

FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY – HELLAS  
INSTITUTE FOR MEDITERRANEAN STUDIES



Halcyon Days in Crete VIII

A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 13–15 January 2012

# Ottoman Rural Societies and Economies

*Edited by* Elias Kolovos

CRETE UNIVERSITY PRESS





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## ABBREVIATIONS

BOA:	Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, (Istanbul)
TSMA:	Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi (Istanbul)
<i>ActOrHung:</i>	<i>Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i>
<i>ArchOtt:</i>	<i>Archivum Ottomanicum</i>
<i>EB:</i>	<i>Études Balkaniques</i>
<i>IJMES:</i>	<i>International Journal of Middle East Studies</i>
<i>IJTS:</i>	<i>International Journal of Turkish Studies</i>
<i>JAOS:</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JESHO:</i>	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
<i>JTS:</i>	<i>Journal of Turkish Studies</i>
<i>NPT:</i>	<i>New Perspectives on Turkey</i>
<i>OTAM:</i>	<i>Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi</i>
<i>RMMM:</i>	<i>Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée</i>
<i>SF:</i>	<i>Südost-Forschungen</i>
<i>SI:</i>	<i>Studia Islamica</i>
<i>TD:</i>	<i>Tarih Dergisi</i>
<i>TED:</i>	<i>İstanbul Üniversitesi Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi</i>
<i>THR:</i>	<i>Turkish Historical Review</i>
<i>VD:</i>	<i>Vakıflar Dergisi</i>
<i>WZKM:</i>	<i>Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes</i>
<i>EP:</i>	<i>The Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> . New Edition (Leiden 1960-2002)
<i>TDVİA:</i>	<i>Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi</i> (Istanbul 1988- )

## NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

A simple system of transliteration from the Ottoman Turkish into the Latin alphabet has been adopted, and most diacritical marks have been omitted.

No final –s- is added to plural nouns, such as *reaya*.





## INTRODUCTION

### BRINGING THE PEASANTS BACK IN?

Elias KOLOVOS\*

FOR 20 YEARS NOW PEASANTS HAVE BEEN ALMOST COMPLETELY ABSENT from Ottomanist historiography. Since 1996 almost no major monograph has been devoted to Ottoman peasant history. This is in sharp contrast with the importance given to the study of Ottoman rural society and economy by earlier Ottomanist historiography. In his classic *History of the Ottoman Empire*, published in 1973, the doyen of Ottoman studies, Halil İnalcık, described the Ottoman Empire as a ‘peasant empire’.<sup>1</sup> However, for the Ottomanist historiography of the beginning of the twenty-first century, it looks as though the Ottoman Empire was rather an ‘empire of difference’.<sup>2</sup>

This historiographical shift is apparently the result of the more general ‘cultural turn’ in modern historiography. As Suraiya Faruqi puts it in her paper in this volume, since “villagers before the late 1800s – or even the twentieth century – have left very few traces of their cultural orientations, including even religious practice, with a few notable exceptions, once culture and identity dominated the scene, Ottoman peasants disappeared from the historiography.”<sup>3</sup>

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\* University of Crete, Department of History and Archaeology and F.O.R.T.H., Institute for Mediterranean Studies.

I wish to thank my colleague Antonis Anastasopoulos for his comments on this introduction.

- 1 H. İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600* (1973, reprinted with new preface (New Rochelle, NY 1989), xiv. Reference from Amy Singer, *Palestinian Peasants and Ottoman Officials: Rural Administration around Sixteenth-Century Jerusalem* (Cambridge - New York 1994), 2. See also H. İnalcık, ‘The Çift-Hane System: The Organization of Ottoman Rural Economy’, in H. İnalcık with D. Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914* (Cambridge 1994), 143-154; idem, ‘Village, Peasant and Empire’, in idem, *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire: Essays on Economy and Society* (Bloomington 1993), 137-160.
- 2 K. Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge 2008).
- 3 See below, p. 10. See also eadem, ‘Ottoman Peasants and Rural Life: The Historiography of the Twentieth Century’, *ArchOtt*, 18 (2000), 153-182; ‘Agriculture and Rural Life in the Ottoman Empire (ca 1500-1878) (A Report on Scholarly Literature Published Between 1970 and 1985)’, *NPT*, 1 (1987), 3-34.

This volume follows an initiative aimed at putting the peasants back on the agenda of Ottoman history.<sup>4</sup> However, we do not seek (how could we?) to reinstate the historiographical *status quo ante* nor to attack the many achievements of contemporary historiography. Moreover, unlike the earlier approach of some ‘classic’ works on this subject, which focused on the state as a central actor in rural societies, our symposium, the Eighth Halcyon Days in Crete Symposium of the Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FO.R.T.H., held in Rethymno on 13-15 January 2012, sought to investigate economic and social relations in the rural countryside of the Ottoman Empire not only from the viewpoint of the central administration, but also from that of rural societies.<sup>5</sup> In the present volume, our aim is to highlight themes that are still today unexplored or deserve revision, and throw light on the diverse trajectories of rural economies and societies in the long history and vast lands of the Ottoman Empire.

Of course, research into Ottoman rural societies and economies does not have to start from scratch. Just before turning its back on the peasants, in the 1990s Ottomanist historiography produced some very important works on the history of Ottoman rural societies and economies, and their impact is much felt in many of the contributions in this volume. These include Halil İnalçık and Donald Quataert’s seminal *Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, H. İslamoğlu-İnan’s *State and Peasant in the Ottoman Empire*, the volumes edited by Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak on *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East*, and by Halil Berktaş and Suraiya Faroqhi concerning *New Approaches to State and Peasant in Ottoman History*, Amy Singer’s dissertation concerning *Palestinian Peasants*, and Linda T. Darling’s detailed study of the nature and transformation of Ottoman tax-collection mechanisms.<sup>6</sup>

The issue of the legal and real rights to agricultural land has been a central issue for the study of the Ottoman society and economy in the historiographical tradition of the

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- 4 Following Nicolas Michel, ‘Introduction. Ottomanisme et ruralisme’, in M. Afifi *et al.* (eds), *Sociétés rurales ottomanes/Ottoman Rural Societies* (Cairo 2005), 1-16. In this introduction, Nicolas Michel shows that in France, Germany, and Britain, rural historiography has been reviving during the last 20 years. The volume by Afifi *et al.*, with its emphasis on the Arab rural lands, and the present volume, with an emphasis on the ‘central’ Ottoman rural lands, should be read as complementary.
  - 5 For a sharp critique of earlier approaches to Ottoman rural history focusing on the state rather than the peasants, see H. Berktaş and S. Faroqhi (eds), *New Approaches to State and Peasant in Ottoman History* (London 1992), 109-184. This publication has also appeared as *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 18/3-4 (April/July 1991).
  - 6 İnalçık with Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*; H. İslamoğlu-İnan, *State and Peasant in the Ottoman Empire: Agrarian Power Relations and Regional Economic Development in Ottoman Anatolia during the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden 1994). For a new edition in Turkish with an extensive introduction by the author see: eadem, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Devlet ve Köylü* (Istanbul 2010), 19-100; Ç. Keyder - F. Tabak (eds), *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East* (Albany 1991); Berktaş and Faroqhi (eds), *New Approaches*; Singer, *Palestinian Peasants*; L. T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire 1550-1650* (Leiden 1996).

