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WERE BYZANTINE MONKS OF THE 13TH-15TH CENTURIES
HOLDERS OF IMPERIAL GRANTS?*

A small number of imperial grants to monks appear in the Byzantine sources from
the late 13th to the 15th centuries, and mainly in the 14th, before the Serbian expansion
in Macedonia. Especially privileged with the right of bequeathal and dedication, they
were given later to the monastery to which each of the monks belonged, mostly to the
Serbian monastery of Chilandar in Athos. Due to characteristic differences they represent
a special category between the pronoiai of laymen and the oikonomiai of monasteries.

Keywords: Athos, basilikon, Chilandar, chrysobull, eleemosyne, gonikos-e, horis-
mos, hyperpyron, (imperial) grant, kathegoumenos, Menoikeion, metochion, monastery,
monk, monydrion, nomisma, oikonomia, oikonomos, Palaiologoi, Patmos, paroikos, po-
sotes, praktikon (of paradosis), pronoia, pronoiar, prostagma, tax-exemption, tax, will

During a long search for evidence about the institution of pronoia-oikonomia¹, I came across, mainly in late Byzantine sources of the 13th, 15th, and – more promi-
nently – 14th centuries, a small number of references of imperial grants bearing a
distinctive “particularity”.

This particularity lies in the position of the individuals who appear as receivers of
these donations. They are clergymen, usually monks², whereas in contemporary sources
the majority of such holders are either laymen or the Church, mainly monasteries.

* An earlier form of this paper was presented at the Septième Congrès International d’Etudes du
Sud-est européen (Thessalonique, 29 août – 4 septembre 1994): “Monks Holders of Imperial Grants
in the Sources of the 13th and 14th Centuries”. It is with great pleasure and amicable feelings that I am now
publishing this in the present volume in honour of Professor Ljubomir Maksimović.

¹ Cf. my first paper on the subject in 1987 and my doctoral dissertation in 1990 (see infra, n. 3 and 4).
² Cf. Patriarch Athanasius I’s letter about a bishop, which does not offer any information on the
legal status of the mentioned kleros of pronoia and residence and as a consequence it is too vague to be
included here: (την ἐκκλησίαν ὑπὸ τῶν τυχόντων δεσπόζεσθαι, ἐν οίς καὶ τῷ βουλομένῳ ἀρχι-
ερεί εἰς κλήρον προνοίας προσενέμησθαι καὶ κατοικίας (The Correspondence of Athanasius I...,
62.146. 30–31 – exact date unknown).
Our knowledge about imperial “grants” to monks, as well as the status of those beneficiaries, is not sufficient proof for us to include them indisputably in the same category as laymen in possession of pronoiai or oikonomiai, even if the sources make explicit use of the appropriate terminology. We cannot, therefore, consider a priori these oikonomiai as exactly identical to others mentioned in the sources, or even less so, the monk holder of an imperial grant as a common pronoia.

In the early stages of my research, I had considered the possibility of a pronoiai to belong to the clergy. Nevertheless, detailed examination of the sources reinforced my initial doubts to the point that I ultimately excluded the documents about monk holders of an oikonomia in my doctoral dissertation on the institution of pronoia.

In what follows, I will endeavour to explain the reasoning behind my conclusion that the Byzantine State granted pronoiai only to laymen. Due to space restrictions, the documentation on the subject will be presented briefly.

* *

The first piece of evidence is dated in the last 30 years of the 13th century, which is the period after the reconstruction of the Byzantine Empire.

It is the well-known will of Theodosios Skaranos or monk Theodoulus, stored in the archives of Xeropotamou monastery, probably written between 1270 and...
1274. Evidently following his wife’s death, monk Skaranos, head of a small monastery (kellion of St. Helias) near Ermeleia in Chalkidike, names as his main heir and executor of certain of his wishes the monastery of Xeropotamou. A part of his estate, namely his “dia paroiikon oikonomia”, was granted to him by the emperor.

The next sources belong to the 14th century.

Grants of land (400 modii) and fifteen proskathemenoi paroikoi to the hieromonachos of Chilandar Simon are confirmed in 1321. According to Andronikos III’s document, the land and the paroikoi, who belonged in the past to the oikonomia of the late Ammon and of Rhadenos, along with their hypostaseis were granted earlier by two successive prostagmata of his grand-father Andronikos II.

The “most honorable” hieromonachos Kallinikos received one third of the possotes of a village corresponding to annual revenue of 145 hyperpyra, with all the usual rights from the paroikoi, according to his praktikon of September 1323. The same year he dedicated the small monastery (monydrion) of St. Nicholas of Kaminikeia and its estate (perioché / nomh / dikai), granted to him for life in 1321, to Chilandar, in accordance with the privileges he had gained.

A piece (300 modii) of the land held in the past by Petros Doukopoulos, was granted to the “most honorable” hieromonachos Matthais before December 1324 and was re-confirmed in Dec. 1324, with privileges and permission to be given to the

...
monastery of Chilandar after the monk’s death\textsuperscript{19}. In 1327, the monk received the rest of Doukopoulos’ land, equally privileged and bearing permission of being donated to Chilandar\textsuperscript{20}. Both pieces of the land and all privileges are described in his \textit{praktikion} written in the same year (1327)\textsuperscript{21}.

In 1333\textsuperscript{22}, the monk Iakovos received annual revenue of twenty \textit{hyperpyra}, which represented the tax payment of Jews living in Zichna\textsuperscript{23}. By the same \textit{chrysobull} the emperor granted to him the \textit{monydrion} of Ostrene and its church along with their estate (\textit{nomi} / \textit{periochi} / \textit{dikaios}) for life and with the permission to bequeath them\textsuperscript{24}; in addition, 200 \textit{modii} of the land previously held by Alexios Palaiologos, which would be held as heritable\textsuperscript{25}. He bequeathed them all to the monastery of Saint John’s in Menoikeion in 1352 or 1353, with the approval of Stefan Dušan\textsuperscript{26}.

