piratic activities in the Eastern Mediterranean. According to Harlaftis, "they are so good at this job, they compete with Maltese pirates."[15]

Over the four centuries prior to the Ottoman conquest, Sfakiots intermittently rebelled against the "invasive" Venetians, who held uninterrupted sway over the land.[16] When faced with the Turkish threat, Sfakiots changed their attitude; the eternal enemy, i.e., Venetians, became a new ally; they forged alliances against the threat of Islam on several occasions. Providing weapons and ammunition, Venetians encouraged the people of this region to fight against the Turks during the siege of Candia. Nevertheless, in the battles of 1648, Sfakiot warriors were outnumbered and overwhelmed by Gazi Hüseyin Pasha's army, and were forced to offer one thousand silver coins and one thousand sheep as ransom to prevent being plundered.[17]

Sfakia thus officially recognized the Ottoman dominance. In the first cadastral register, they were forced to pay five thousand *kuruş* (silver coin) as poll tax. Two years later, the Grand Vezir granted the Sfakia region to Gazi Hüseyin Pasha

13 In his narrative based on Foscarini's reports, Ottoman historian Zinkeisen mentions in detail the characteristics that differentiate Sfakiots from rest of the island: "Sfakiots always carrying their guns and being fond of their freedom, might be dangerous when they organized very well." Johann Wilhem Zinkeisen, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, trans. Nilüfer Epçeli (İstanbul: Yeditepe, 2011), IV, pp. 449-50.

14 Kostas Sakavelis, *Daskalogiánnēs* (Daskalogiannis) (Heraklion: 1952), pp. 5-6.

15 Gelina Harlaftis, *A History of Greek-Owned Shipping: The Making of an International Tramp Fleet, 1830 to the Present Day* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 31.

16 Hanyevi, *Girid Tarihi*, p. 119.

17 Detorakis, *History of Crete*, p. 229.

as a reward for his achievements in the conquest. Before leaving the island after being called back to İstanbul in 1658, Hüseyin Pasha granted Sfakia territory as a *Haremeyn* (Mecca and Medina) waqf to be allocated to the "*sürre*" regiments travelling to the Holy Land.[18] In other words, a "privileged" status was conferred on the region, and thus the Sfakiots were exempted from the major taxes paid by other Cretans. Sfakiots also used geographical advantages to preserve themselves from Turkish cultural influences: they neither converted to Islam, nor had any Turco-Cretan neighbors, isolated from rest of the island, but with access by sea to the wider Mediterranean world.[19]

For a century, under its waqf status, Sfakia remained relatively quiet and out of direct control. Yet, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, a notable Sfakiot called as Daskalogiannis led the first independence struggle against the Turks. After his failed attempt, he was captured and tortured, and sentenced to death on 17 June 1771 at the Castle of Candia (Kandiye / Heraklion). Ioannis Vlachos (Ιωάννης Βλάχος), more commonly known as Daskalogiannis (Δασκαλογιάννης, Master Yannis), was well-known as a revolutionist, warrior and patriot, and was one of the most important figures in Cretan history. Vlachos was not his real surname, and it is not clear when or why this surname was used to refer to him; recent studies have suggested that it could have been Androulidakis or Androulakakis.[20]

Information regarding his earlier life and activities is extremely scarce, and at times, contradictory. It is known that he was born in Anapolis, a mountain village 600-meters above sea level, 2 kilometers far from Sfakia. Because of the lack of written culture and irregular birth records, his year of birth is not exactly known; in the light of the historical events, some historians claim 1722, although 1730 seems more probable.[21] One of the earliest Ottoman documents to mention the name Daskaloyannis dates back to 1750, and calls him "Daskalo Yani, the

18 Simon R. F. Price and others, "Sphakia in Ottoman Census Records: A Vakıf and Its Agricultural Production," Antonis Anastasopoulos (ed.), *The Eastern Mediterranean under Ottoman Rule: Crete, 1645-1840* (Rethymno: Crete University Press, 2008), p. 74.

19 N. A. Barnicot and others, "A Genetical Survey of Sphakiá, Crete," *Human Biology*, XXXVII, 3 (September 1965), p. 277.

20 Stergios Spanakis, *H Epanastasē tou 1770 kai Daskalogiánnēs* (Rebellion of 1770 and Daskalogiannis) (Heraklion: 1971) p. 74.

21 Spanakis, *H Epanastasē tou 1770*, p. 12.

son of Andreas, who is the *Kethüda* (chieftain) of Kasteli."[22] Daskalogiannis was the eldest son, and with his brother Nikolos Sgouromallis, as part of his official duties, he frequently consulted with the Ottoman authorities about poll tax and other local issues.[23] His father was a wealthy man with interests in shipping. As it was commonplace among the Cretans, he had sent Daskalogiannis to Venice for education, where he was to spend his entire youth. Daskalogiannis was endowed with persuasive public speaking skills, had a good command of Italian and Russian, and was respected by all Sfakiots. He took over his father's business with his four brothers, namely Nikolos Sgouromallis, Paul, Manousos, and George, becoming a prosperous merchant, with four ships trading throughout Greece and the Mediterranean.[24]

Although Sfakia was relatively isolated from Ottoman dominance, as mentioned above, Daskalogiannis's vision transcended the purview of his hometown. He was able to understand his people's actual situation. Mourellos asserts that Daskalogiannis was dissatisfied with the Turkish control of the island and he feared for Christianity and Hellenism under continuing Turkish rule and "enslavement." Therefore, when he heard of the Russian plans regarding the independence of the Greeks during a trade expedition to Trieste, he unwaveringly carried reports of tsarina's promises to the island.[25] At this point, an epic poem entitled *Το Τραγούδι του Δασκαλογιάννη* (The Song of Daskalogiannis) is one of the major sources of information regarding his activities and the rebellion.[26] The poem gives clues about his perceptions, his outlook and aspirations, even if, as Laourdas claims, it is not a completely reliable historical source.[27]

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22 Nicolaos Stavrinidis, "Sumvolḗ eis tēn Istorī̄an tōn Sphakī̄ōn (1645-1770)" (Contribution to the History of Sfakia (1645-1770)), *Kritika Chronika,* IX, 53 (1953), p. 325.

23 George Dalidakis and Peter Trudgill, *The Story of Sfakia: A History of the Region in its Cretan Context* (Heraklion: Mystis, 2015), p. 150.

24 Detorakis, *History of Crete*, p. 278.

25 J. D. Mourellos, *La Créte Travers Les Sciécles Candia* (Candie: N. Alikiotis, 1920), pp. 92-93.

26 For the *Song*, see Barba-Pantzelios, "To Tragoúdi tou Daskalogiánnē" (The Song of Daskalogiannis); http://www.pare-dose.net/168. (Accessed in February 28, 2018). I discuss the *Song* as a historical source in the last part of the article in the context of the rebellion and Greek historiography.

27 Vasileios Laourdas, "Ē Epanástasis tōn Sphakianṓn kai o Daskalogiánnēs katá ta Éngrapha tou Tourkikoú Arkheī̄ou Ērakleī̄ou" (The Revolution of Sfakia and Daskalogiannis in the Documents of the Turkish Archive of Heraklion), *Kritika Chronika*, I, 1 (1947), p. 275.