twentieth century. It has been examined in detail, mainly in the light of the Ottoman legal codes (*kanunnames*), which reflect the claim of the Ottoman dynasty, in accordance with the Islamic law,<sup>7</sup> that all agricultural (grain) land belonged to the state (*miri*).<sup>8</sup> However, as John Chr. Alexander, our symposiarch, emphasised in his introductory paper at our symposium, this claim was not accepted without dispute: both the officials of the state and the peasants were always trying to circumvent, undermine, and, in the last analysis, deny this claim. This gave rise to a constant tension concerning the definition of property in Ottoman society, reflected in the ambiguity of the related terms (*miri*, *mülk*, *vakıf*, *tasarruf*) in the Ottoman documents. It is characteristic that, in the Ottoman landholding system, the legal rights of both the *sipahis*, or any tax-takers (described as ‘lords of the land’, *sahib-i arz*), and the peasants, to the state lands (*miri*), were described by the same term, ‘usufruct’ (*tasarruf*); the latter had the ‘usufruct’ of their plots and the former the legal right to enjoy the revenues of the same lands, in return for their military or other services to the state. According to Alexander, “in the end, the essential question is, perhaps, the significance, in all its possible extrapolations in time and at the various levels of Ottoman society, of *I have*, *mine*, and *ownership*.”<sup>9</sup>

The Ottomans used for the peasants the terms *ra’iyet* and *reaya*, terms which refer more generally to the taxpaying population and the subjects of the Sultan (literally, they mean ‘the flock’), as opposed to the *askeri*, the military tax-takers.<sup>10</sup> In the Ottoman centuries, peasants were tenants,<sup>11</sup> who had the obligation to cultivate certain plots of land,

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7 B. Johansen, *The Islamic Law on Land Tax and Rent: The Peasants’ Loss of Property Rights as Interpreted in the Hanafite Legal Literature of the Mamluk and Ottoman Periods* (London 1988).

8 H. İnalcık, ‘The Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300-1600’, in İnalcık with Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 103-107; C. Imber, *Ebu’s-su’ud. The Islamic Legal Tradition* (Stanford 1997).

9 See below, p. 2. Recent research has shown that there were important exceptions to the general characterisation of grain land as *miri* land, including the Aegean islands, and Crete after 1669. See E. Kolovos, ‘Beyond “Classical” Ottoman *Defterology*: A Preliminary Assessment of the *Tahrir* Registers of 1670/71 concerning Crete and the Aegean Islands’, in E. Kolovos, P. Kotzageorgis, S. Laiou and M. Sariyannis (eds), *The Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, the Greek Lands: Toward a Social and Economic History; Studies in Honor of John C. Alexander* (Istanbul 2007), 201-235.

10 In the Arabic sources, peasants were referred to more precisely as *fallah*, plural *fallahun*, cultivators. Singer, *Palestinian Peasants*, 11-12.

11 Ottoman peasants were not serfs, since they did not belong personally to anyone. However, since they were tied to the lands they cultivated, and these lands were actually controlled by tax-takers, they were implicitly attached to the latter. A farmer could not abandon his plot and move to another area, unless he paid a rather heavy penalty (*çift-bozan resmi*). Dariusz Kołodziejczyk makes, in his paper in this volume, a comparison between Ottoman peasants and serfs in seventeenth-century Eastern Europe, see below, p. 59-60 For the debate concerning feudalism and Asiatic mode of production and Ottoman rural society, see H. Berktaş, ‘The Feudalism Debate: The Turkish End - Is ‘Tax - vs. - Rent’ Necessarily the Product and Sign of a Modal Difference?’, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 14/3 (1987), 291-333, versus C. Wickham, ‘The Uniqueness of the East’, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 12 (1984), 166-196.

without altering their original use, or selling, donating, endowing, or mortgaging them; however, Ottoman peasants had the right to transfer their plots to their children, and even to other farmers as well (*ferağ*). Moreover, peasants, as well as the tax-takers, had also the right to acquire land as a private property (*mülk*) in the case of vegetable plots, vineyards, or fruit trees. In this respect, peasants could be put in the centre of historical research as social actors who fought to expand their rights against both the tax-takers and the state (and their fellow-villagers as well). According to Huri İslamoğlu-İnan, the Ottoman landholding system, which left the organisation of production to the peasants themselves, with hereditary rights, provided the peasants with a 'minimal space' for productive initiative. This was an important space for social action.<sup>12</sup>

Unfortunately, in Ottomanist historiography we do not have (and are unlikely to have in the future), a study similar to that of Montaillou by Emmanuel Le Roy-Ladurie. However, the *micro-history* of Ottoman peasant communities constitutes a promising area for further research. Suraiya Faroqhi, in her paper in this volume, embarks on such a micro-historical study, introducing us the district of Gebze, in the vicinity of Istanbul, during the eighteenth century. Faroqhi focuses especially on the contested character of Ottoman peasant life, analysing the disputes concerning the legal status of the lands between the local tax-takers with one another, and, more importantly, with the peasants. She shows us, for example, peasants planting trees on agricultural land, or making them fruitful, in order to acquire them as their property, actions that gave rise to the legal reaction of the tax-takers, who claimed their right to control the crops cultivated on their lands. Faroqhi focuses especially on the strategies that the peasants used to avoid the 'hated' *resm-i tapu*, the transfer tax on their lands. Other disputes examined by Faroqhi include the case of peasants who refused to return their plots when they had been left uncultivated for more than three years, because of drought, lack of oxen, or illness in the family. Faroqhi's research also reveals women who fought for their right to inherit their deceased brother's lands. Disputes over land reflect the contested character of Ottoman landholding and they are to be found quite often in the judicial documents. Faroqhi examines a special case of a border dispute between two pious foundations (*vakıfs*) in Gebze, which went so far as to remove the stones that marked the limits of the lands. Such disputes were also very frequent between Christian Orthodox monasteries, as examined in the relevant section of this volume below.<sup>13</sup>

Overall, Ottoman peasants were not eager to pay their taxes without complaint, or even a fight. The perfect example was given by Amy Singer in her book on the Palestinian peasants, and is cited in this volume by Dariusz Kołodziejczyk: in 1531, in the village of Bayt Jālā, south of Jerusalem, some of the local peasants chased away the Ottoman surveyor with the following curse, which tells us a great deal about the legitimacy

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12 İslamoğlu-İnan, *State and Peasant in the Ottoman Empire*, 243-245.

13 See below, p. 163-208. Border disputes were also common between peasants and nomads or semi-nomads who entered the village pastures with their flocks. Faroqhi examines cases in the area of Gebze, where, in one example, the peasants of a certain village were almost ready to leave their fields because of the attacks of migrant Kurds and Turcomans.

of the Ottoman landholding system for the peasants: “your writing down (*kitābatukum*) is like the wind from a donkey” (1).<sup>14</sup> In this volume, Faroqhi gives an account of a case in Gebze where the peasants of a village refused to pay one-eighth and insisted that they should pay only the true tithe, ten per cent. In another case, villagers resisted an attempt to collect more than a flat rate for the produce of their orchards, invoking tradition. The administration, however, as Faroqhi notes, refused such claims, since, in the eighteenth century, they wanted to support the newly instituted life-time tax farmers by guaranteeing their revenues. On the other hand, provincial elites were struggling to acquire control of the lands. Faroqhi examines a case of a local ‘strongman’ in Tuzla, who tried to prevent the villagers from pasturing their animals on the village commons, which he attempted to retain for his own use, usurped agricultural lands belonging to the peasants, and overcharged the latter on their tithes.