\textit{Gervasios, hieromonachos} and “most honourable” \textit{kathegoumenos} of Chilandar, received, according to three successive documents of July and August 1334\textsuperscript{27}, a \textit{posotes} / \textit{oikonomia} of forty \textit{hyperpyra}, held before by Kassadrenos and Lependrenos, with privileges and tax exemption\textsuperscript{28}. He dedicated it to the monastery he belonged in 1335, as he had gained permission to do so\textsuperscript{29}.

The last document cited here is about one century later to our previous and main documentation.

\textsuperscript{19} ... μετὰ δὲ τὴν αὐτοῦ τελευτήν καθέξει καὶ νεμηθῆσαι τὴν εἰρημένην γῆν ἢ ἐν τῷ ἀγίῳ ὤρει σεβασμίᾳ μονή τοῦ Χελανταρίου ... (Chilandar I, no. 100, 15–17).

\textsuperscript{20} ... ἀρτίως ... ἐδόθη ... καὶ ἐπίλυτος γῆ τοῦ ... Δουκοπούλου ὅση ἑναπεξείσφυς πρὸς τοῦτον ἀπὸ τῆς πρόσφορον δοθείας γῆς ... καὶ παρεκλήσεων ... Ἰνα πορίσηται καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ τοιαύτῃ γῆ χρυσοβουλίων τῆς βασ. μου ... (Chilandar I, no. 114, 6–11).

\textsuperscript{21} Chilandar I, no. 116.

\textsuperscript{22} The editor of the archives of the St. John’s monastery in Menoikeion, A. Guillou, accepts this year for the present first document of the Iakovos dossier (Les archives de Saint-Jean-Prodrome sur le mont Ménécée, ed. A. Guillou, [Bibliothèque byzantine, Documents 3] Paris 1955 = Prodrome, no. 28 and ibid. 97). About the dossier see mainly Prodrome, 140.

\textsuperscript{23} ... τὰ ἀπατούμενα χάριν τέλους ἑπταετίας ἀπὸ τῶν εἰς τὸ κάστρον τῆς Ζίχνας Ιουδαίον ...

\textsuperscript{24} Prodrome, no. 28, 4–9, 17–22.

\textsuperscript{25} ... ἀπὸ τῆς εἰς τὸ χωριόν τῶν Θολῶν γῆς τοῦ Παλαιολόγου κυροῦ Λεπενδρηνοῦ ἡ ὁμοίων διακοσίων...


\textsuperscript{27} L\textit{chrysobull, a prosthagama} and \textit{a praktikion} (Chilandar I, no. 45, 46, 47). Cf. about the documents’ authenticity G. Ostrogorski, Pour l’histoire de la féodalité byzantine, traduction H. Grégoire / contribution P. Lemerle, [Corpus Bruxellense Historiae Byzantinae, Subsidia I] Bruxelles 1954, 150–152, and the opinion of the first editor L. Petit, who accepted the chronology 1319.

\textsuperscript{28} ... κατέχει διὰ χρυσοβουλίου τὴν περὶ τῶν Στρυμόνων εἰς τα Ἱουδαϊκά ποσότητα τῶν τεσσαράκοντα ὑπερπύρων, ἢν κατέχει μὲν πρὸτερον ὁ Κασανδρηνὸς, ἀρτίως δὲ κατέχεται παρὰ τῷ Λεπενδρηνῷ ... / ... ἐπιλάβητας τῆς περὶ τῶν Στρ. εἰς τὸ χωρίον τὰ Χ. οἰκονομίας τῶν τεσσ. ὑπ. ... τὴν ῥηθέσαν ποσότητα παραδόσεως ... / ... τὴν ... εἰς τὸ χωρίον τὰ Χ. πρόνοιαν τοῦ Λεπενδρηνῆ ... (Chilandar I, 45, 4–7, 46, 5–9, no. 47, 6–7).

\textsuperscript{29} ... καθὼς ἦσαν ἐνόδωσμεν διαβιβάσας πρὸς ἔτερον, ... ὁμορφῷ καὶ προστίθημι τὴν ... ἀπασάν οἰκονομίαν ... (Chilandar I, no. 126, 26–28).
It is a basilikon / horismos of Demetrios Palaiologos granting (probably in 1448) to the monk and oikonomos Methodios a life revenue of five nomismata, paid as tax by paroikoi, in Lemnos, and confirming his rights as mentioned in his praktikon.

Close examination of the aforementioned sources leads to the following observations:

The documents that undoubtedly deal with imperial grants to monks are very few. They mostly belong to the Palaiologan period, especially the period of the reign of Andronikos II and Andronikos III, during which the first crisis of the 14th century took place. They are either horismos / prostagma and chrysobull or praktikon (of paradosis) as it is customary with imperial grants. The emperor himself is sometimes specifically mentioned as “donator” (ἀπεχαρίσατο) and even terms usually mentioned in case of a pronoia or oikonomía, as psychikon and especially eleemosyne, are used.