According to the *Song*, he particularly emphasized the role of history in his entreatment of the people of Sfakia to join the revolt: creating "romiosyni" (*ρωμηοσύνη*) with all his heart.[28] This was a revelation for the Cretans. Daskalogiannis had a deep personal conviction that the island should be a part of the greater Greek identity. Although it is impossible for Daskalogiannis to predict how exactly the island would respond to this idea, the homogeneous structure of Sfakia, which allowed its people to preserve their culture for centuries, is likely to have helped him to realize his goal. In the *Song*, "romiosyni" is the essential symbol for the unification of all Greek-speaking Orthodox peoples. It seems quite clear that Daskalogiannis based his optimism on Russian promises, which he conveyed to his people in support of his ambitions, without seriously considering whether these promises could be materialized:[29]

> Every Sunday he used to wore his Easter Hat[30]
> And said to Priest: I will bring Muscovites
> To save Sfakia from Turks.[31]

Daskalogiannis's ultimate aim was to liberate his people from the Turkish rule. To achieve this, it is in the realm of possibility that Daskalogiannis preferred to use an intensive religious rhetoric. Before the advent of nationalism, the religious rhetoric was the most powerful instrument in mobilizing masses, as indicated by the broader nationalism studies.[32] In a statement attributed to him in the *Song*, his religious outlook is quite clear: "those who accept to be Christians can only be

28 *Με την καρδιά ντου ήθελε την Κρήτη Ρωμιοσύνη*. It is hard to define that the term *Ρωμιοσύνη* (Romiosyni). It can be described as a holistic Greek identity that points to Greek Orthodoxy after the collapse of Byzantine Empire in 1453. In this context, it can be understood as the *Millet* (Nation) of Rum. As a matter of fact, the view that the early Greek nation and Greek state was a continuation of the Byzantine Empire became very popular among neo-conservative thinkers during 1960-70s in Greece. Barba-Pantzelios, "To Tragoúdi tou Daskalogiánnē," line 10.

29 David Brewer, *Greece, the Hidden Centuries: Turkish Rule from the Fall of Constantinople to Greek Independence* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), p. 118.

30 Although Sfakiots traditionally prefer to wear *kalpaki*, Daskalogiannis usually dressed like the Europeans and never took his European hat off. Angelis, *Daskalogiánnēs*, p. 10.

31 Barba-Pantzelios, "To Tragoúdi tou Daskalogiánnē," lines 11-13.

32 According to Anderson, nationalism appears in which the religious discourse disappeared as a form of an imagined community that defines itself with a common sense. In this regard, it should be underline the common religious ground instead of Greek nationalism. Benedict

present in Crete and will present Crete with the red apple."[33] In the *Song,* it is also apparent that the *Protopapas* (chief-priest) does not always support Daskalogiannis's views, voicing his concern that "Daskalogiannis will ride for a fall and cause non-tax payer Sfakians to be enslaved."[34] Daskalogiannis responds, "I will not ride for a fall and I will not put Sfakia in a dangerous position," instead promising that "I will bring the cross to Chania" and further, "to wash the cross, which I will nail to the entrance of the city, with lemon juice." In the following verses, he states, "I will never pay tribute or poll tax" and "I will challenge the Pasha of Candia and his soldiers, of whom I am not afraid." He also claims that "Crete has enough courageous and warlike young men to drive Turks into the sea."[35]

As reflected in the poem, Daskalogiannis's discourse against the Turks is extremely hostile. He says, "we will let only a limited number of Turks escape."[36] He maintains that, in his view, the renegades, i.e. converts to Islam, although preserving their languages and cultures, have changed not only their religion, but also their "nationality". In the following verses, Daskalogiannis speaks of the purpose of the alliances: "The alliance with Prince of Wallachia to exile Turks from the island to India and the alliance with people of Mani to kill all Turks who live around Sfakia."[37] In another verse, he warns Sfakiots to be ready for independence and to send young men to support the impending battle[38] If everything was to go as planned, "Russian navy and army was planning a foray," therefore "he wanted everyone in the area to support the war lest anyone leaves the battle field." At the end, the whole Romio would revolt against Turks and annihilate them, so Sfakiots "would see the lands they inherited from their ancestors free again." However, the chief-priest, the leader of the opposition in Sfakia, seems unimpressed by these promises and threats, and the growing tension they cause. As depicted in the *Song*, "he expressed his concerns that Pasha and the Janissaries would destroy Sfakia and then he left for the church to pray for the wellbeing of Crete."[39]

R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London; New York: Verso, 2006), p. 32.

33 Barba-Pantzelios, "To Tragoúdi tou Daskalogiánnē, " lines 14-15.

34 This is one of the historical mistakes repeated in the *Song*. They paid their poll taxes just as other islanders. BOA, C. ML., 549/22573 (29 Şaban 1158 / 26 September 1745).

35 Barba-Pantzelios, "To Tragoúdi tou Daskalogiánnē," lines 17-24.

36 Barba-Pantzelios, "To Tragoúdi tou Daskalogiánnē," line 37.

37 Barba-Pantzelios, "To Tragoúdi tou Daskalogiánnē," lines 40-42.

38 Barba-Pantzelios, "To Tragoúdi tou Daskalogiánnē," lines 45-49.

39 Barba-Pantzelios, "To Tragoúdi tou Daskalogiánnē," lines 50-54.

The Rebellion and Beyond

The Cretan rebellion culminated with the chief-priest's catastrophic foresight rather than Daskalogiannis's promised independence. Indeed, the Cretan rebellion needs to be seen in a broader context of power dynamics in the Balkans and the Mediterranean, with a special focus on Russia's political aspirations and political engineering in these regions. In this respect, it could be argued that the rebellion may be construed, in part, as a point where, in the aftermath of the developments in the Peloponnese, the regional aspirations began to grow, reigniting and rivalries between the Ottomans and Russians. Religion was another dimension of this broader regional dynamic. Although the idea of self-determination and independence was *per se* a source of strong political motivation behind the rebellion, it was religion that provided the Orthodox Greek communities in the region with a sense of collective identity. As Vasilis Molos notes, religion was highly instrumental in the Greek awakening, and in fostering a sense of common identity that would unite the fragmented Greek world under a single rubric and cause.[40]

The Ottoman-Russian War (1768-1774) certainly created fertile ground for the Greek rebellion against the Ottoman Empire, and sustained a congenial atmosphere in which Russia was able to wield considerable influence among her Greek Orthodox co-religionists, and concurrently galvanized their anti-Ottoman feelings. Sultan Mustafa III (1757-1774) eventually declared war on Russia, as the powerful Catherina the Great (1762-1796) had been continuing to pose a considerable threat since the mid-eighteenth century.[41] Promising "independence [to Greeks] and resurrection of the Byzantine Empire along with its capital city, Constantinople,"[42] prior to the war, Catherina made efforts to mobilize all the Orthodox Balkan and Greek subjects under the Ottoman authority.[43] Indeed, it

40 Vasilis Molos, "Nationness in the Absence of a Nation: Narrating the Prehistory of the Greek National Movement" (doctoral dissertation), New York University, 2014, pp. 84-86, 189-200.

41 Suraiya Faroqhi, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Around It* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), p. 67.

42 She had such a strong belief in this idea that she trained her second grandson to be perfect Byzantine emperor. Henri Couturier, *La Crète sa situation au point de vue droit international* (Paris: A. Pedone, 1900), p. 61.

43 The Russians had previously tried a few occasions to provoke a Greek rebellion but all their attempts failed, including Peter the Great's Prut War. David R. Stone, *A Military History of Russia: From Ivan the Terrible to the War in Chechnya* (Westport, Connecticut; London: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006), p. 57.

was a Macedonian military officer in the Russian Army, George Papazolis, who secretly assured her majesty that a concerted Greek rebellion would deal the Ottomans a deathblow in the imminent war. Catherina charged the Orlov (Alexei and Theodore) brothers with setting the scene for the impending war.[44] Moscow would then serve as a temporary capital of the forces of Orthodox believers, given that Constantinople was at that time under the Ottoman yoke.[45]

While the rebellion plans were being drawn up in tsarina's palace, however, the Ottoman administrators in Crete, as always, were on the alert for a sudden outbreak of war, especially due to their concerns about the recent incidents of disorder. The Ottoman decision to deploy thousands of Janissaries on the island could be understood in this light.[46] The Ottomans always paid a great attention to the maintenance of the castles, and periodically reviewed the condition of arsenals in Candia, Chania and Rethymno castles.[47] In other words, before the rebellion, it seems that the infrastructure in Crete was relatively controllable, in contrast to the Peloponnese. Archival sources reveal that the Ottoman administration clearly prioritized the maintenance of the island's military strength. A brief review of the Rethymno court records for the pre-rebellion period shows, unsurprisingly, that the Ottomans regularly reviewed public order contingencies.[48]

A document among these court records sent by Pasha of Candia to the Rethymno governor pointed out suspicious behaviors of non-Muslims in the region. The document also reminded the governor that the non-Muslims were not

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44 David Brewer, *Greece, the Hidden Centuries*, p. 184.