Village autonomy, i.e., self-governance and self-regulation of rural communities, was a cornerstone of Ottoman rural societies. Rhoads Murphey, in his contribution in this volume, argues that many aspects of village life were unaffected by the gradual process of Ottomanisation. Interestingly, he suggests that this was a fact not only acknowledged, but also supported by the pre-modern Ottoman state, which actually held a position more of a passive observer than of an active regulator of the social norms and practices in the rural societies of the ‘protected domains’. This approach stands in sharp contrast with the earlier state-centred and literalistic interpretation of state-peasant relations, especially by Ömer Lütfi Barkan, who argued for an all-centralising land-tenure regime fully controlled by an almighty Ottoman state.<sup>15</sup> Instead, Murphey argues that “to rule its diverse empire effectively and to minimise the potential for controversy, fiscal expectations and even normative values had to be modified and occasionally set aside to achieve the greater good of smooth governance. With respect to the fine tuning and micro-managing of many aspects of its relations with the inhabitants of the rural and provincial spheres, the [Ottoman] state could not afford for practical reasons to be overbearing or over-intrusive and had to learn to accept what it was incapable of changing.”<sup>16</sup>

14 See below, p. 57, quoting Singer, *Palestinian Peasants*, 37. See also another case-study in E. Kolovos, ‘Riot in the Village: Some Cases of Peasant Protest Around Ottoman Salonica’, in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Political Initiatives ‘From the Bottom-Up’ in the Ottoman Empire. Halcyon Days in Crete VII, A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 9-11 January 2009* (Rethymno 2012), 47-56.

15 See Ö. L. Barkan, *Türkiye’de Toprak Meselesi* (Istanbul 1980) [a collection of his papers]. Cf. also the sharp critique by H. Bertay, ‘The Search for the Peasant in Western and Turkish History/Historiography’, in Bertay and Faroqhi (eds), *New Approaches*, 109-184.

16 See below, p. 36. The work of the Greek scholar Spyros Asdrachas is very important for the analysis of the autonomy of the Greek rural communities under Ottoman rule. See especially Sp. I. Asdrachas, ‘Φορολογικές και περιοριστικές λειτουργίες των κοινοτήτων στην Τουρκοκρατία [Taxation and restrictive functions of communities under Turkish rule]’, *Τα Ιστορικά*, 3/5 (1986), 45-62; idem, ‘Νησιωτικές κοινότητες: οι φορολογικές λειτουργίες [Island communities: taxation functions]’, *Τα Ιστορικά*, 5/8-9 (1988), 3-36, 229-258. Asdrachas has edited a collective volume entitled *Greek Economic History, 15th-19th centuries*, transl. D. Sloman

Earlier Ottomanist historiography worked especially with the Ottoman tax registers (*tahrir defterleri*). Ömer Lütfi Barkan, for example, systematically studied these sources, using them more to show the supposed might of the Ottoman state over the rural economy than as a source for Ottoman rural history.<sup>17</sup> As a consequence, this historiographical trend did not meet sufficiently with the methodology of economic history, with one notable exception: the experimental study of Bruce McGowan, who tried to estimate with the methodology of economic history production and consumption in the Middle Danube; McGowan, however, found no followers.<sup>18</sup> Heath Lowry has successfully described the studies based on the *tahrir defterleri* as *defterology*; he was, however, the same scholar who stressed their pitfalls and limitations.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, economic historians like Metin Coşgel have recently suggested that the data from the Ottoman tax registers, which include estimates of agricultural production at different dates (and not actual production measurements), can be used *adequately* as data by economic historians, who actually *prefer* average data in order to make useful generalisations.<sup>20</sup> Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, revisiting in this volume his earlier publication of the *defter* of Kamanice, embarks upon these new vistas in order to compare the agrarian productivity in seventeenth-century Ottoman Podolia with that of sixteenth-century Hungary and Anatolia, to the advantage of the latter. Kołodziejczyk, in his paper, experiments also with a grain production model comparing Podolia with Mazovia, suggesting that the Podolian peasant household did better than the Mazovian one in the same century.

Moreover, scholars, like Stefka Parveva in this volume, have attempted to include new sources in the earlier *defterology* sample, from the seventeenth and the eighteenth century, which add new potential to the study of rural society, especially as regards the

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(Athens 2007), with many chapters on the rural history of the Greek lands; see also Vol. II, *Sources*, ed. E. Liata, trans. J. Davis (Athens 2007).

17 See Ö. L. Barkan, 'Türkiye'de İmparatorluk devirlerinin büyük nüfus ve arazi tahrirleri ve hakana mahsus istatistik defterleri', *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 2 (1940-41), 20-59 and 214-47; idem, 'Essai sur les données statistiques des registres de recensement dans l'empire ottoman aux XVe et XVIe siècles', *JESHO*, 1 (1958), 9-36; idem, 'Research on the Ottoman Fiscal Surveys', in M. A. Cook (ed.), *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East*, (Oxford 1970), 163-71. The 'classic' edition of the registers of the *sancak* of Bursa was published after the death of Barkan. Ö. L. Barkan - E. Meriçli, *Hüdavendigâr Livası Tahrir Defterleri*, I (Ankara 1988).

18 B. McGowan, 'Food Supply and Taxation on the Middle Danube (1568-1579)', *ArchOtt*, 1 (1969), 139-96. McGowan has also published an exemplary transcription of the register of Srem, *Sirem Sancağı Mufassal Tahrir Defteri* (Ankara 1983).

19 H. Lowry, 'The Ottoman *tahrir defterleri* as a Source for Social and Economic History: Pitfalls and Limitations', in idem, *Studies in Defterology: Ottoman Society in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Istanbul 1992), 3-18. Another important study, showing that the study of the *defters* as a source for economic history has to be very careful was that of John Alexander, 'Counting the Grains: Conceptual and Methodological Issues in Reading the Ottoman Mufassal Tahrir Defters', *Arab Historical Review for Ottoman Studies*, 19-20 (1999), 55-70.