The monks receiving these grants are referred to either as τιμιώτατος ἱερομόναχος, ἱερομόναχος or simple μοναχός. They usually hold a prominent position in their monasteries; Gervasios was the ordained superior of the monastery (καθηγούμενος), Methodios was the steward (οἰκονόμος) of the monastic establishment (metochion),

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30 Βυζαντινά έγγραφα της μονής Πάτμου, Α’: Αυτοκρατορικά, ed. Era Vranousi, [ΕΙΕ / ΚΒΕ] Athens 1980 = Patmou I, no. 45, which belongs to the most rare kinds of Byzantine documents and creates issues (see the detailed comments ibid., 322–326, and especially 325 about the possibility of being a fake, as Dölger-Wirth, Reg., 3555, believed it was). Possibly the despot Demetrios Palaiologos signed this ὁρισμός a few years before the end of the Empire as representative of the imperial authority, expecting to be the next emperor after Ioannis VIII’s death in November 1448. The aforementioned opinion of Nikos Oikonomides could explain the term βασιλικόν and is cited (and obviously accepted) by the editor Era Vranousi (Patmou I, 325).

31 ... ἀνθρώποι τρεῖς ... τελοῦσιν εἰς τὸ δημόσιον (νομίσματα) πέντε ... / ... ἐνεφάνισε καὶ πρακτικόν τῶν ἀπογραφέων ... (Patmou I, no. 45, 11–14, 8–9).

32 I did not include any uncertain information on the subject, like the presence of monk Keramas as holder of a vineyard in Iviron III, no. 70 (mentioned also in nos. 75 and 79).

33 Cf. several grants to churches and monasteries at that time, like those mentioned by the term pronoiai in Georges Pachymérès Relations Historiques, IV, ed. A. Failler, [CFHB XXIV/4] Paris 1999 = Pachymeres IV, 425. 23f.

34 An imperial prostagma in the cases of Skaranos, Simon, Kallinikos, Matthaios, Gervasios and Methodios (cf. supra, n. 30), an imperial chrysobull in the cases of Kallinikos, Matthaios, Gervasios (χρυσόβουλλος λόγος) and Iakovos (χρυσόβουλλον σιγίλλιον), and a praktikon in the cases of Skaranos, Kallinikos, Matthaios, Gervasios and Methodios. Some of these documents are missing but they are mentioned in the documents we studied.

35 See infra and n. 87.

36 Kallinikos and Matthaios. Cf. Gervasios as τιμιώτατος καθηγούμενος (Chilandar I, no. 46. 3).

37 Simon and Gervasios.

38 Skaranos and Iakovos.

39 About him see also infra, n. 43–44, and cf. PLP, no. 3792.

40 I.e. the senior monk, responsible for the management of the properties, buildings etc. of the metochion of St John Theologos’ monastery in Lemnos. He was not mentioned elsewhere (cf. PLP, no. 17614).
while others, as *kyr* Kallinikos and *kyr* Matthaios⁴¹ or Simon⁴², also represent the whole community in various negotiations, being mentioned by name apart from the rest of the monks⁴³ (sometimes two or four of them together⁴⁴). Moreover, Iakovos showed particular loyalty to the emperor Andronikos III⁴⁵ (ca 1332⁴⁶) and Kallinikos is referred to as *apokrisarios* of the Serb *kral* (Stefan Milutin) near the emperor Andronikos II in 1318⁴⁷ and kindly, loyal and most valuable for this emperor in 1321⁴⁸. We also know of the acquaintance of Skaranos with the *despot* Ioannis Palaiologos and possibly with the emperor Michael VIII⁴⁹. We should note that all the monks of the 14th century, except Iakovos, belonged to the Serbian monastery of Chilandar⁵⁰ or maintained furthermore a relationship with the Serb sovereign.

All kinds of profit (*telos of paroikoi*⁵¹ / *land, posotes of hyperpyra / chorion* etc.) a monk enjoys are the exact components of an *oikonomia*. The technical term of *oikonomia* is mentioned in fact in some documents⁵² and in three cases⁵³ monks receive

⁴¹ He appears in several documents (in the archives of Chilandar and Zographou) and he apparently was well known to the imperial government; see e.g. the *prostagma* ordering two *apographeis* (Manuel Tzimiskes and Nikephoros Balsamon) to compose a new *praktikon* in 1327 (Chilandar, no. 116. 1–3f.). Cf. M. Živojinović, The Spiritual Father of Monastery of Chilandar, JBÖ 32/2 (1982) 247–256, and L. Mavrommatis, Η πρόνοια του Μονομάχου και η διαμάχη για τον Χάντακα (1333–1378), Σύμμεστα 14 (2001) 265–266 and n. 24: "Matthaios will evolve into the financial mind of Chilandar". Cf. also PLP, no. 17322.

⁴² About him see infra, n. 44 and cf. PLP, no. 25370.

⁴³ E.g., Matthaios appears in an earlier document about a conflict between Zographou and Chilandar (ca 1321): ... per tēs ὑποθέσεως, ἢ εἴχαν μετὰ τοῦ ἱερώμονάκου κυρίον Μαθαίον καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν μοναχῶν τῆς σεβασμίας μονῆς τῶν Σέρβων ... (Acts de Zographou, edd. W. Regel – E. Kurtz – B. Korablev, [Acts de l’Athos XX] W. Regel – E. Kurtz – B. Korablev, [Actes de l’Athos I–IV] Paris 1998 = Zographou, no. 20. 4–6). In a sale document of 1323 (πρατήριον ἕγγραφον), both *kathegoumenos* Gervasios and Kallinikos represent the monastery of Chilandar, while, in a similar occasion in 1324, the *kathegoumenos* and *kyr* Kallinikos are mentioned before the *part (μέρος) of the monastery* (Chilandar I, no. 93 and 99).

⁴⁴ Gervasios, Kallinikos, Simon and Matthaios appear together in 1322 (Chilandar I, no. 84. 17–18 and 85. 11–12), similarly Simon and Matthaios in 1327 (Chilandar I, no. 112. 25–26).

