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ANOTHER DOCUMENT OF ŞEHAB AL-DIN PASHA  
CONCERNING MOUNT ATHOS (1455)

Şahin or Şehab al-Din Pasha, a eunuch and at the same time a bold soldier, served under two sultans, Murad II and Mehmed II. His patronymic Abd Allah, figuring on his *pendje*, suggests that he was a convert, probably recruited through the *devshirme*.<sup>1</sup> His career was a glorious one and in 1439–1441, when the clash between the Hungarians and the Ottomans was at its height, he was vizier and at the same time *beğlerbeği* of Rumelia, being credited with the important conquest of the silver-producing region of Novobrdó.<sup>2</sup> When, with the accession of the young Mehmed II to the throne, the war party within the Ottoman Empire acquired full power, Şahin stood firmly at the new sultan's side.

In addition to his military activities, Şahin Pasha was involved in the affairs of the monks living on Mount Athos. As early as 1439 he had a very rich and aristocratic friend there, Radić the Serbian Čelnik who had retreated to the monastery of Kastamonitou without surrendering his interests in his silver mines in Serbia and his fortune in general. Şahin treated Radić's attitude favourably. When the Čelnik had a dispute about a very large deposit, Şahin was careful to instruct a judge to open an investigation. When Novobrdó was conquered by the Ottomans he took care of the Čelnik's share in the silver mines as well as of his house situated in the town.<sup>3</sup>

Other Athonite documents in Greek show Şahin's preoccupations with monastic disputes, which could be settled through customary law (*örf*) and not in the religious court (*shari'a*). That made it possible for the monks to appeal to him. In 1452 the monasteries of Xenophon and of Saint Panteleimon were in dispute about

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- <sup>1</sup> V. L. Ménage, "Seven Ottoman Documents from the Reign of Mehmed II". In: *Documents from Islamic Chanceries*, ed. S. M. Stern, Oxford 1965, p. 112–118. For the *pendje*, see C. Truhelka, *Turško-Slovenski Spomenici Dubrovačke Arhive*, Sarajevo 1911, p. 7–8 (of June 1441), V. Boškov, "Aus Athos Turcica: Eine Urkunde Şehab ed-Din Şahin Paşa's, des Wesirs und Statthalters von Rumelien; aus dem Jahre 1453". In: *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 76. 1986, p. 66, and E. A. Zachariadou, "The Worrysome Wealth of the Čelnik Radić". In: *Studies in Ottoman History in Honour of Professor V. L. Ménage*, edd. C. Heywood and C. Imber, Istanbul 1994, p. 396–397.
- <sup>2</sup> V. L. Ménage, "The 'Annals of Murad II'". In: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 39. 1976, p. 577. He is frequently mentioned in the *Gazavât-i Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân*, edd. H. İnalçık – M. Oğuz, Ankara 1978; cf. T. Gökbilgin, *XV–XVI. asırlarda Edirne ve Paşa livası, Vakıflar-Mülkler Mukataaalar*, Istanbul 1952, p. 255–257, and H. İnalçık, *Fatih Devri üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar I*, Ankara 1954, p. 84–85.
- <sup>3</sup> Zachariadou, "The Worrysome Wealth", p. 383–397; cf. N. Oikonomides, *Actes de Kastamonitou*, Paris 1978, p. 5–8.