20 M. M. Coşgel, 'Ottoman Tax Registers (*Tahrir Defterleri*)', *Historical Methods*, 37 (2004), 87-100.



economic and social stratifications in the countryside.<sup>21</sup> (Additionally, Socrates Petmezas in his paper in our volume uses non-Ottoman sources, i.e., the Venetian *Cadaastro* of Vostizza, completed in 1700, to study the land tenure and land settlement patterns of late seventeenth-century Ottoman and early eighteenth-century Venetian Vostizza in the Morea.) Stefka Parveva's study suggests that in the south-western Peloponnese in the early eighteenth century, villages had a grain surplus before the payment of the poll-tax and the *ispence*, but not after subtracting from this surplus the necessary amount for the payment of the aforementioned taxes. These findings corroborate earlier suggestions by Spyros Asdrachas also concerning the Peloponnese.<sup>22</sup>

The Ottoman survey registers have also been traditionally used for the study of settlement patterns in the rural countryside. Oktay Özel, in his paper in this volume, revisits the earlier studies of Ottoman Anatolia by the historical geographers Xavier de Planhol and Wolf Dieter Hütteroth.<sup>23</sup> Anatolia was a region which, after demographic growth during the early sixteenth century, experienced major settlement destruction during the late sixteenth and the early seventeenth century, which actually lasted well into the nineteenth century. This was a phenomenon termed 'The Great Flight' (*Büyük Kaçgunluk*) by Mustafa Akdağ.<sup>24</sup> Recently, Sam White has suggested that the climate change described as the 'Little Ice Age' was a direct cause of the *Celali* rebellions and settlement destruction.<sup>25</sup> Özel's study of the abandoned settlements in the province of Amasya, based on rich data provided in the *mufassal avarız* and *cizye* registers of the seventeenth century, corroborates Hütteroth's findings regarding the Central Anatolian plateau to a striking extent: "The number of ruined, and partially or wholly abandoned, villages in the Anatolian provinces had indeed reached to the extent where any seemingly exaggerated portrayal of the phenomenon by contemporaries was thoroughly warranted." (p. 107).

It has been already argued that the Ottoman survey registers are a very important source for a variety of issues. A further use of the registers is for the study of conversions to Islam in the countryside. In this volume, Phokion Kotzageorgis embarks upon such a study through the survey registers, focusing on a comparative study of two cases of conversion among rural populations in northern Greece: the Greek-speaking 'Vallahades' of the province of Voion and the region of Grevena (who, according to tradition, were given their name by the Christians, because of the fact that the only Turkish-Arabic word the 'Vallahades' knew was 'wallahi'), and the Slav-speaking 'Pomaks' of the Rhodope

21 See also E. Kolovos, 'Insularity and Island Society in the Ottoman Context: The Case of the Aegean Island of Andros (Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries)', *Turcica*, 39 (2007), 49-122.

22 S. Asdrachas, 'Le surplus rural dans les régions de Méditerranée orientale: les mécanismes' in *Actes du IIe Colloque International d'histoire. Economies méditerranéennes équilibres et intercommunications XIIIe-XIXe siècles*, Vol. 2 (Athens 1986), 32-40.

23 X. de Planhol, *De la plaine pamphylienne aux lacs pisidiens. Nomadisme et vie paysanne* (Paris 1959); W. D. Hütteroth, *Ländliche Siedlungen im südlichen Inneranatolien in den letzten vierhundert Jahren* (Göttingen 1968).

24 M. Akdağ, 'Celali İsyanlarından Büyük Kaçgunluk, 1603-1606', *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, II/2-3 (1964), 1-49.

25 Sam White, *The Climate of Rebellion in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 2011).

Mountains. Kotzageorgis argues that the conversion phenomenon in the Balkans does not easily lend itself to any typology: the particular socio-economic, spatial, and cultural conditions affected the time, the motive, and the manner of conversion to Islam. It is important to note, however, that, according to Kotzageorgis, “economic deficiency was a phenomenon that characterised both rural societies; however, the question is to what extent it was the case in previous centuries.” (p. 154).

A separate section in this volume examines monasteries as social and economic units in the countryside of the Balkans and the Aegean Sea. Elias Kolovos reviews the recent Greek historiography of the monasteries in the Greek lands under the Ottomans, focusing on their social and economic functions. Big monasteries had important landed assets in the countryside and were involved in a variety of economic activities, agriculture, stockbreeding, fishing, woodcutting, in order to secure their autarchy in times of crisis. In relation to that, historiography has described the monasteries as ‘enterprises’ and has embarked upon research into their contribution to the development of the rural landscape, the expansion and the improvement of cultivation. The latest achievement of efforts in exploiting the Ottoman archives of the monasteries of the Greek lands, the publication of the Ottoman archive of St John’s Monastery on Patmos,<sup>26</sup> is presented in this volume in the papers of Elizabeth Zachariadou (who was the first scholar to highlight the value of monastic archives for Ottoman history), Nicolas Vatin, and Michael Ursinus. Zachariadou and Vatin describe the geographical expansion of the monastic economy of Patmos into the world of the Aegean islands. Ursinus, on the other hand, focuses on the island of Patmos itself and makes an attempt to map the monastic lands of Patmos and their topography.

The nature of Ottoman landholding, which was based mainly on the *timar* system, has been investigated sufficiently in earlier historiography. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that no study in this volume is devoted solely to the *timars*. On the other hand, in our volume, Nicolas Michel investigates in detail the involvement of the military in sixteenth-century Egypt, through a study of the inheritance inventories (*daftar muḥallafāt*). He concludes that the city-based military elites in Egypt were actually involved in rural investments. Michel’s findings are in contrast with the traditional view of the sixteenth-century Ottoman military as a *rentier* group, living from the revenues granted to them, without any day-to-day involvement in the rural economy.

A major debate in earlier historiography of Ottoman rural societies and economies concerned their transformation during the slow transition to capitalism. In this debate, Fernand Braudel and Immanuel Wallerstein suggested that the rise of demand for cereals in Western Europe caused the formation of big landholdings in the Ottoman Empire, which prompted the supply of the European demand through the commercialisation of agricultural production. On the other hand, Ottomanists who have studied the sources for the formation of big estates (McGowan, Veinstein, Keyder, Kasaba, Tabak) concluded that the Ottoman Empire remained an empire of generally small landholdings, with only

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26 N. Vatin, G. Veinstein and E. Zachariadou, *Catalogue du fonds ottoman des archives du monastère de Saint-Jean à Patmos. Les vingt-deux premiers dossiers* (Athens 2011).

relatively few big estates. Thus, “commodity production by small-owning peasantry represented an alternative mode of integration into the market”.<sup>27</sup>

In their paper, Antonis Anastasopoulos and Eleni Gara focus on the ‘chiftlicisation process’ in the case of eighteenth century Karaferye, where the local Muslim elite had obtained control of a considerable part of the countryside. The sources they have examined in detail suggest that this major change in the Ottoman landholding pattern was caused by an unprecedented increase in taxation, combined with population decline. The collapse of the free peasantry in Karaferye under the heavy exactions of the central administration is to be dated to the years of the war with the Holy League in 1684-1699.

The paper by Theocharis Stavrides in this volume provides a detailed example of how European merchants created links with small producers in the case of Cyprus. Stavrides shows that credit from European merchants was one of the primary ways of financing agriculture in eighteenth-century Cyprus. In return for the cash provided by the European merchants, the small landholders gave the merchants marketable agricultural products, necessary for their mercantile activities. In this way, the European merchants were able to safeguard their supply well before the harvesting season. Stavrides links this phenomenon directly with the increase in international trade, leading to the abandonment of subsistence agriculture and the rise of commercial agriculture and cash crops, such as cotton. For the peasants, this resulted to their transformation from small-time independent farmers to agricultural workers. As shown in the penultimate section of this volume, this was a trend which continued during the nineteenth century.