45 Derek Benjamin Heater, *Order and Rebellion: A History of Europe in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Harrap, 1964), p. 296.

46 J. M. Tancoigne, *İzmir'e, Ege Adalarına ve Girit'e Seyahat: Bir Fransız Diplomatın Türkiye Gözlemleri (1811-1814)*, trans. Ercan Eyüboğlu (İstanbul: Büke Kitapları, 2003), p. 57. Giannis Spyropoulos, "Koinōnikḗ, Dioikētikḗ, Oikonomikḗ kai Politikḗ Diástasē tou Othōmanikoú Stratoú: Oi Genĩtsaroi tēs Krḗtēs, 1750-1826" (Social, Administrative, Economic and Political Structure of the Ottoman Army: The Janissaries of Crete, 1750-1826) (doctoral dissertation), University of Crete, 2014, p. 71.

47 BOA, C. AS., 36/1626 (19 Ramazan 1175 / 13 April 1762); BOA, C.AS., 37/1663 (29 Zilkade 1174 / 2 July 1761); BOA, C.AS., 46/2117 (02 Rebiyülevvel 1176 / 21 September 1762); BOA, C.AS., 64/3022 (19 Cemaziyülahır 1175 / 15 January 1762); BOA, C.AS., 716/30026 (07 Safer 1183 / 12 June 1769).

48 The court records of Chania, in which the Sfakia region is located, have not been found. For this reason, I am obliged to examine the Rethymno records, as the prospective provisions might have been applied in Chania.

entitled to carry arms, in accordance with restrictions under the Ottoman *millet* system. Alarmed by the news that, despite the Chania governor being asked to prevent non-Muslims from carrying arms, there were some audacious enough to continue to do so, the Pasha was convinced to take measures, and carried out investigations and surveillance. He was also asked to confiscate weapons, and immediately report any resistance during these inspections to Candia.[49] It seems from the records that this order was renewed the following year;[50] and two further search warrants were later submitted.[51] Considering the turn of events, it would be interesting to ascertain whether these steps were part of regular administrative routines, or specific to the recent developments, but unfortunately no such details are given; however, the documents clearly demonstrated the extent to which Ottoman administrators were alarmed by the "mischievous" activities of the non-Muslim communities.

A copy of an imperial edict among these records, dated 1769, a year before the rebellion, sheds light on the dawn of the Russian war. It revealed that the sustained peace with Russians had come to an end under the command of Mehmed Emin Pasha, and that war has been declared against the "infidel Muscovites to remove some problems."[52] It also asked for wariness, banning the Mediterranean merchants from contacting and helping the Russians, and requested them to inform authorities of any suspicious events. Mediterranean merchants were also warned against interacting and cooperating with the Russians, and again emphasized the need to inform the Ottoman authorities of potential aggression. Almost a year later, a few months before the rebellion, another imperial edict was sent to many provinces, including Crete. In short, in addition to giving information about the progress of the each local governor was instructed to organize a thousand-strong brigade.[53] In the light of these records, the administrators of the island appeared to be on the alert against any potential threat. Encouraged by the continuing rebellion in Mani,

49 Resmo Şeriyye Sicili (RŞS), p. 415 (27 Receb [1]168 / 9 May 1755).

50 RŞS, 415, p. 460/2 (5 Receb [1]169 / 5 April 1756).

51 RŞS, 60/78, p. 40/2 (5 Muharrem [1]176 / 27 July 1762).

52 RŞS, 44/53, p. 116 (11 Ramazan [1]182 /19 January 1769).

53 Ersin Kırca, "Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi 168 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (S. 1-200) (1183-1185/1769-1771) Transkripsiyon, Değerlendirme" (master thesis), Marmara Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2007, pp. 335-36.

Daskalogiannis poured weapons and ammunition into Sfakia to prepare the Sfakiots for the rebellion.[54]

Detorakis maintains that Daskalogiannis decided to confine the rebellion to Sfakia due to practical and tactical factors. In the event of rebellion, it would be much easier to act swiftly in ethnically and culturally homogenous Sfakia, and it was also geographically more advantageous.[55] However, the situation became unexpectedly much more complex, considering the turns of events. Initially, some prominent Sfakiots were reluctant to support him, and it was even more difficult for Daskalogiannis to mobilize the wider island population around a single cause and vision. In this sense, the decision to confine the rebellion within the limits of Sfakia, was dictated by the exigencies and limitations of the time, rather than carefully considered strategic calculation. It was probably Daskalogiannis's hope that the rebellion, initially within the confines of Sfakia, would extend to the other parts of the island on the arrival of the promised Russian support. Despite the suspicion and reservation of leading Sfakiots, who doubted that any such large scale rebellion would materialize, Daskalogiannis was able to use his religious and political rhetoric to muster a small armed force of two thousand. His hopes of engaging the Cretan elites, with their potential role for mobilization, in the rebellion against the Ottomans were frustrated by their close relationship with the Ottoman authority, and the excessive number of Turks who had recently occupied the shore would further seal the fate the rebellion.[56]

Although there is no definite record indicating as to when exactly the rebellion began, the Cretan historian Papadopetrakis suggested 25 March 1770, as the day when Daskalogiannis raised the red flag of rebellion in his hometown, Anapolis.[57] This estimation of the starting date of the rebellion, corresponding with the known order of the events, has not elicited any objection from historians so far. During meetings held in Venice, Daskalogiannis reached an agreement with

54 I benefited for the classical narrative of the Rebellion, names and dates from the following sources: Barba-Pantzelios, "To Tragoúdi tou Daskalogiánnē;" Gregorios Papadopetrakis, *Ē Istorī̆a tōn Sphakī̆ōn étoi Méros tēs Epanástasēs tōn Sphakianṓn* (History of Sphakia as a Part of Greek History) (Athens: 1888), pp. 127-59.

55 Detorakis, *History of Crete*, p. 279.

56 For more information on the relationship between Christian elites and Ottoman administration, see Dean J. Kostantaras, "Christian Elites of the Peloponnese and the Ottoman State, 1715-1821," *European History Quarterly*, XLIII, 4 (October 1, 2013), p. 629.

57 Papadopetrakis, *Ē Istorī̆a tōn Sphakī̆ōn*, p. 129.

the Orlov brothers: Sfakia would be the starting point for the rebellion that would extend to Chania, which would be captured, possibly with concurrent Russian support. For this reason, a camp was set up in Krafi, in the north of Askifou district, at which point all warriors from Sfakia would join the rebellion. Daskalogiannis aimed to sweep immediately through Chania and surround the region with Russian support. Towards this end, after having celebrated Easter on April 4, he attacked the Apokoronas, Agios Vasilios and Kydonia territories, but then he was forced to wait for the Russian navy to begin its siege of Chania.[58]

It is worth noting that the planning and execution of the attack was full of religious overtones and symbolic meanings. The Easter rituals played instrumental role in the mobilization. After the rebellion was declared, the groups used the intense religious feelings of the two-weeks of Easter festivals in efforts to recruit local villagers and gain support for the rebellion.[59] Yet, the available data suggests that very few in the region in fact joined, as most were probably unconvinced that Russians would arrive.[60]

An imperial edict dated the end of March 1770 sheds light on the earliest rebellion efforts, and provides some details in this respect. It was addressed to Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha, commissioned to suppress the Peloponnese Revolution, as well as to many other governors in the Balkans, to encourage them to take necessary steps and measures required by recent developments, and to understand their interpretation of ongoing events. What is of significance to our concern about this edict is the central authority's response to the recent developments: "Russians – with their perennial malevolent intensions – incited the non-Muslims in Chania to revolt." The edict also commissioned the respective authorities to with "strengthening the castles." It echoed the threat highlighted in some reports sent to the Sublime Port: "Muscovites are aiding and abetting people's rebellion by sending their vessels to ports where they meet the rebels, who are also supported and harbored by non-Muslim *reaya* dwellers."[61] This edict clearly shows that, even before the rebellion broke out, the Ottoman central administration was aware of the mobilization efforts on the island. The Ottoman authorities on the island might have been expected to report the situation to the Sublime Port, and demanded an imperial order to enable the necessary steps accordingly. However,

58 Spanakis, *H Epanastasē tou 1770*, p. 11.

59 BOA, C. AS., 35/1597 (7 Zilhicce 1183 / 3 Nisan 1770).

60 Dalidakis and Trudgill, *The Story of Sfakia*, p. 152.

61 Kırca, "Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi 168 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri" pp. 427-28.

there is no extant document in the Ottoman archives corroborating such a demand; how the news of the developments in the region was delivered to the central government is yet to be revealed. It is likely, however, that the reports and anticipations surrounding the issue, which reflected the sensitivity of the subject, were produced two weeks prior to the aforementioned edict, i.e; it was probable that İstanbul was aware of the situation on the island by mid-March.

