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The Kalebends of Varna Fortress Confinement in the Second half of the 18th Century: Prisoners and Dungeons

(Abstract)

In this article, we will look at the Kalebend's of Varna and provide some information on the city itself and its fortress. The etymological meaning of Kalebend will be given, and some information on its history, registers of Kalebend and documents will be also provided. Later, we will talk on the crimes that resulted in the punishment of Kalebend and its legal background. We will also deal with those who got sentenced with punishment of Kalebend, how they were transferred to the fortress where they were transferred for their sentence and how the legal procedures took place. The main sources for this research are mainly from the Presidential Ottoman Archives in Istanbul. The Registrar's of Kalebends in this Archive are classified according to their subjects. We will examine these registrars and documents due to the fact that these are legal documents related to the topic and also crucial for the Ottoman diplomacy. The punishment of Kalebend which derives its legality from the Islamic law has its place in the Ottoman legal system. For this reason we aim to shed light on this topic with the help of archival documents and bring this topic to the attention of the academic world. The first document that I would like to talk about is on the Bulgarians exiled from Bulgaria to Diyarbekir.¹ In this document which deals with Varna Kalebends, their punishments, kalebend registrars, the reason why such a punishment was given, crimes committed, the prisoners and their social status, the

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process of release of the prisoners helps us shed light to the legal and punishment system of the Ottoman Empire.

Keywords: Varna; Varna Castle; Kalebend; Release; Crime; Punishment; Exile