A series of three papers in this volume, all from a dynamic research group from Boğaziçi and Ege Universities, examine the ‘great transformation’ of Ottoman agrarian relations during the nineteenth century. The nineteenth century has been described by Eric Hobsbawm as an era of ‘legal revolution’, among other revolutions;<sup>28</sup> all around Europe, feudalism and serfdom were abolished in favour of installing markets in land and labour. Yücel Terzibaşoğlu suggests that we should attempt to understand the Tanzimat reforms, and especially the Ottoman land code of 1858, within this comparative framework.<sup>29</sup> The Tanzimat reforms led to the institution of individual ownership of land, through a transformation, first, from multiple rights to individually exclusive rights, and second, from communally-held rights (commons) to individual rights. Terzibaşoğlu, in his paper researching nineteenth-century Ottoman provincial councils in the Balkans as law-makers and courts, observes a trend in the course of the nineteenth century towards the criminalisation of customary practices of agrarian communities. Alp Yücel Kaya’s research on *çiftliks* and sharecropping in nineteenth-century Ottoman Tırhala (Gk. Trikala) shows that the traditional labour bondage to the soil survived well into the mid nineteenth century, in favour of the profit of the Ottoman *çiftlik*-holders. Moreover, it is of extreme importance to note that these agrarian relations and the social questions they entailed were

27 Keyder and Tabak (eds), *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture*, 3.

28 E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789-1848* (London 1962), 151-160.

29 See H. İslamoğlu, ‘Property as a Contested Domain: A Re-evaluation of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858’, *Ottoman History as World History* (Istanbul 2007), 210.

inherited after the annexation of Thessaly to Greece in 1881, when the absentee Ottoman pashas sold all their *çiflik*s to major financiers of the Greek Diaspora, at least until the post-World War I agrarian reforms. Last, but not least, Meltem Toksöz, examines in her paper the 1858 Ottoman Land Code from the regional perspective of Çukurova. According to her study, during the second half of the nineteenth century, Ottoman Çukurova gained unprecedented access to economic incentives, commercial mechanisms, and infrastructural improvements. As a result, by 1908, Çukurova, according to Toksöz, “became a land of shared hegemony between foreign capitalists, the burgeoning indigenous classes, and the state” (p. 395).

The final section in our volume examines two particular challenges for the future of the historiography of Ottoman rural societies and economies. The first challenge is that of the robust field of environmental history. How environmental and rural history (and even beyond...) can be interrelated is, I believe, magnificently shown in the *opus magnum* of the late Faruk Tabak on the *Waning of the Mediterranean*.<sup>30</sup> More recently, two contributions concerning more specifically Ottoman environmental history have been published: Alan Mikhail’s *Nature and Empire in Ottoman Egypt* and Sam White’s *The Climate of Rebellion in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire*.<sup>31</sup> Alan Mikhail has kindly contributed a paper for our volume as well, researching the role of rural engineers in the environment of Ottoman Egypt between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. According to Mikhail, these early modern engineers “helped to make the rural world” of Egypt: “They served as crucial intermediaries between imperial desires and ambitions and local ecological realities and economic interests.” (p. 413).

The other challenge I would like to address for the future of the study of rural societies and economies is that of the digital humanities.<sup>32</sup> The prospects and limitations of the challenge of Digital Humanities are examined in the paper of Antonis Hadjikyriacou and Elias Kolovos. The authors have embarked upon a project of studying the Ottoman rural economies with the help of digital humanities. They emphasise the fact that the unprecedented level of sophisticated and complex mathematical calculations provided by new

30 Faruk Tabak, *The Waning of the Mediterranean, 1550–1870* (Baltimore 2008).

31 Mikhail, *Nature and Empire in Ottoman Egypt: An Environmental History* (Cambridge 2011); White, *The Climate of Rebellion*.

32 See the recent paper by C. Gratien, M. Polczynski, and N. Shafir, ‘Digital Frontiers of Ottoman Studies’, *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, 1:1-2 (2014), 37-51. Another challenge for the future of Ottoman rural studies should be that of Ottoman archaeology, which is still in its infancy. See U. Baram and L. Carroll (ed.), *A Historical Archeology of the Ottoman Empire: Breaking New Ground* (New York 2002). See also A. K. Vionis: ‘The Archeology of Ottoman Villages in Central Greece: Ceramics, Housing and Everyday Life in Post-Medieval Boeotia’, *Hayat Erkanal’a Armağan: Kültürlerin Yansıması/Studies in Honor of Hayat Erkanal: Cultural Reflections* (Istanbul 2006), 784-800; idem, *A Crusader, Ottoman, and Early Modern Aegean Archeology: Built Environment and Domestic Material Culture in the Medieval and Post-Medieval Cyclades, Greece (13th-30th Centuries AD)* (Leiden 2012). Also F. Zarinebaf, J. Bennet, and J. L. Davis, *A Historical and Economic Geography of Ottoman Greece: The Southwestern Morea in the 18th Century* (Athens 2005); however, see my review of this publication in *IJMES*, 40 (2008), 139-140.

digital tools in processing masses of numerical data from Ottoman land and fiscal survey registers has to be put to use. The potential practical results of the use of Digital Humanities in the study of Ottoman rural economies are shown in the paper of Socrates Petmezas, who has used Geographical Information Systems (G.I.S.) to visualise the structures of land tenure and land settlement as per the 1700 Venetian Cadastro of Vostizza. The efforts of his Institute for Mediterranean Studies team have managed to relate the structures depicted in the 1700 Cadastro with present-day patterns of land settlement, as shown in the modern Greek Cadastre (see <http://vostizza.ims.forth.gr>).

In the year 2000, in the closing sentence of her review of the historiography of the twentieth century on Ottoman peasants and rural life, Suraiya Faroqhi duly noted that “The ‘search for the Ottoman peasant’ is likely to continue for a long time to come.”<sup>33</sup> We sincerely hope that this volume is a contribution to this research project, which, of course, has still a long way to go.

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33 S. Faroqhi, ‘Ottoman Peasants and Rural Life: the Historiography of the Twentieth Century’, *ArchOtt*, 18 (2000), 153-182.





## BETWEEN THEORY AND PRAXIS: THE NOTION OF 'MINE' AND THE OTTOMAN STATE

John C. ALEXANDER\*

*"It can indeed be said that ownership is either so simple as to need no explanation or so elusive as to defy definition. At its simplest it is the difference between thine and mine, at its most sophisticated it is the ultimate right, the right behind all other rights."*<sup>1</sup>

AN IMPORTANT PLACE IS OCCUPIED IN THE STUDY of the Ottoman Empire, and particularly of the Balkans and Asia Minor, by the issue of the regime of landed property and of the conditions for land-ownership. Perhaps this could without exaggeration be described as a constant struggle between, on the one hand, the state, a – symbolic at least – embodiment of which was the Sultan, who insisted upon his claim to ownership of and absolute control over the possession and use of land (to the greatest degree and extent that these could be imposed at a given moment), and, on the other, various strata of society. This contest started out from those serving as 'slaves' (*kul*) but also from his legally free representatives and functionaries who formed the establishment at the time and who, collectively or individually, attempted to circumvent, to undermine, and, in the end, openly to dispute this claim, and reached as far as the ordinary taxpaying subjects (*reaya*). In fact, seen from the viewpoint of the central power, the, ideally absolute, state control of land in the last analysis was, over time, a foundation of the – real and later mainly theoretical – military structure of the Empire, where land was the *par excellence* source of the maintenance and payment of the various functionaries, military and otherwise, of the state.<sup>2</sup>

Thus the struggle for the control of land, of its produce, and also of the farmers themselves, who attempted to safeguard the integrity of their holdings, forms a constant feature in the course of the history of the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, this factor should in no way lead to the conclusion that things remained static. Social and economic

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1 B. Nicholas, *An Introduction to Roman Law* (Oxford 1979), 159.