In addition, three petitions, dated a few days prior to the conflicts, aimed to inform the authorities about the situation. These petitions clearly show the concern of the rulers and Muslim population about the impending events. The first, from Chania, includes significant details: "two Sfakiot vessels escorted the Russian navy into the port of Mani." After that, the petitioners claim that "Muslims were killed and their properties were looted by non-Muslims, who were provoked to revolt by Russians," and "two Peloponnese noblemen had knowledge of these incidents six months before the rebellion occurred." According to the intelligence provided by poll tax collectors in the area, "Sfakiots were in contact with Russians and Manians; they were also transporting weapons on their ships."[62] As clearly seen, all these developments indicates that Sfakia people were in preparation for rebellion, giving rise to much concern and foreboding among the local authorities and the Muslim islanders, stated in the following prediction: "It is important to emphasize the fact that the situation will be just as bad as in Mani if the necessary measures are not taken before the revolt."[63] The second and the third petitions echoed the first, and expressed the Muslims' concerns about the recent developments, shedding significant light on the build-up to the revolution.[64]

A further imperial order is important in that it marks the first serious reaction of the Ottoman central authority against the rebellion.[65] The edict highlights the Sfakiots' hostility, from the opening sentence: "applying their hidden inner malice and hostility, the Sfakiots at Crete, who are notorious for their rebellious history, are once again resorting to hostility and maliciousness."[66] The edicts claim that the Sfakiots' ulterior motive behind their rebellion is to "seize the properties of Muslims," and towards this end, "they are in alliance with Muscovites, and they are transporting weapons, gunpowder, and food to Muscovites' ships in their own

62 BOA, C. AS., 35/1597, 1 (4 Zilhicce 1183 / 31 March 1770).

63 BOA, C. AS., 35/1597 (7 Zilhicce 1183 / 3 April 1770).

64 BOA, C. AS., 35/1597 (7 Zilhicce 1183 / 3 April 1770).

65 TAH, 31, p. 49 (Evahir-i Zilhicce 1183 / 16-26 April 1770).

66 BOA, C. AS., 35/1597.

vessels. It is known to everybody that they have threatened Muslims' lives and properties."[67] Considering that this edict reflected an official discourse of the state, it can be speculated that the Ottoman governors' preoccupation with Muslims' property shows that they had little idea about the ultimate goals of Daskalogiannis. In other words, the Ottoman governors perceived the rebellion not as a serious threat to the Turkish administration itself, but as a minor issue that aimed only at intimidating the Muslim population. The reason for such a misunderstanding is revealed towards the end of the document: they interpreted the rebels' intentions as essentially economic, rather than political.[68] The government's reaction to the preparations for the rebellion in Sfakia, however, was harsh: the rebels would be sentenced to death.[69] The underlying reason was probably the view that continuing revolt at Mani and the Peloponnese would spread, and that only such extreme measures could prevent the rebellion from contaminating Crete.

After the Russians failed in the Peloponnese, they retreated into the Mediterranean and abandoned any plans for further rebellion. The *Serasker* of Crete, Hüseyin Pasha[70] was aware of the situation, and acted to attack Sfakia through Krapi and Kallikratis, gathering an army of 12.000[71] soldiers with the authority granted to him by the imperial edict. The first major conflict was on April 24,

67 BOA, C. AS., 35/1597.

68 *Öteden beri isyan ile me'luf Girid ceziresinde vaki' İsfakiye nahiyesi reayası derunlarında muzmer olan melanet ve mefsedetleri icra* (…) *İbadullahın emval ve eşyasını nehb ve garet sevdasıyla Moskof keferesine i'anet ve sefain ve kayıklarıyla esliha ve barut ve levazımat-ı saire irsal ve dalaletleriyle Mora ve cezire-i Girid'in ehl-i İslamına isal-i mazarrat ve hasaret kasdında oldukları mütevatir olduğundan* (…) *Sene-i sabıkada cizye-i şeriyyeleri amade-i muhalefet ve iş bu sene cizyedârı nahiyeden ihraç edip* (…).

69 *Siz ki Hanya ve Resmo nâibleri mumâ-ileyhumasız* (…) *fi'l hakika reaya-yı mesfurenin isyan ve tuğyanları ve düşmen-i dine ianetleri ve devleti aliyyeme ve ehl-i İslama sui-kasd ve ihanetleri bila-şübhe zahir ve mütehakkik ve katl ve tedmirleri şeran vacib ve lazım olur ise verilen fetva-yı şerife mucibince a'lal-ittifak mesfurları katl ve idam ve lefs-i vücud-ı habaset-mümudlarından vilayeti tanzif ve tathir ve ahaliyi temin ve tatmin eyleyip muğayir-i şer'-i müttehar vaz' ve hareketten hazer ve mücanebet eylemeniz* (...). BOA, C. AS., 35/1597.; TAH, 31, p. 49.

70 Some Greek historians mistakenly refer to Hüseyin Pasha, who was *serasker* of the island, as Hasan Pasha. Although Stavrinidis, who undertook the translations of the court records, read it correctly, some historians have continued to make this mistake. For Stavrinidis account, see Laourdas, "Ē Epanástasis tōn Sphakianṓn," p. 285. See the examples from those who prefer to call him as Hasan Pasha: Spanakis, *H Epanastasē tou 1770*, p. 19; Angelis, *Daskalogiánnēs*, p. 120. Dalidakis and Trudgill never mentions the name of Hüseyin Pasha.

71 Number of the Ottoman soldiers is not precise, Spanakis relies on the *Song of Daskalogiannis*. Spanakis, *H Epanastasē tou 1770*, p. 18.

following a number of skirmishes in the lowland areas of Sfakia.[72] The Ottoman army had extra ammunition, including 20 balls for each soldier, as well as other necessary ammunition sent by Abdi Pasha, the *Serasker* of Tuna.[73] A record indicates that the Ottomans were still recruiting in the weeks after the battles began.[74]

Since all the information about the conflicts on the island comes from Greek sources, it is important to make a thorough survey of the available archival sources, for an overview that is as accurate as possible. According to the Greek narrative, based on the *Song of Daskalogiannis,* the Turkish side always suffered the greatest losses in the battles. Despite this success, however, due to the disproportion in numbers, the Sfakia defenses could not indefinitely hold back the Turks, who succeeded in entering Imbros. Greek sources allege that they destroyed everything in their path, plundered the villages and captured children and women. But, their primary target was to reach Anapolis, the starting point of the rebellion, to seize the families of the rebels who were trying to escape.[75]

The emphasis of the Greek sources was how this struggle, which started as an attempt by rebels to drive the Turks off the island with Russian help that never materialized, turned into a fight for their lives. To protect their families, the rebels clashed with the Turks on the top of Imbros, Mouri and Anapolis. Meanwhile, most of the women and children in Anapolis managed to leave the area, but an unfortunate group of approximately one thousand, protected by 200 armed rebels, was caught and all killed, except for one hundred, taken prisoners. These events were described in detail in the Greek sources, but other developments were reported more briefly, for example, the story of Daskalogiannis, who managed to evade capture during this massacre, while his two oldest daughters were caught fleeing to Loutro.[76]

We learn from the archival documents that the Ottomans captured others along with Daskalogiannis's daughters; the priests in the region revealed valuable

72 Spanakis, *H Epanastasē tou 1770*, p. 19.

73 BOA, C. AS., 615/25941 (20 Muharrem 1184 / 16 May 1770).

74 Indeed, it is a will agreement between two soldiers regulating in case that the one dies in the battle the other will be legal heir for the heritage, after recouping the debts and funeral expenses. TAH, 31, p. 50 (5 Safer1184 / 31 May 1770).