⁴⁵ And, as A. Guillou argues, possibly young (Ibid., 97). Cf. PLP, no. 7921 (and 7880).

⁴⁶ "Undoubtedly, he was involved in the conflict of influence between the followers of Syrgiannes and the followers of Kantakouzenos and Andronikos III, which took place in 1332" (Prodrome, 97).

⁴⁷ About this diplomatic mission and Kallinikos' experience in his reconciling role, cf. Kantakouzenos' history: η ἡ δὲ προσβέσθεως προφασία ἢ... /... ὁ προσβεβληθεὶς δὲ μονάχος ἡν, Καλλίνικος κακασμένος... εὐς δὲ εἰς καροσ καὶ πράγματος πολιτικοῖς χρήσθη ε᾿ ἐμπράξειν ... (Ioannis Cantacuzeni ex imperatoris Historiarum libri IV, ed. L. Schopen, I–III, [CSHB] Bonn 1828–1832 = Kantakouzenos I, 35. 19ff., 36. 1–3f).

⁴⁸ Cf. Gervasios' full signature in Serbian under the dedication document of 1335 (Chilandar I, no. 126. 46–47) and the mention of Kallinikos as *Trivalos*, i.e. Serb, like the *kral* Stefanos: K... τὸ γένος μὲν καὶ αὐτὸς Τριβαλός... (Kantakouzenos I, 36. 2).

⁴⁹ See also infra and n. 68.

⁵⁰ Of Simon, Matthaios and Gervasios.

⁵¹ The term *diα paroikioν oikonomiα* (of Skaranos) has identical meaning.

⁵² Referring to Skaranos and Gervasios.

⁵³ Of Simon, Matthaios and Gervasios.
part of oikonomia that previously belonged to another holder, usually a pronoia. In Gervasios’ praktikon the term pronoia refers more to the previous holder than to the monk’s grant, probably due to simple repetition.

The value of these oikonomia according to our sources, is estimated as moderate. The biggest revenue (145 hyperpyra), as well as the benefits of aer, angareiai and kaniska, are mentioned in the praktikon of Kallinikos, referring to one of the grants given to him.

The legal status of these grants is indeed privileged.

The monks of the 14th century would usually hold and exploit their oikonomia or grants “permanently” (ἀναφαρέτους, ἀναποσάπτους, ἀνενοχλήτους, ἀδιασείστους) and, in three cases, they would even acquire tax exemption. Skaranos in the 13th century probably had similar rights, whereas Methodios in the 15th century would exploit his grant also undisturbed. The right of “amelioration” (of the land of the oikonomia or grant) is mentioned only for Kallinikos’ estate of the monydrion and Gervasios’ posotes.

In the chrysobull for Iakovos his rights over the given land are described with one single word; he would hold his land as gonike. The term’s meaning is identical to heritable and refers to the most important privilege of those monks, the right of bequeathal and dedication (παραστάσεων και προσκυνοῦν). This privilege is also explicitly mentioned in the cases of Kallinikos’ estate (monydrion), Matthais, Iakovos’ monydrion and Gervasios, is clearly implied in Skaranos’ will through the term “full ownership” — although probably granted to him when he gained back his oikonomia.
– and is proved in the cases of Simon and of Kallinikos’ *posotes* by the presence of the documents in the archives of Chilandar. Maybe the preservation of document about Methodios in the archives of Saint John Theologos’ monastery in Patmos proves not only that the monastery (through its *metochion* in Lemnos) became the final owner of the monk’s grant as described in his *praktikon*, but also that the condition about the revenue of five *nomismata*, which were to be paid back to the State after Methodios’ death, was not maintained.

The aforementioned condition in the document of the 15th century, identical to the status of a life *pronoia* grant, was the least favourable of all mentioned here, along with the withdrawal of Skaranos’ *oikonomia* – or a part of it – for a short time in the 13th century (ante 1262–ante 1270/1274), in favour of the Iviron monastery.

As far as tax exemptions are concerned, it is not very clear – as is the case with most of state grants that become heritable –, if they would be transferred along with the profit and other privileges to the next owners.

* The questions that consequently arise from the above are the following:

Keeping in mind the well-known *aktemosyne* of monks – regardless of exceptions – and the fact that the final owner of a monk’s *oikonomia* was a monastery, there could be no doubt about the real aim of these imperial grants. Remains to be seen, whether the grants were given personally to the monks and the monks kept the privilege to bequeath (or dedicate) them to a monastery of their free will. Or whether

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65 Cf. P. Schreiner, Zwei unediete Praktika aus der zweiten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts, JÖB 19 (1970) 33–49, n. 24, where he argues that, contrary to another similar case (of Demetrios Kabasilas), Kallinikos is “content” with an imperial *prostagma*, probably because the “pronoiar” was a monk and the grant was not heritable.

66 *εὐεργετοῦμεν ταῦτα οὖν ἵνα τὰ λαμβάνει ἐπὶ ζωῆς τοῦ καὶ μόνον μετὰ δὲ τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ, πάλιν νὰ ἐν τοῦ δημοσίου, καθὼς εἶσι καὶ νῦν ... (Patmou Ι, no. 45. 17–20).