2 On the importance of *timars* as regards the cohesion of the Ottoman state see H. İnalcık, 'The Emergence of Big Farms: Çiftliks, State Landlords and Tenants', in Ç. Keyder and F. Tabak (eds), *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East* (Albany 1991), 17.

change – sometimes delayed and pursued by means of wrong-headed or unsuccessfully implemented reforms – was a basic point in the history of the Empire.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, simply put, at least until the period of the Reforms, when for the first time the legislation – including that ‘Concerning Landed Properties’ (1858) – in force and applied in varying ways, was codified for the whole Empire, there was constant tension as to the content and the breadth chiefly of the concepts of *miri* (state, public), *mülk* (in ownership), and *vakıf* (dedicated) land, to the extent that the state retained and could invoke the ownership (*rakabe*) of these three categories of immovable property. In the end, the essential question is, perhaps, the significance, in all its possible extrapolations in time and at the various levels of Ottoman society, of *I have, mine, and ownership*.

According to the official apprehension of the state, as expressed in the mid sixteenth century by the *şeyhülislam* Ebussuud, all lands, regardless of their status, were actually or potentially, *miri*, that is, in essence, public.<sup>4</sup> This potential is of particular importance. It stems from the Sultan’s will (*örf*), expressed either directly by the Sultan himself or in his name by his representatives, to endorse, determine, or alter the secular laws (*kanun*) and practices. His absolute power was restricted only by sacred law (*şer’ia*), as that was ‘interpreted’ by the jurists, and particularly the *şeyhülislam*.<sup>5</sup> A typical exercise in due lawful form of this power – in total contrast with previous, and subsequent, practice – was the determination of the property status of the land of newly-conquered Crete in 1669, where its lands were deemed to be privately owned (*haracî*).<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, it is useful to examine the question of exceptions from the rule, which also involve the concept of the determination or re-determination of a specific status, from this point of view; to examine, that is to say, the ceding, confirmation (*mukarrer*), the restriction or removal of ‘privileges’ (or, in other words, exceptions from the rule) depending upon the particular circumstances; the creation of an established status by means of their express or tacit ratification; their mutability and duration, and their promotion, at least in the apprehension of the beneficiaries, into ‘rights’, as well as the express recognition at any time of the right of ‘power over’ or ‘ownership’ by reason of *mürür-i zaman-i hakkı* (*kadimden berü*,

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3 On these changes and the debate on decline see indicatively S. Faroqi, ‘Crisis and Change, 1590 – 1699’, in H. İnalcık with D. Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914* (Cambridge 1994), 545-575.

4 C. Imber, *Ebu’s-su’ud. The Islamic Legal Tradition* (Stanford 1997), 122-125.

5 In essence, the interpretation in itself of sacred law was regarded as having ceased in the ninth century, and, consequently, only the possibility of delivering opinions remained. In spite of this, by the use of legal stratagems (*hile*), applied *par excellence* by Ebussuud, as will be seen immediately below, in connection with the legal reformulation of the status of land, jurists were permitted to be on occasion flexible in the interpretation of sacred law by means of the issuing of specific opinions on it (*fetva*). On the *ictihad*, J. Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford 1964), 69-75.

6 See G. Veinstein, ‘Les règlements fiscaux ottomans de Crète’, in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *The Eastern Mediterranean under Ottoman Rule: Crete, 1645-1840. Halcyon Days in Crete VI, 13-15 January 2006* (Rethymno 2008), 5-16. See also M. Greene, ‘An Islamic Experiment? Ottoman Land Policy on Crete’, *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 1/1 (1996), 60-78.

*ab antiquo*);<sup>7</sup> or, conversely, the implementation of a statute of limitations on the right of recourse or contestation of titles held or of consolidated possessions. Indicative of the policy of limiting the scope of the concept of ownership is the poverty of the vocabulary as to the basic terms to describe land-ownership and the legal framework which defined it. The terms *tasarruf* and *mutasarrif*, in their, probably, narrower rendering signify ‘enjoyment’ and ‘usufructuary’, respectively. In the case of public/*timar* lands, the farmer had the *tasarruf* of the land which he legally held, whereas the *sipahi* had the *tasarruf* of the revenues from the cultivation of the land, but in practice, of the land and of the farmers themselves, in consideration of the (chiefly) military services which he provided to the state. Thus, in the case of *timars* there were at least two levels of *tasarruf*: of the one who cultivated the land and was taxed, and of the one who was in receipt as direct ‘lord or master of the land’ (*sahib-i arz*). In the Greek documents of the Ottoman period, the terms *tasarruf* and *mutasarrif* are translated as ‘ἐξουσίασις’ and ‘ἐξουσιαστής’, and legitimate ‘I have’ and ‘mine’. In reality, the Ottoman term *tasarruf* has a broad content, depending on the case; it has, together with other terms, a polysemy, and is a clear indication of paucity of vocabulary in matters of land-ownership.<sup>8</sup>

The picture is further complicated when the sources and rights of revenues are ranked or shared with other persons, when, that is to say, there are other ‘owners’, chiefly by the method of tax-farming (*iltizam*), and, from the late seventeenth century, of *malikâne*, the life-long ceding of usufruct rights.

The late sixteenth century was a definitive period for the study of the transformation of the Empire from the so-called ‘classical’ Ottoman system and of its sometimes tardy and irregular adaptation to the new internal and external conditions. The concept of the ‘classical’ period is a basic principle chiefly for Halil İnalcık. The latter attributes the rapid ascendancy and flourishing condition of the Ottoman Empire to the formation, development, and duration of a concentrated, Middle Eastern, monarchical, militaristic state model, based on the distribution, on conditions, of the revenues of public land to *par excellence* military estates (the *timars*), cultivated by a partially dependent, but legally free, agrarian population, settled on agricultural units sufficient for their comfortable survival in accordance with the principle of *çift-hane* (ζευγάρι - household, *iugum - caput*).<sup>9</sup>

7 In connection with the concept of *kadimden berü* concerning the recognition of precedent in order to legitimate a practice see S. Faroqi, *Coping with the State. Political Conflict and Crime in the Ottoman Empire, 1550-1720* (Istanbul 1995), 16-17.

8 See J.C. Alexander, ‘The Lord Giveth and the Lord Taketh Away: Athos and the Confiscation Affair of 1568 – 1569’, *Mount Athos in the 14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (Athens 1997), 168-169; H. İnalcık, ‘The Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300 – 1600’, in İnalcık with Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History*, 110-112.