75 Spanakis, *H Epanastasē tou 1770*, p. 11; Angelis, *Daskalogiánnēs*, p. 118; Barba-Pantzelios, "To Tragoúdi tou Daskalogiánnē."

76 Spanakis, *H Epanastasē tou 1770,* p. 19; Angelis, *Daskalogiánnēs*, p. 131; Dalidakis and Trudgill, *The Story of Sfakia*, p. 153.

information about Daskalogiannis and the progress of the rebellion. The Ottoman administrators sent the priests to Daskalogiannis as ambassadors to discuss his surrender and obedience. On their return, however, the priests were to report to the leading Ottomans that Daskalogiannis "refused Pasha's proposal, saying that he would never stop, was ready for the battle and death, and certainly would not surrender."[77]

Another record, dated 17 June 1770, summarizes the progress of events to that day regarding the rebellion. It states that "the army sent to repress the uprising arrived at Sfakia safely." It also reports that "the Ottoman army, which had begun a battle with a certain number of weapons, cannons and combat equipment, succeeded in capturing mountainous hill area. The seized infidels were massacred, and one of the monastery priests was seized by the army when they progressed across the region and attacked the rebels." When interrogated, the priest said, "on the 15th of August last year, the Muscovites sent instructions to come to this side." The record states that three days later, "three Greek men came to beg for forgiveness." The "noblemen" (*kocabaşlar*) named Pero, Nikolaki and Yorgaki, who lived in Bashonos village, arrived with a white flag attached to their necks, and confirmed the priest's account of events. They said, "We are the subjects who pay poll tax, we do not have power to fight, we will accept whatever verdict we are given."[78] The local authorities sought advice from the center on what should be done in this case. Another record gives information about one of the most important prisoners captured during the Anapolis raid: a chief priest, uncle of Daskalogiannis. When questioned in public, the chief priest stated:

> Gathering all the people in the region, Daskalogiannis sent a man to invite the Muscovites. Through the middleman, he said "Manyot and our places are off the beaten track, and we have many men and we can conquer the island of Crete easily." Therefore, the Muscovites sent gunpowder and bullets. He distributed them while I was there. He said, "I will supply your needs like cannon balls, rifles and army later, be ready now and gather your troops together." Then, we gathered our soldiers from the region. The Muscovite ships went to Peloponnese first, instead of Crete. Even Daskalogiannis himself sent a man there because of the inconvenience caused by the Muscovites. The man brought some gunpowder and bullets, and told us to be ready. After a while, Daskalogiannis sent another man to Peloponnese. "Why did not you come, at least send us two ships and we can

77 TAH, 31, p. 56/1 (13 Safer 1184 / 8 June 1770).

78 TAH, 31, p. 57 (20 Safer 1184 / 15 June 1770).

> do our work." was the message he sent. The Muscovite general Orlov, answered Daskalogiannis's message: "You will receive these materials from Peloponnese and Mani, and although he said we would take Peloponnese in three days, and yet spent five thousand pouches of akçe, we have not achieved any success. (…) First, I will get a grip on the situation in Peloponnese, later I will come to that part."[79]

After these failures, as seen in the document above, Daskalogiannis lost confidence in the Russians, and resolved to consult to the leading figures of the rebellion in Krousia on the next step. Rather than reviving the *romiosyni*, his only concern at that time was to save his people from more cruelty, and to spare them great anguish. For this reason, from then on, he was always on the point of surrender. This view was unprecedented in Sfakia's history, and certainly opposed by the elders and warriors at the meeting, who still hoped to win the battle in the end, or alternatively, "they would prefer to die with their honor rather than falling as slaves to the Turks."[80]

After the plunder, Turks fell back to their camps in the Aradena strait. The surviving Sfakiots were positioned high on the western part of the strait, at a point that completely controlled the region. The two sides exchanged fire across the strait for two days.[81] Although the Turks tried to cross several times, they suffered great losses because of their geographical disadvantage. Hüseyin Pasha, who realized that this approach was impossible, developed a different strategy, dividing his troop into three forces. Pasha sent one to Samaria, where women and children were sheltering, achieving at least a psychological victory. However, the siege initiated by the two other forces, to the north and to the south, was repulsed by a group of Sfakiots.[82]

After Sfakia and the surrounding villages were destroyed, Daskalogiannis and a group of survivors took refuge in the mountain caves. However, summer was over and the season was slowly turning into fall; it wasimpossible to remain. The Turks would not give up, and from their camp in the Frangokastello lowland, sent a small troop to the mountains to clear the rebels. Nevertheless, a group survived in the mountains, conducting guerilla raids on Turkish villages at night.[83]

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79 TAH, 31, p. 57 (20 Safer 1184 / 15 June 1770).

80 Barba-Pantzelios, "To Tragoúdi Tou Daskalogiánnē," line 292.

81 Spyropoulos, "Koinōnikḗ, Dioikētikḗ, Oikonomikḗ kai Politikḗ Diástasē tou Othōmanikoú Stratoú," p. 146.

82 Angelis, *Daskalogiánnēs*, p. 134; Spanakis, *H Epanastasē tou 1770*, p. 22.

83 Dalidakis and Trudgill, *The Story of Sfakia*, p. 155.

The Ottoman side also faced challenges. It was not easy to supply the needs of the army in the region. The war had made it difficult to find wheat to make bread. This is detailed in a record: a total of 8990 bushels of wheat, some of which was sold to the public, was exported to the island to solve the problem. However, the problem of the soldiers' bread was still not completely resolved, so an order was given for an extra thirty thousand bushels of wheat from the vicinities of Damascus and Kos to be delivered to the fortresses of Candia, Chania and Rethymno.[84] Fifteen thousand bushels of wheat was to be sent to Candia, ten thousand to Chania and five thousand to Rethymno.[85]

Daskalogiannis realized that his people had experienced a great disaster during the rebellion and he wanted to prevent further unnecessary suffering. He knew that conditions in winter would become even more unbearable. His only solution was to surrender, despite the risk of dishonoring the reputation of Sfakiot compatriots and their ancestors. After receiving the news of this change of attitude, Hüseyin Pasha urged Daskalogiannis to surrender, promising friendship and forgiveness for himself and the rebels. Trusting in the Pasha's word, Daskalogiannis surrendered to the Turks in Anapolis and was taken to Candia via the Turkish camp in Frangokastello.[86] In October 1770, before Daskalogiannis was imprisoned, a group of 80 Sfakiots went to to pay their respects at Candia, but were immediately arrested and imprisoned, effectively bringing to an end the first rebellion against Turks.[87]

At his meeting with Hüseyin Pasha at the castle of Candia, Daskalogiannis was at first treated well, but this was only a tactical move. Hüseyin Pasha offered a deal to end the rebellion, and asked Daskalogiannis to persuade other Sfakiots to accept. The early Greek rhetoric about the text of this agreement, on which the surrender conditions depended, is different from the copy in the Candia court records. According to the information given by Papadopetrakis, based on the *Song of Daskalogiannis*, the conditions were not excessively severe: "They would not resist to Ottoman rule and pay their taxes. They could then continue to carry their weapons and apply their own custom duties." One of the prominent conditions

84 TAH, 31, p. 47 (23 Cemaziyülevvel 1184 / 14 September 1770).

85 Egypt governor Osman Pasha wrote in his undated letter that this need had been supplied. TAH, 31, p. 72-73.

86 Spanakis, *H Epanastasē tou 1770*, pp. 24-25.

87 Papadopetrakis, *Ē Istorĭa tōn Sphakĭōn*, p. 148.

was that "Daskalogiannis agreed to be held in custody for three years with his brother in Candia castle."[88]