67 Cf. ibid., p. 326.

68 In his will Skaranos mentions the withdrawal of the grant (by Michael VIII?) and the new decision of the emperor (who was possibly persuaded by Ioannis Palaiologos) in a vague way along with the name of the *apographeus* Kerameus («unknown», according to Lefort, Exploitation, 364, n. 2, see PLP, no 11646): *Τινὲς τῶν χαιρεκάκων ἀνέφερον τῷ αὐθέντῃ μοι τὸ βασιλεί τὸ ἄγιον ὅτι ἔχει πολλὰ καὶ διὰ τοῦ ἐλέους τοῦ ἄγιον ἦν τοῦ Κεραμέαν δὲ τί εἶχε διὰ πρακτικοῦ τοῦ πάλιν δὲ τὸ ἔχει (Xéropotamou, no. 9 B. 47–49). Cf. the *praktikon* of ca. 1262 (in Iviron III, no. 59. 82ff. – 1262) and Lefort, Exploitation, 364 and 372.

69 The monks seem to be convinced although vague about that, in the same way Gervasios appears in his dedication document: *... ὡς ἀν καὶ τὸ τοιοῦτον πρόσωπον ὑμωσιοτρόπως αὐτὴν κατέχῃ καὶ νέμηται ...* (Chilandar I, no. 126. 19–20). Cf. for example contrary opinions on the transfer of the tax-exemption right (*exkousseia*) in Actes d’Iviron, I: Des origines au milieu du Xle siècle, edd. J. Lefort – N. Oikonomidès – Denise Papachryssanthou, en collaboration avec Hélène Métrévéli, [Archives de l’Athos XIV] Paris 1985 = Iviron I, 136–137 (“rather illegal, although testified” in a sole case in 984 – Iviron, no. 6) and B. Gorjanov, Pozdne-vizantijskij feodalizm, Moskva 1962, 171f. (“as *pronoia* was being converted into a hereditary possession, *exkousseia* was also passed to the children of the beneficiary”).

70 Theodoros Balsamon (in the 12th c.) condemned the economical activities of clergymen. Cf. about the exceptions of the rule *I. M. Konidaris*, Το δίκασον της μοναστηριακής περιουσίας από του 9ου μέχρι και του 12ου αιώνος, Athens 1979, 19–21.
the monks received all those revenues as representatives of their monasteries\textsuperscript{71}, as they often did. If the latter were the case, one would be tempted to assume easily that the monasteries exploited the grants all along.

Concerning Skaranos, we could have some doubts as to whether he received the imperial grant as \textit{Theodosios} or as \textit{Theodoulos}. There is no doubt, however, that if it was given to him as a monk, which I think is most probable, it was also given to the small monastery he owned\textsuperscript{72}. The fact that this grant finally passed by his will to the monastery of Xeropotamou seems to be a subsequent choice of Skaranos. As already mentioned, a few years before that Skaranos lost his \textit{oikonomia} for a short period of time in favour of the monastery of Iviron.

As to the rest of the monks, it is very clear in the documents that they personally received the grants and that they also exploited their \textit{oikonomiæ}\textsuperscript{73}. In Matthaios’ \textit{praktikon} the land is initially “handed over” (\textit{παραδίδεται}) to him and to the monastery of Chilandar “through him” (\textit{δι’ αὐτοῦ})\textsuperscript{74}. The expression of course reminds us of many other donations to monasteries “through” the superior (\textit{kathegoumenos}), but this is not the case here\textsuperscript{75}, not even as far as \textit{kathegoumenos} Gervasios is concerned. Furthermore, Kallinikos refers to the small monastery as belonging to him\textsuperscript{76}, whereas Gervasios’ own words, in the dedication document of his \textit{oikonomia} to Chilandar, are distinctive: the monastery alone would profit of all revenue from the \textit{oikonomia}, “as I personally did”\textsuperscript{77}.

Bequeathal or dedication to the monasteries is also performed of the monk’s free will and is followed by the Emperor’s consent. In some of the documents we read: “to any person or any monastery I will choose to bequeath these”\textsuperscript{78}. Obviously profitting from this right, Kallinikos wrote down his thoughts and concerns before he finally

\textsuperscript{71} For example, the superior of the monastery of Lemvon is mentioned in a \textit{periorismos} of its holdings and grants (1235) as having gained new acquisitions for the monastery: \ldots\ \textit{οἱαδήτινα κτήματα, \ldots ὁ καθηγούμενος ἐπεκτήσατο} \ldots (\textit{Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana}, edd. Fr. Miklosich – J. Müller, I–VI, Wien 1860–1890 = MM IV, I. no 2).

\textsuperscript{72} It was the most important source of revenue for the monastery (\textit{Lefort}, Exploitation, 371–372).

\textsuperscript{73} Cf. e.g. the economic profit of Gervasios, similar to any other owner of a state grant: \ldots\ \textit{ἵνα κατέχω τὴν τοιαύτην οἰκονομίαν καὶ νέμωμαι καὶ τὴν εξ αὐτῆς πᾶσαν πρόσοδον ἀποφέρωμαι} \ldots (Chilandar I, no. 126. 16–18).

\textsuperscript{74} Chilandar I, no. 116: 19–23.

\textsuperscript{75} The grant or privilege given “through” the superior (\textit{δι’ αὐτοῦ}) to his (\textit{κατ’ αὐτὸν}) monastery is “automatically” included among the possessions of the monastery.

\textsuperscript{76} \ldots\ \textit{ὡς οἰκείαν αὐτὴν παραπέμψω} \ldots (Chilandar I, no. 94: 8–9).

\textsuperscript{77} \ldots\ \textit{τὴν ἐξ αὐτῆς πᾶσαν καὶ παντοτον πρόσοδον ὡς ἐγὼ μονομερῶς ἀποκερδίζουσα} \ldots (Chilandar I, no. 126: 34–35). The word \textit{μονομερῶς} (meaning “only the part of”) could refer to both Gervasios and the monastery of Chilandar.