9 H. İnalcık, ‘The Ottoman State’, 143-154. It should be noted that this system of calculation, which goes back to the reign of Diocletian, was implemented in Byzantine practice; however, as regards the ζευγάρι (*çift*), from the sixteenth century onwards, it is mentioned in the sources as a unit of taxation of exclusively Muslim farmers. See, *inter alios*, J.C. Alexander, *Toward a History of Post-Byzantine Greece: The Ottoman Kanunnames for the Greek Lands, c. 1500 - c. 1500*, Athens [1974] 1985, 392 *et seq.* It emerges from the census registers of the fifteenth-

The legal argumentation within the sacred law of Ebussuud, even before he was appointed *şeyhülislam* (1530-1545), and his resort to legal stratagem (*hile*) draw attention to the attempt to inhibit and reverse the trend towards departure and deviation from the 'classical' system. In essence, in the period when Ebussuud served as *şeyhülislam* (1545-1574), there was a very marked attempt to consolidate control over land and to maintain and strengthen the centralised state against the – in many ways – new Ottoman interpretation of Islamic law. In this spirit, furthermore, the regime in force of owned (*mülk*) and dedicated (*vakıf*) lands throughout the Balkans (and selectively perhaps in a part of Asia Minor, and elsewhere), which were re-defined as *miri*, was abolished, while by the imposition now of the absolute will of the monarch, everything was now subject to that principle.<sup>10</sup> This meant potentially the re-examination and confiscation of 'all' immovable property which had been described and recognised as privately owned or dedicated. The titles to these properties for various formal reasons no longer had force and the issuing of new titles (*tapu*) was enforced with restrictive terms of *tasarruf*. It should be noted that research conducted up to the present shows that the confiscation measures had retrospective force and were especially strict as regards Orthodox church property, particularly of monasteries, as to which acquisitions from transfers, inheritance, purchases, and dedications were declared imperfect and void. On the other hand, I have not located up to now any mention of similar retrospective expropriation of Ottoman Muslims.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, in spite of the fact that the main points of Ebussuud's opinion on sacred law were regarded as an underpinning for action, these measures were subsequently implemented with interruptions, variations, and, as time went on, not always with the same success and persistence. Parenthetically, it is worth noting that similar measures, though on a smaller scale, were taken by Mehmed II towards the close of his reign and had the aim particularly of inhibiting the loss of state lands, which had negative impacts on the integrity of the timar system.<sup>12</sup>

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sixteenth centuries, but also later (e.g., of Crete in 1670 and then of the Morea in 1716) that as regards the Muslim population, who were mainly charged with the *çift resmi* (the fluctuating *ζενγάριο* tax), the ideal of the *çift-hane* was rarely fully implemented, and is even more rarely encountered in the case of compact arable lands.

- 10 As regards the extent of the general implementation of the measure, it should be observed that, apart from the *kanunname* of the newly conquered Buda (1541), the full development of Ebussuud's interpretation is to be found only in the detailed register of Thessaloniki and Skopje of 1567/8. See . Ö. L. Barkan, *XV ve XVI'ncı Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Ziraî Ekonominin Hukukî ve Mali Esasları*, Vol. I: *Kanunlar* (İstanbul 1943), 297-300.
- 11 On the confiscation of monastic property within the context of the re-definition of the land-ownership regime by Ebussuud see J.C. Alexander, 'The Confiscation Affair', 148-200; A. Fotić, 'The Official Explanations for the Confiscation and Sale of Monasteries (Churches) and their Estates at the Time of Selim II', *Turcica*, 26 (1994), 33-54; E. Kermeli, 'The Confiscation and Repossession of Monastic Properties in Mount Athos and Patmos Monasteries, 1568-1570', *Bulgarian Historical Review*, 28/3-4 (2006), 9-23.
- 12 Indicatively, O. Özel, 'Limits of the Almighty: Mehmed II's Land Reform Revisited', *JESHO*, 42/2 (1999), 526-546.

Consequently, when the ‘classical system’ is examined within the framework of a more general process of changes to the state formation, it must be defined not as an absolute and inflexible entity, but as a stage in an evolving process; as a balancing between the rule and the deviation and with fluctuating differentiations as to place and time. In any event, a typical example provided by taxpaying subjects of the successful balancing between state legality on issues of land-ownership and the deviations is the manner in which the Orthodox monasteries in the southern Balkans developed their economic activities and a number of them ended up possessing significant immovable property. In the framework of this delicate balance, the expansion of tax-farming (*iltizam-malikâne*) in the seventeenth and eighteenth century shaped a complex of fragmented and overlapping claimants to tax revenues, something which *de facto* subverted the *çift-hane* system. In these new conditions, the maintenance of state legality on the part of farmers in the form of the uninterrupted rendering of taxes for long periods or even in the course of successive generations left scope for the consolidation of the sense of *mine*. This was true both of the taxed *reayas* who held the *tasarruf* of lands and of the possessors of *çiftlik*s, the majority of whom were also holders of the *tasarruf* of an enlarged immovable property and not the owners of it, and therefore also owing tax to the state. The latter intervened selectively in the case of those whom it thought threatened or were able to threaten this legality. And these were not ordinary *reayas*, or, *a fortiori*, the monks.





MICRO-HISTORIES OF OTTOMAN RURAL  
SOCIETIES AND ECONOMIES



## A STUDY OF RURAL CONFLICTS: GEGBUZE/GEBZE (DISTRICT OF ÜSKÜDAR) IN THE MID-1700S

Suraiya FAROQHI\*

STUDIES OF SMALL RURAL UNITS, BE THEY VILLAGES (*karye*) or sub-districts (*nahiye*) are quite rare in Ottoman historiography; and studies of economic and political conflicts in this milieu are even less common. At least in part, the reasons for such neglect doubtless are connected with the scholarly and political concerns of twentieth – and twenty-first – century historians. After all, when the study of peasants was in its heyday, in the 1960s to 1980s, scholars were interested in the structure of the Ottoman state, often in a Marxist or at least Marxian perspective. As a result, broad questions such as the classification of political systems were subjects for debate, as, for example, the problem of whether a society in which peasants paid taxes to a ruler rather than rent to a lord still should or could be regarded as ‘feudal’.<sup>1</sup>

In other instances the *problématique* drew inspiration from the rural sociology of the later 1900s: thus Huricihan İslamoğlu, author of a most comprehensive and theoretically sophisticated study of Anatolian villagers of the ‘classical period’, was mainly interested in the survival of peasant farming in Anatolia into the twentieth century and beyond. As a corollary, she concentrated on the reasons why in Asia Minor the increased marketing of rural products by and large did not result in the formation of great landholdings and a proletarianised peasantry.<sup>2</sup> She also argued against the neo-Malthusian view that population increase necessarily resulted in the sub-division of farms and the cultivation of ever more marginal lands. Certainly this author did not ignore ‘micro’-questions such as the conflicts that villagers and other rural dwellers encountered most frequently in their eve-

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- 1 H. Berktaş, ‘The Search for the Peasant in Western and Turkish History/Historiography’, in H. Berktaş and S. Faroqhi (eds), *New Approaches to State and Peasant in Ottoman History* (London 1992), 109-184; this publication has also appeared in *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 18/3-4 (April/July 1991).
- 2 H. İslamoğlu-İnan, *State and Peasant in the Ottoman Empire: Agrarian Power Relations and Regional Economic Development in Ottoman Anatolia during the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden 1994). For a new edition in Turkish with an extensive introduction by the author see: H. İslamoğlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Devlet ve Köylü* (Istanbul 2010), 19-100.

ryday lives; but such disputes were not her main concern. After all, the tax registers did not record when a man ploughed up his neighbour's field or through carelessness, caused a fire in the latter's orchard.