An entry in the Candia court records, however, offers a different narrative, and it is historically more secure.[89] Before discussing the content of the document, I must underline that this is an order issued by Hüseyin Pasha himself, and sent to the administrative officials of the island, in other words, the agreement was his own initiative. The local notables sent five prominent people to Candia as deputies "to beg for forgiveness." 11 articles in this agreement were made in public, and in order to prevent reneging on the agreement, captives were necessary under sharia laws. Although these names, undecided at the time, are not cited in the document, they were undoubtedly Daskalogiannis, his brother and other captured prisoners. Contrary to the Papadopetrakis' narrative, the length of captivity is not stated. The Sfakiots were assured that captives would not be insulted; instead they would be protected just like other residents of the region.[90]

> Article 1: Those of rebels who are supposed to pay poll tax according to Sharia law will pay it on time once a year to tax collector, based on their class (rich, middle-class and poor).
>
> Article 2: All the war weapons they have will be collected and stored in the arsenal in Candia.
>
> Article 3: Those who oppose the non-Muslim laws of the Ottoman Empire will be taken to the officer to be sent to vizier of Candia to be disciplined.
>
> Article 4: The cases arising between them shall be brought before, and solved in the presence of, the viceroy and beadle chosen and sent from Candia, and when the unresolved cases are reported to Candia, they will be brought to Candia under beadle's watch, with no right to object.
>
> Article 5: No contact shall be established with strangers who come to region; they shall be captured if possible, if not, they shall be expelled; like Muslims, it will be expected that Sfakiots fight, kill and expel those strangers from the region. Not even a drop of water will be given to them.
>
> Article 6: The damaged monasteries will be examined by the guardians of Candia according to the religious measures, no repairs will be made without permission, and new monasteries will not be constructed against Sharia laws.

88 Papadopetrakis, *Ē Istorīa tōn Sphakiōn*, p. 148.

89 TAH, 31, p. 78/2 (3 Zilkade 1184 / 18 February 1771).

90 TAH, 31, p. 78/2.

> Article 7: From now on, tithe of cereals and crops will be delivered to the place and person that the Sultan appoints.
>
> Article 8: The dress reserved for non-Muslims shall be worn, and the dress reserved for Muslims shall not be worn.
>
> Article 9: Constructing of high towers [like minarets], which are the signs of Islam, will not be allowed.
>
> Article 10: The ringing of bells and displaying crucifixes, like in non-Muslim lands, will be forbidden.
>
> Article 11: At the time of war, escaped captives, whether the Muslim or non-Muslim captives, will be returned to their owners without any delay.[91]

These conditions are clearly heavier than those recorded in the aforementioned book of Papadopetrakis. Starting from the first article, Hüseyin Pasha first brought the poll tax issue to the agenda. This was a deliberate choice because it was known that Daskalogiannis had made refusal to pay poll tax or any other taxes to the Turks as a pretext for his rebellion. Hüseyin Pasha wanted to permanently discourage this form of resistance. In the translation of Stavrinidis, this article was incompletely described in as "the payment of the poll taxes of the last year that they refused to pay."[92] Although there is no indication of how much of this amount should be in the above text, there is a document that after a year, stating they still had to pay "five thousands *kuruş* per year."[93] As I emphasized earlier, Sfakia was a region with the status of a special foundation, exempted from all taxes imposed on the residents in other parts of the island. It is understood that Hüseyin Pasha was determined to end this arrangement. The 7th article seems very important in this respect; Sfakiots would additionally pay tithe from that moment on.[94] This was a violation of the regions's *waqf* status: because of their failed insurrection, Sfakiots would lose the economic privileges that had set them apart from other Cretans.

The reference to weapons in the 2nd article is very important. Before the rebellion, the weak local Ottoman authority meant that Sfakiots were able to carry arms unchallenged, unlike in other parts of the island. Sfakiots had to surrender

91 TAH, 31, p. 78/2. For Greek translation of the agreement, see Laourdas, "Ē Epanástasis tōn Sphakianṓn," pp. 286-89.

92 Laourdas, "Ē Epanástasis tōn Sphakianṓn," p. 287.

93 BOA, Cevdet Evkaf (C. EV.), 549/27749 (29 Şevval 1185 / 4 February 1772).

94 TAH, 31, p. 78/2.

all their weapons in order to prevent future rebellions, but for Hüseyin Pasha, this was not enough; the 4th article was designed to ensure the loyalty of Sfakia people to the Ottoman government by a strict regulation of the treatment of foreigners. In this way, the impositions aimed to block foreign powers trying to incite the region to revolt. At the end of the contract, there are articles that directly refer to the rebellion. One of the most obvious implications of the final article was that the rebels would free all captives.

The 3rd article was aimed at capturing 'bandits,' referring to rebels, since only these fled to White Mountains after the failure of rebellion, where they caused significant losses among the Ottoman troops and constantly harassed Muslim villages in the vicinity. Hüseyin Pasha demanded that the surrender of these rebels, or bandits. The translation of Stavrinidis seems somewhat confusing here; he translated the term "bandits" in the sense of "ringleaders of the rebellion," and wrote that "they would be suitably punished."[95] Even though such a translation seems plausible in those circumstances (because the failure of the rebellion was certain), it shows that Stavrinidis, in his loose interpretation of the text, missed the exact meaning of the word. There is no evidence of such a punishment in the original article.[96]

The 4th and 8th articles reveal a desire to abolish region's the relative autonomy and to reduce the Sfakiots to the level of the other non-Muslim Cretans. The prohibition on Muslim clothes has two possible causes. The first that comes to mind is to indicate that, no longer a privileged class, they must live on the same terms as other non-Muslims on the island. However, a more plausible reason, in the context of uprising – as seen in the Peloponnese Revolution – is the desire to prevent them posing as Muslims in covert operations.

The 6th, 9th and 10th articles were intended to bring important changes in arrangements concerning religious life in the region. There is some discrepancy on this point. This article shows that the damaged monasteries could, in fact, be repaired, clearly stated in the Stavrinidis's translation.[97] Detorakis, however, stated the opposite, claiming that repair was not allowed, despite basing on Stavrinidis's translation.[98]

95 Laourdas, "Ē Epanástasis tōn Sphakianṓn," pp. 287-88.

96 TAH, 31, p. 78/2.

97 Laourdas, "Ē Epanástasis tōn Sphakianṓn," p. 288.

98 Detorakis, *History of Crete*, 282; Dalidakis and Trudgill, *The Story of Sfakia*, p. 255.

After the surrender of Daskalogiannis, preventative measures were taken. While the Ottoman troops were still searching the mountains for the fugitives, some restrictions were imposed on the urban dwellers. Hüseyin Pasha forbade the sales of gunpowder and bullets at bazaars by an instruction.[99] During the following months, Hüseyin Pasha made a bargain with Daskalogiannis, promising to prevent any form of revenge for the rebellion, aimed at reassuring escaped rebels, and encourage their return to Crete. However, he later changed his mind and breaking the agreement, organized an execution ceremony at the south gate of the city to intimidate any potential traitors. On 17 June 1771, Daskalogiannis was excoriated alive, and executed while his brother was forced to watch. The remaining prisoners succeeded in escaping from prison, finding a way to return to Sfakia three years after the painful event.[100]

After the Rebellion

The Ottomans perceived the suppression of the rebellion as a great achievement, leading to a period of intensified interest in policies for the region. This is shown by a piece of correspondence I encountered in the Ottoman Archives in İstanbul states that a year later, five thousand *kuruş* of poll tax were to be collected from the region, which had the status of a waqf, and sent to royal mint.[101] However, I found no information concerning the collection of this amount. Yet another document, produced a year and half later, shows the difficulty of the situation in the region.[102] There were only 70-80 taxpayers left, all on low income; the wealthier ones had all escaped in Russian ships to other part of the island. The evidence shows that it was simply not possible to collect the poll tax, and the five thousand *kuruş* remained unpaid.