\textsuperscript{78} Kallinikos’ \textit{monydrion}: \ldots\ \textit{μετὰ δὲ τὴν ἀποβίωσιν αὐτοῦ, κατέχεται παρὰ τοῦ μέρους τοῦ μοναστηρίου εἰς ὃ μέλλει διακρίνει \ldots;} \ldots\ \textit{ἡ μονή, πρὸς ὃν μέλλει διακρίνει καὶ ἑπαρφίνει αὐτό} \ldots \ldots\ \textit{ἐνθὰ ἂν ἐθελήσω} \ldots (Chilandar I, no. 74: 8–9, 27–29 and 94. 8). Jakovos’ \textit{monydrion}: \ldots\ \textit{μετὰ τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ κρατεῖται \ldots παρὰ τοῦ προσόσον εἰς ὃ μέλλει ἑπαρφίνειν ὡς ἐνδιαθέθηκας} \ldots; \ldots\ \textit{πρὸς ὅπερ ἂν βουλήθη καὶ θέλησιν πρόσοσον} \ldots (Prodrome, no. 28: 7–9, 20–21). Gervasios’ \textit{posotes}: \ldots\ \textit{καὶ ἐνθὰ ἂν βούληται εἰ καὶ θέλῃ} \ldots \ldots\ \textit{πρὸς ὅπερ ἂν ἐνθέλησον πρόσοσον} \ldots (Chilandar I, no. 45: 8–9 and 126. 18–19).
decided to dedicate his monydrion and the estate attached to it to Chilandar, stating why his choice was the best and praising his small monastery.  

Even in the cases where it is clearly stated in the imperial document that the successor of a monk in his oikonomia would be a monastery – specified by name or not – the emperor points out his consent to the monk’s special request (καθὸς ἔξητῆσατο περὶ τοῦτον or ἔχειν ἐπ’ ἀδείας), which again demonstrates the monk’s free will. Indicative detail: Kallinikos, having the best interest of his monydrion in mind, chose to transfer the grant before his death, while the emperor’s permission explicitly referred to the possibility of a new holder after the monk’s death; Gervasios, on the other hand, invokes a long and very serious illness, which made him think of death and decide to care about his oikonomia’s future. This could have happened in any one of the studied cases and should not be thought as illegal, if the grant was already transformed, according to the privileges of bequeathal and dedication, into a hereditary estate.

Nevertheless, the emperor appears to be “involved” in the future dedication of the grant or oikonomia, which again is quite common and expected when a donation of state land or revenue is concerned: the grant is awarded out of the emperor’s eleemose or psychikon and will be bequeathed or dedicated, by his special permission, in order to consist an eternal mnemosynon for the emperor’s soul and memory. Noteworthy, but not surprising, is the extensive praise of the Emperor’s granting

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79. See the chrysobull in favour of Kallinikos in 1327: “περικλήσθεν ένα ... μετά δέ τήν ἀποβίωσιν αὐτοῦ, κατήργησα παρά τά μέρη τοῦ μοναστηρίου εἰς ἄρξεις διακρίνας καὶ παραστέμων αὐτό ... (Chilandar I, no. 74. 8–9). Cf. the repeat of almost the same words in a chrysobull of 1327 in favour of Chilandar, after the dedication and Kallinikos’ death: “... μετά δέ τήν αὐτοῦ τελευτίαν, κατήργησα τούτο παρ’ ἐκείνου πρῶς οὖς μέλλει διακρίνας καὶ καταλέγων αὐτό ... (Chilandar I, no. 11, 3–6)."

80. See the chrysobull in favour of Kallinikos in 1321: “περικλήσθεν ένα ... μετά δέ τήν ἀποβίωσιν αὐτοῦ, κατήργησα παρά τά μέρη τοῦ μοναστηρίου εἰς ἄρξεις διακρίνας καὶ παραστέμων αὐτό ... (Chilandar I, no. 74. 8–9). Cf. the repeat of almost the same words in a chrysobull of 1327 in favour of Chilandar, after the dedication and Kallinikos’ death: “... μετά δέ τήν αὐτοῦ τελευτίαν, κατήργησα τούτο παρ’ ἐκείνου πρῶς οὖς μέλλει διακρίνας καὶ καταλέγων αὐτό ... (Chilandar I, no. 11, 3–6)."
tendency in favour of all his subjects and the monk himself in Gervasios’ dedication document.\(^{89}\)

We could assume that bequeathal or dedication of a monk’s *oikonomia* to a monastery could not be taken for granted but was undoubtly expected by both monastery – at least his own monastery – and the emperor who signs off the granting document. It should be noted that in the case of Matthaios’ *praktikon*, the *apography* received an imperial order to proceed to the *paradosis* of the Doukopoulos’ land to the monk and, as was usual, return to him the *prostagma*\(^{89}\). In the beginning of the *paradosis*, however, they mention both Matthaios and Chilandar as beneficiaries, while at the final part of the document they write that the *praktikon* was handed over (ἐπεδόθη) to the monastery alone.\(^{91}\) A possible additional motive for granting that land to this monk and finally to Chilandar may have been that the land was adjacent to a *metochion* of the monastery.\(^{92}\)

It is also worth repeating that the Serbian monastery of Chilandar in Athos became the final owner of all monks’ *oikonomiai* of the 14th century, except the one of Iakovos, which was given to Saint John Prorome’s monastery in Menoikeion – during the Serb Stefan Dušan’s sovereignty in the area. This choice of the monks was more than expected, as they all belonged to that monastery, and Kallinikos’ doubts were rather a rhetorical statement of concern (about his grant) and justification of his “choice”\(^{93}\); the release in 1321 of a *chrysobull* confirming his donation to the monastery, following his special request to Andronikos III, proves evenmore this monk’s genuine and special care for Chilandar.\(^{94}\)

