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Άγιο Όρος: Εξαιρετικό αφιέρωμα στον Guardian

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Το Άγιο Όρος είναι η πνευματική πρωτεύουσα του ορθόδοξου χριστιανισμού και αποτελείται από 20 μοναστήρια και περίπου 2.000 μοναχούς, σημειώνει ο βρετανικός Guardian σε ένα συγκλονιστικό αφιέρωμα που έκανε πριν από μερικές ημέρες.

«Ο τρόπος ζωής των μοναχών παραμένει ίδιος από τότε που πρώτοι μοναχοί

έφτασαν εδώ τον 9ο αιώνα» σημειώνει η βρετανική εφημερίδα και προσθέτει: «Ορισμένοι μοναχοί μένουν μέσα σε ένα μοναστήρι, ενώ άλλοι επιλέγουν την πλήρη απομόνωση».

«Για την πλειονότητα των μοναχών που μένουν σε κάποιο μοναστήρι, η προσευχή παίρνει τον περισσότερο από τον χρόνο τους. Ακόμη και όταν δουλεύουν ή τρώνε, προσεύχονται» σημειώνει, μεταξύ άλλων ο Guardian.



The Guardian picture essay

The holy mountain: monks of Mount Athos - photo essay

Mount Athos is the spiritual capital of the Orthodox Christian world, consisting of 20 monasteries and approximately 2,000 monks. Photographer Rick Fidler visited the oldest surviving monastic community in the world
by Rick Fidler and Matt Falter



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Mount Athos is one of the most important centres of the Orthodox Christian world, consisting of 20 monasteries and approximately 2,000 monks. Located on a Greek peninsula, it is home to the oldest surviving monastic community on Earth. The way of life for the monks is practically unchanged since the first monks arrived in the sixth century. Most of the monks live within the walls of their chosen monastery, but others choose to live in complete isolation, away from any distractions.

Women are not allowed within 500 metres of the shore, and even female animals are prohibited from walking on Mount Athos. This is because the Virgin Mary is said to have visited the peninsula and prayed to have it as her own. It is believed that the presence of women might distract the monks, tempting them away from true celibacy and lead them to sin.

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Monastic life

For the majority of monks on the holy mountain who live inside one of the 20 monasteries, prayer takes up most of the time. Even when they are hard at work or eating in the refectory, they are in prayer. Services take place in the monasteries' often exquisitely ornate churches.



Father Paul Agapocostas reads the Greek New Testament. Right: A monk prays at a window during the day in the church of Monastery.



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The timings of the services vary and can sometimes run for six hours. Most prayer takes place at night, with one of the services starting at 2am and finishing at 6am - this is because the monks believe prayer is easier when the monastery is at its quietest.



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