However, Sfakia managed to regain its former prosperous condition, despite defeat and loss of a considerable proportion of its population. Underlying this recovery was sea trade. According to the observations of travelers, the life in the southern part of the island returned to its normal state. On the rest of the island, it was claimed that indigenous Janissaries frequently mistreated Christians and attacked their neighborhoods after the rebellion, generally uninterrupted by the

99 TAH, 31, p. 74 (29 Şevval 1184 / 15 Şubat 1771).

100 Papadopetrakis, *Ē Istorïa tōn Sphakïōn*, p. 282.

101 BOA, C. EV., 549/27749 (29 Şevval 1185 / 4 February 1772).

102 BOA, Cevdet Dahiliye (C. DH.), 301/15015 (18 Ramazan 1187 / 4 November 1773).

Ottoman authorities. In cities such as Chania, Rethymno and Candia, however, the situation was better for the Christians, and Sfakian captains continued to pursue piracy.[103]

Sfakia generally played an important role in the rebellion climate that dominated the island during the nineteenth century. The Cretans rebelled against the Ottomans during the Greek War of Independence, then again in 1840 for economic and religious reasons, and once more in 1858 to reinforce their demands for the implementation of reforms promised by Ottoman Reform Edict of 1856. Yet another rebellion started in 1866, and continued until suppressed three years later. It was quite destructive for the island: about 30 thousand died, both non-Muslims and Muslims, and caused widespread suffering. During the war of 1877-1878, Russia yet again provided the encouragement for another revolt.[104] This history of uprisings from 1770 formed the basis for the independence struggle of the island, leading eventually to the unification with Greece at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Daskalogiannis himself, and his rebellion have become widely regarded as significant, in not only the Greek national historiography, but also in the popular culture of the island. In recent decades, the historiography of the rebellion has expanded as details emerged due to the efforts of Greek, French, and British historians; however, until the first translations of the court records of Candia by Nikolaos Stavridinis, Greek historians and the Cretan public's major source was the epic poem, *Το τραγούδι του Δασκαλογιάννη* (The Song of Daskalogiannis). The poem, commemorating Daskalogiannis's martyrdom and keeping alive his legacy and memory, was improvised fifteen years after his death by Barba-Pantzelios, an illiterate cheese monger, and recorded in writing by Skordilis, the son of a priest. The motive for composition of the poem, of critical importance to the present study, and the religious and nationalist themes are clearly illustrated in the following stanza:[105]

> Oh my Lord! Bestow me power (light), give me great courage (heart as a cauldron)
> So that I could bring myself to think of John the Master (Daskalogiannis)
> Oh Lord! Give me the Will so I can commence

103 Dalidakis and Trudgill, *The Story of Sfakia*, pp. 15-60.

104 Detorakis, *History of Crete*, pp. 340-49.

105 Barba-Pantzelios, "To Tragoúdi tou Daskalogiánnē" lines 1-6.

And sing my heart out about the famous Master
Oh Lord! Give me patience and clear mind
To evoke and utter the sorrows of Sfakia.

Barba-Pantzelios tells us the entire story in chronological order, clearly describing the names and places connected with the rebellion. Although recent research has shown some incongruities and inaccuracies, his epic song played a critical role in forming a collective memory that would persist for centuries.[106] The song became very popular after its publication by Emile Legrand in 1879, leading to a second edition in 1888.[107] It was a primary historical document in reference to the rebellion in *History of Sphakia as a Part of Greek History* (1888), by the well-known Cretan historian Gregorios Papadopetrakis, and as a consequence, his tendentious and nationalistic narrative of the event fails to recognize any historical incongruities and mistakes it is likely to contain.[108]

In contrast to the uncritical approach of Papadopetrakis, Nikolaos Stavridinis, another Greek historian, contributed much to unpacking the history of the rebellion by translating many Turkish historical documents in Heraklion (Candia).[109] Similarly, by publishing the translated documents concerning the rebellion, Vasileios Laourdas's contribution was able to further highlight the errors that characterize in Papadotrakis's narrative.[110] Another work by Nikos Angelis, the first monography about Daskalogiannis and his rebellion, was interlaced with the *Song of Daskalogiannis,* emerged in 1962.[111] Later, a pamphlet was published containing a speech by a prominent historian of Crete, Stergios Spanakis, to commemorate the second centenary of Daskalogiannis's martyrdom at a meeting organized by the Municipality of Heraklion.[112] These works are all in agreement that the Russians, having incited the rebellion, failed to provide adequate support for the Cretan rebels on the ground, thus condemning the rebellion to eventual failure;

106 Roderick Beaton, *Folk Poetry of Modern Greece* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 155-57.

107 Dalidakis and Trudgill, *The Story of Sfakia*, p. 157.

108 Papadopetrakis, *Ē Istorī̱a tōn Sphakī̱ōn*, pp. 117-58.

109 Nuri Adıyeke, "Stavrinidis ve Girit'teki Osmanlı Kadı Sicilleri," *Kebikeç*, 19 (October 2005), pp. 65-72.

110 Laourdas, "Ē Epanástasis tōn Sphakianṓn," pp. 275-90.

111 Angelis, *Daskalogiánnēs*.

112 Spanakis, *H Epanastasē tou 1770*.

however, they also agreed that, although at great cost and causing great misery, it unified Greeks around the idea of independence.

Compared to the Greek historiography, it is difficult to retrieve any information about the rebellion from the contemporary Ottoman chronicles or subsequent histories of the island. This is, for the most part, because the rebellion was greatly overshadowed by a much more serious development, the Ottoman-Russian War; the rebellion was therefore largely ignored by the chroniclers of the time. This also explains the reticence of Ottoman chroniclers and paucity of the accounts concerning the rebellion, whereas much attention was devoted to the Peloponnese narrative.[113] Nineteenth century Ottoman historians did not even touch upon the subject, and the silence in Turkish historiography was not broken until the first decades of the Republican Turkey.[114] In 1945, Cemal Tukin went so far as to claim that such a rebellion never occurred:

> As in Morea, first time in 1770, people of the island was incited and provoked to a rebellion by a Greek agent called Papazoğlu, commissioned by Catherina. Although it is claimed that there was a rebellion stirred by a rich Sphakiot called Daskalo Yani, this rebellion was quelled and with the retreat of Russians as in Morea, and the death of the chief of rebellion, there is not sufficient information illuminating and corroborating the incident, neither in archival documents and chronicle entries, nor in the studies of the Ottomanists in the late Ottoman Empire, such as Hammer, Zinkeisen or Yorga. It seems that nothing happened worth mentioning because of mismanagement of the Ottoman Empire throughout one and a half century from the conquest of Kandiye to Greek War of Independence.[115]

At the turn of the century, when the issue of independence came to the fore, the history of Crete gained renewed interest, especially among French historians, travelers and politicians. As a part of this increasing interest, *La Créte et l'Hellénisme* by Fosses, published the year before independence, briefly mentioned the 1770 Rebellion in a reappraisal of the place of Crete in the Hellenic

113 Ahmet Vasıf Efendi, *Mehâsinü'l-Âsâr ve Hakâikü'l-Ahbâr*.

114 Hanyevi, *Girid Tarihi*, p. 6; Mehmed Necati, *Girid Adası*, p. 13.

115 Cemal Tukin, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Girit İsyanları (1821 Yılına Kadar Girit)," *Belleten*, IX, 34 (Nisan 1945), p. 205. Although the literature has expended for several decades, Mithat Aydın takes Tukin's assertion for granted without confirmation. Mithat Aydın, "Girit Ayaklanması (1866-1869)'nın Ortaya Çıkışı ve Uluslar Arası Bir Sorun Haline Gelişinde Yunanistan'ın Rolü," *TSA*, 1 (Nisan 2007), p. 117.

culture. For him, this rebellion marked the beginning of the long struggle against the Ottoman authority. He also noted the key role of Sfakiots, not only in the 1770 incident, but also in the nineteenth century rebellions.[116] This study was followed by another important one, namely, *La Créte et sa situation au point vue du droit international* by Henry Couturier. Compared to Fosses, Couturier provides us with a more detailed account of the turns of the events, discussing the characteristics of Sfakiots, the geography of the region, and the extent of Russian influence. He construes the rebellion as the first step of "Great Greek Project." In short, in his view, the 1770 Rebellions played an important role in the development of the international political context.[117] Another French scholar, Paul Combes, states:

> The conquest of the Crete island was by no means easy for Turks. Ever since they had seized the island, they had to deal with various ethnic, religious, and linguistic problems, mainly because of the unwavering opposition, and hostility against the Ottoman rule. This entrenched opposition alone, without needing any external provocation, explains why the rebellion broke out in Crete. The earliest of all these rebellions date back to 1770 and was spearheaded by Sphakiots, as was the case in other rebellions in the island.[118]

Moreover, Combes went further to claim that the Ottomans would inevitably be compelled to acknowledge the demands of the islanders, and grant autonomy, allowing the islanders freedom within their rugged and unruly country. These remarks, far from being isolated personal assertions, resonated with other French authors, reflecting the general beliefs about the period, albeit with minor differences.