It is obvious that the relations between Byzantium and Serbia at the time, more friendly than hostile, Andronikos II’s good-will towards the Church and the first civil war between this emperor and his grand-son Andronikos III, are also to be “blamed” for both the grant to the monks and the first dedication to Chilandar. The Serb *krals*’ interference in favour of the Serbian monastery and monks is certainly more than expected and natural, if we take under consideration the diplomatic reasons along with their practices.\(^{95}\) Nevertheless, the future of these grants could not be predicted. New and more effective requests from the part of other monasteries, if not laity, could

\(^{89}\) ... ἀπὸ ἀκρας ἀνυπερβλήτου φιλοτιμίας, ἧν πολλοῖς εἰς πολλοῖς ἐξαπλοῖ καὶ ὑπερεκτείνει ... / ... καὶ στηλογραφίαν ... καὶ μαρτυρίαν ἀξιόπιστον τῶν εὐεργεσιῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀθρόεις, ἂς ... εἰς τὸ ἐπήκουν ἀπαν ὅσα ἄρα μεταθέσαι καὶ χορηγεῖ ... (Chilandar I, no. 126. 14–15, 21–23).


\(^{91}\) Chilandar I, no. 116. 19–23, 72–74.

\(^{92}\) ... ἐδόθη ... διὰ χρυσοβούλλου τῆς βασιλείας μου γὰρ μοιδίων τριακοσίων πλῆθος τῷ Λοζικίῳ τοῦ μετοχίου τῆς ... μονῆς ... τοῦ Χελανταρίου ... Matthaios took also care of gaining the emperor’s permission on behalf of Chilandar for holding the abandoned watermill of a *paroikos*, which was on the first piece of land granted to him (Chilandar I, no. 114. 1–5, 22–31).

\(^{93}\) See supra.

\(^{94}\) Chilandar I, no. 75. 7–9.

\(^{95}\) Cf. the grants of villages to monks living near the monastery of Chilandar in 1321 (Chilandar II, no. 11 and 12) and to the monastery directly (in a great number of documents) by Serb rulers and especially Stefan Dušan; cf. e.g. *M. Živojinović*, Les donations du roi Uroš I au monastère de Chilandar, ZRVI 35 (1996) 213–219, and *S. Mišić*, Chrysobulle du roi Stefan Uroš III en faveur du monastère de Chilandar, Anciennes Archives Serbes 2 (2003) 19–40.
potentially change the emperor’s decisions for “permanent” holding – and it was indeed changed often96.

We are finally able to reach a conclusion, although the evidence we have is relatively poor.

Breaking the rule of poverty (aktemosene) and achieving a bigger or smaller posotes or even some privileges on the part of the monks, by using their acquaintances in the state hierarchy and profiting from the circumstances, are not the only noteworthy features of the Palaiologan grants we examined. Attention should be drawn on the possibility of bequeathing and dedicating their oikonomiai. This privilege is granted to laymen holders of pronoiai-oikonomiai relatively rarely and in special cases, by a subsequent imperial decision (and a chrysobull), signifying extraordinary favour. On the contrary, the «oikonomiai» granted to these monks are qualified of this privilege usually allowed to them in the first imperial document (except Matthaios, who gained the privilege later97).

This probably happened because it was well known in the cases we have examined that the oikonomiai would in the end – before or after the monk’s death – belong to monasteries, which would hold them as every other (privileged) estate they owned98, that is “permanently”. Even the terminology used in the description of the privileges in our documents is the same with that used in state grants to monasteries (ἀναφαιρέτως, ἀδιασείστως, ἀναποσπάστως, ἀνενοχλήτως)99.

Thus, although the receivers of these grants are individuals whose life (βιοτή) is limited, their oikonomiai bear the quality of a donation to the Church, a “legal entity”100 expected to live forever and be therefore the permanent owner of the imperial grants and privileges: εἰς τοὺς ἐξῆς πάντας καὶ διηνεκεῖς χρόνους101.

96 For example (a piece of) the land of Doukopoulos granted to Matthaios and dedicated by him to Chilandar in 1327 is mentioned, in a chrysobull of 1342, as held and exploited by the monastery of Zographou, which should not be “disturbed” about it by neither Chilandar nor Matthaios: ... καὶ μετὰ τῆς γῆς τῆς ἀποσπασθείσης ποσότητος τῶν ἐκοσμων ἑπερβήσθην ἀπὸ τῆς εἰς τὸ λοξήθην οἰκονομίας Πέτρου τοῦ Δουκοπούλου καὶ δοθήσαις διὰ χρυσοβούλλου πρὸς τὸν ἁπὸ τῆς ... μονῆς τοῦ Χιλανταρίου ἰερομόναχον Ματθαίον καὶ κατέχειν καὶ νέμεσθαι ... τὸ μέρος τῆς ... μονῆς τοῦ Ζωγράφου ... (Zographou, no. 34. 22–32). Along with the posotes of this land is mentioned the hydromylon (cf. supra, n. 92).

97 By the two chrysobulls and of course not by the missing (and mentioned) prostagma, which granted to him the right of simply holding the land (ἵνα κατέχη αὐτὴν). See also supra and n. 93 about the fact that the land granted to him was near a metochion of Chilandar.

98 In the second chrysobull in favour of Matthaios (1327) Andronikos II explicitly permits: καὶ ἔχων ἐπ’ ἀδείας δοθεῖν αὐτὴν εἰς τὴν ... μονὴν τοῦ Χιλανταρίου, ὅσοι κατέχειν καὶ παρ’ αὐτῆς ἀναφαρέτως ὡς ἐρῶτα ἀνενοχλήτως καὶ ἀδιασείστως, καθὼς κατέχοντα παρὰ τῆς αὐτῆς μονῆς καὶ τὰ ἄλλα κτήματα αὐτῆς διὰ τῶν ἑπερβηθέντων αὐτῆς χρυσοβούλλων τῆς βασιλείας μου (Chilandar I, no. 114. 17–22).

99 See supra (and n. 58).

100 I am using the modern terminology, of course.

101 Chilandar I, no. 74. 27–28, 75. 23 etc. Nikos Oikonomides expressed the same opinion about the “immortality” of the Church and monasteries, even if they were holders of grants (N. Oikonomidès, Notes sur un praktikon de pronoiaire – Juin 1323, Travaux et Mémoires 5 (1973) 335–346 [= Idem, Documents et études sur les institutions de Byzance (VIIe-XVe s.), Variorum Reprints, London 1976, XXIII], 340). See also supra and infra about the possible ending of the grants’ permanency by state decisions.
Moreover, the main rule of forbidding the holder to transfer his pronoia-oikonomia being broken\textsuperscript{102} from the beginning and the privilege aiming mainly to the dedication to a monastery, the studied grants differ from common pronoia\textsuperscript{i} granted by the Byzantine emperor to any other individual. Those beneficiaries could only hope and ask for the privilege of having their grant converted to a heritable and transferable holding in order to secure their children’s inheritance\textsuperscript{103} in the first place and in the second place the possible dedication to the Church.

Because of these particular elements the oikonomiai granted to monks may constitute a special “category” between the holdings of a pronoiar, even a privileged one, and the oikonomia of a monastery.

The final acquisition of public property by some monasteries through the monks’ oikonomiai could be considered as another success of the monasteries in their constant effort of increasing their own property, mainly at the expense of pronoiars\textsuperscript{104}. In any case, it was a better way of achieving this than the possible temporary dedication by a laity pronoiar\textsuperscript{105}, but, naturally, not as good as a direct grant from the emperor.

On the contrary, the State would prefer to grant pronoiai-oikonomiai to laymen, not only because, unlike monks, a great number of them served (or would serve) in the army or the state hierarchy, but mostly because it was easier to withdraw them, if necessary. This estimation and the fact that it is not appropriate for monks to hold an oikonomia in the first place might explain why these grants were very few and in all likelihood granted in special cases, mainly in the 14th century before the Serbian expansion in Macedonia and certainly before the “confiscation” of a great number of monastic revenues in 1372, when even oikonomiai granted directly to monasteries had been recalled by the State\textsuperscript{106}.

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\textsuperscript{102} Cf. the references of illegal transfer (by sale or dedication) of pronoiai-oikonomiai (or parts of them) and the following confiscation by the state authorities in many Byzantine documents.

\textsuperscript{103} ... πρὸς τοὺς ἐξ ὀσφύος γινητέως παῖδας καὶ κληρονόμους αὐτοῦ ... (e.g. in 1343, Chilandar I, no. 132), which is on the contrary mentioned in identical privileges of ex-pronoiai held also by monks and dedicated to monasteries (e.g. Xeni Soultanina in 1344, Actes de Vatopédi, II: De 1330 à 1376, edd. J. Lefort – Vassiliki Kravari – Chr. Giros – K. Smyrlis, [Archives de l’Athos XXII] Paris 2006 = Vatopédi II, no. 89).


\textsuperscript{105} Cf. examples of such dedications in the 14th century (Docheiariou, no. 13 and 14).

\textsuperscript{106} The well-known “confiscation” of half of monastic revenues in Athos and Thessaloniki, after the battle of Maritsa in 1371, was a reasonable decision of Manuel II Palaiologos, despot of Thessaloniki at the time, proved, however, useless for the protection of the city against the Turks.


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TRIANTAFYLLITSA MANIATI-KOKKINI: Were Byzantine monks of the 13th–15th … 643


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ДА ЛИ СУ ВИЗАНТИЈСКИ МОНАСИ ОД XIII ДО XV ВЕКА БИЛИ УЖИВАОЦИ ЦАРСКИХ ДАРИВАЊА?

Царска даривања (парици, земљишни поседи...) појединцима и Цркви често се помињу у византијским изворима, поготову документима, од 13. до 15. а посебно у 14. веку. У већини случајева корисници су ланци или манастири. Постоје, међутим, помене (нако ретки) клирика (углавном монаха) као поседника парика, земље или пореских прихода. Они су углавном обележени терминима који означавају царска даривања (oikonomiai) или се само као такви препознају.

Ова студија је имала за циљ да утврди, у оној мери у коликој је то могуће, општи контекст у којем су византијски цареви доносили одлуке у корист одређених монаха, као и да утврди разлике у правном статусу између оваквих царских даривања и сличних даривања ланцима. Тако су царска даривања монасima носила привилегије, као што је право завештања и посвете, и била су додељивана и уживана од стране монаха лично, пре него што би била додељена
манастиру, углавном оном ком је сам монах припадао. Пошто су се одликовала поменутим и другим карактеристикама, даривања монасима могла би чинити посебну категорију између пронија лаика и икономија Цркве.

Осим тога, у раду се тврди да су у 14. веку готово сви монаси били везани за српски манастир (и неки од њих и за српског краља) и да су своја даривања добили пре српске експанзије у Македонији, док је корисник монашких посвета био Хиландар а потом (по одобрењу Стефана Душана) и манастир Светог Јована Продрома на Меникејској гори.