Conclusion

As the points in this present study indicate, the unique location of the island and its distinct administration system within the Ottoman Empire gave the Cretan Rebellion a special character, despite fitting with a pattern of Russian involvement. Since the first day it was conquered, the Ottomans approached the island

116 Henri Louis Castonnet des Fosses, *La Créte et L'Hellénisme* (Paris: C. Douniol, 1897), pp. 60-65.

117 Couturier, *La Crète*, pp. 21-29.

118 Paul Combes, *L'ile de Créte: Etude géographique, historique, politique et économique, avec une carte* (Paris: J. André & Co., 1897), pp. 55-56.

with a special attention, aiming to protect the existing social and economic life by not insisting on rigid enforcement of usual imperial administrative practices. The Ottomans also applied taxation and land allocation practices quite distinct from the classical Ottoman system implemented in other parts of the empire. The "special" administrative status of the Sfakia region and its privileged status on the island highlight the contribution of specific local factors to the rebellion, while the history of this region provided a further vital motivation and social justification.

The Cretan Rebellion of 1770 remained a local event, and failed to spread across the island. According to the data revealed in this study, the consolidated Turkish authority on the island, the presence of a large number of Janissaries, and the resulting intimidation meant that the rebellion was restricted to a single location, and was not able to embrace all the Cretans. One of the most significant reasons why the Cretans failed to participate, openly or covertly, was the atmosphere of fear and the accompanying authoritarian practices of the Janissaries, comprising of converted Cretans from the central region. Indeed, the islanders inhabiting the plains were so accustomed to daily oppression; they would certainly want to avoid exacerbating the situation. In other words, the Christian population on the island lived in a constant state of containment, and too fearful to consider planning or joining in any rebellion attempt.

One of the features that rendered the Cretan rebellion unique was the fact that Cretans alone were in the administrative and operative cadres of the rebellion that broke out in Sfakia; while Russian promises triggered them to rebel in the first place, from the preparation process to its ultimate failure, the Russians provided no support nor made any intervention in the rebellion. This effort was unaided from outside, and most likely because of this characteristic, this rebellion and its leader, Daskalogiannis, emerged as symbols of Greek awakening on the island in the nineteenth century, and the aforementioned epic poem introduced Daskalogiannis into the pantheon of Greek heroes, while immortalizing the rebellion in Greek history. As the data discussed throughout this study show, in conclusion, the Cretan rebellion as a unique uprising movement representing a link between the conventional Cretan rebellions and the nineteenth-century nationalist revolutions that led to the birth of nation states.

The First Cretan Rebellion against the Ottoman Authority: Narratives and Sources

Abstract ■ The first rebellion threatening the Ottoman authority in Crete was started by Sfakiots under the leadership of Daskalogiannis in 1770. This study aims to conceptualize this rebellion, which quickly collapsed. It examines the political, socio-economic and religious causes that triggered the rebellion, which occurred as a continuation of Morean Insurrection (Orlov Revolt), which unfolded during the Ottoman-Russian war of 1768-1774. It also scrutinizes the consequences of the rebellion. Additionally, it discusses the possible reasons for the limited attention given to this historical phenomenon in the Ottoman and modern Turkish historiographies, despite the fact that the rebellion and its leader enjoyed an outstanding position in the nineteenth century Greek historiography. This study explores the insurgents' religious and political motivations, as well as the responses it provoked from the local and central Ottoman administrators.

Keywords: Crete, Sfakia, Daskalogiannis, Ottoman Empire.

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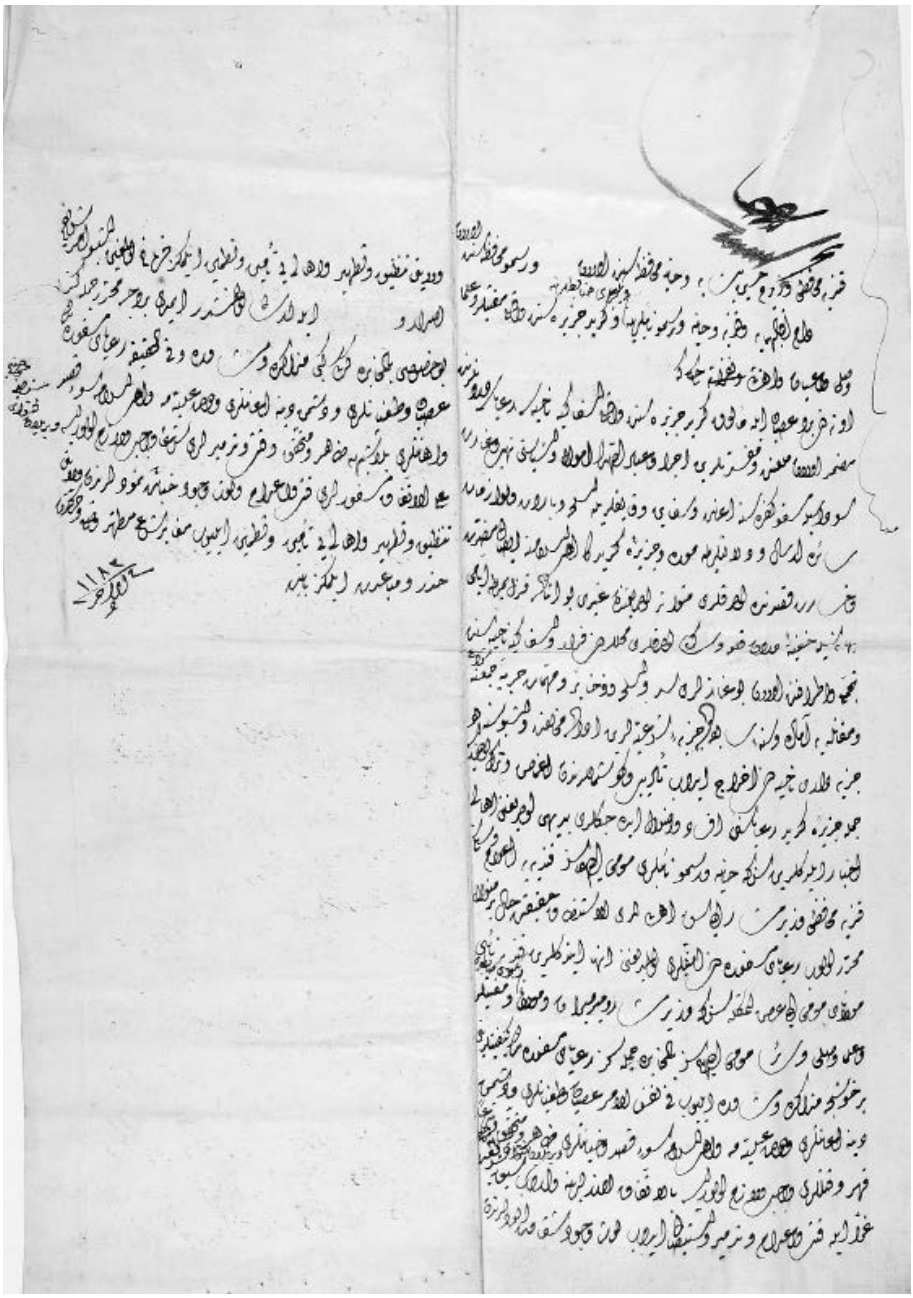
APPENDIX

Imperial Edict on the Cretan Rebellion of 1770: BOA, C. AS. 35/1597.



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