Moreover, from the later 1980s onwards, the 'cultural turn' arrived in Ottoman historiography with a vengeance, and 'identity' and 'alterity' became the dominant concerns of the day. As, however, villagers before the late 1800s – or even the twentieth century – have left very few traces of their cultural orientations including even religious practice, with a few notable exceptions, once culture and identity dominated the scene, Ottoman peasants disappeared from the historiography.<sup>3</sup>

### *The Bureaucratic Process as Revealed in Our Sources*

Such 'ideological' concerns apart, a major impediment to the close-up study of Ottoman rural life lies in the very nature of our sources. Most work on the Ottoman peasantry focuses on the sixteenth century, a period for which we possess many tax registers covering most of the central Ottoman provinces. While these records are a great boon, they do not say enough about any single locality to permit an in-depth study: as it is mostly impossible to reconstruct family ties, we cannot even tell whether one or several coteries of relatives controlled local resources and, at least for a while, dominated their poorer fellow-villagers. Neither do we know how the tax load, assessed on the village as a whole, was distributed among families; nor can we say which people were responsible for the distribution. As rural archaeology is an underdeveloped realm as far as the Ottomans are concerned, it has only rarely been possible to supplement information from written sources with the results obtained by excavators.

Moreover, the registers of the local *kadis*, which Ottoman historians have been mining for some 40 years now, concern mainly – though not exclusively – urban cases. This observation is valid especially for the 1500s and 1600s, but to a considerable extent for later periods as well; throughout the Ottoman period the number of court cases in which peasants were involved tends to be rather limited. Presumably villagers often resorted to arbitration, with prominent local figures such as dervish sheikhs functioning as mediators: but as these procedures were oral, we know nothing about them.

However, the situation improves somewhat when we move into the mid-1700s: at least where settlements close to Istanbul are involved, enough documentation survives to make at least a brief study of a rural locality feasible. For by this period the central administration's officials had begun to compile the *ahkâm defterleri*, a series of registers instituted in different provinces at different dates during the eighteenth century: the records dealing with Istanbul begin in the 1740s. Every series of *ahkâm defterleri* normally covers a single province, such as Karaman or Anadolu; and while as yet there was no Istanbul province, for the purpose of this particular correspondence, the Sultan's officials acted as if such an administrative unit was already in existence.

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3 E. Gara, 'In Search of Communities in Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Sources: The Case of the Kara Ferye District', *Turcica*, 30 (1998), 135–162.

From the sixteenth century onwards, it had been Ottoman chancery practice to record not the petitions/reports from provincial officials and/or ordinary subjects but only the centre's responses. However, we can to some extent deduce the previous history of the cases concerned as the orders issued by the central bureaucracy typically contained summaries of the texts presented by petitioners and local administrators. When compiling the *ahkâm defterleri*, officials followed the same procedure. While the texts thus do not record the 'voices' of the complainants, they do tell us something about the issues that preoccupied them.

In these registers we find documents concerning pious foundations, artisans, questions of taxation, and a multitude of other matters. Ahmet Kal'a and his collaborators in 1996-1997 published a ten-volume selection from the eighteenth-century documents concerning Istanbul.<sup>4</sup> For our purposes, the two volumes covering the countryside surrounding the Ottoman capital and called *İstanbul Tarım Tarihi* (History of Istanbul Agriculture, hereafter: *İTT*) are of special interest, supplemented from time to time by a volume on pious foundations (*İstanbul Vakıf Tarihi*, History of Istanbul Pious Foundations, hereafter: *İVT*). We will discuss the affairs of rural dwellers in the vicinity of the capital on the basis of documents made available in this collection. In all likelihood there were documents dealing with rural conflicts but not included among the published material. However, it does seem that the selection currently in print gives us a fairly good impression of the problems confronting people who tried to make a living in the vicinity of Istanbul during the middle years of the eighteenth century.

On what basis did the central authorities decide a rural dispute? On the whole they had more information available than their predecessors of the 1500s or 1600s because it had become common practice to refer to a series of registers known as the *başmuhasebe defterleri*, instituted already in the early 1600s, but which gained in importance during the eighteenth century. As it was the job of the scribes working for the bureau known as the *başmuhasebe kalemî* to audit government agencies, the *başmuhasebe defterleri*, insofar as they survive, contain a record of all bureaucratic procedures which involved spending the treasury's money.<sup>5</sup> Entries in these registers often contained copies of older documents concerning the matter at issue, so that officials were, for instance, able to say who had held this or that revenue source for the past decades and under what conditions. Given these sources of information, the authorities in Istanbul apparently were not much inclined to leave rural problems to the discretion of the local *kadı*, *timar*-holders (*sipahîs*), tax farmers or foundation administrators.<sup>6</sup>

Overall, it is surprising to see how often officials of the mid-1700s referred to the sixteenth-century tax registers (*defter-i hakani*), although conditions had changed radically

4 A. Kal'a et alii (eds), *İstanbul Külliyyatı I, İstanbul Ahkâm Defterleri*, 10 vols (Istanbul 1997-98).

5 *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Rehberi* (Istanbul 2000 [2nd ed.]), 142-158.

6 Such office-holders had been assigned revenues, usually of a rural character, against the provision of services, often but not always as cavalry soldiers.

in the meantime.<sup>7</sup> When, as often happened, bureaucrats at the centre included verbatim citations from these documents in their responses to petitioners, they must have known that neither the crops planted nor the numbers of taxpayers on record necessarily corresponded to the realities of the mid eighteenth century. However, they apparently regarded the *defter-i hakani* as a model to which the Sultans' servitors as well as his subjects should conform to the best of their abilities; even so, it frequently remains unclear what the parties were supposed to do if, for instance, a village recorded in the *defter* had been abandoned and the fields belonging to it no longer produced any grain.

A similar situation must have sometimes obtained on the lands of pious foundations: not all the revenues described in the relevant registers (*vakıf defteri*) of the 1500s necessarily corresponded to the realities of the eighteenth century. As an example we may mention changes in the status of five agricultural holdings (*çiftlik*) that Sultan Orhan (r. 1324-1362) had dedicated to the ferry-service of Dil İskelesi: in this case written information was lacking, so that the judge had to supplement data derived from foundation registers by a visit to the site and recourse to the memory of old, well-informed, and righteous Muslims.<sup>8</sup> As a result, local arrangements and accommodations that officials through their extensive use of archives based in Istanbul supposedly had chased out by the front door, quietly came back in 'through the window'.

### *The Location of Our Research: Introducing Gebze*

When on the lookout for a good 'sample location' why choose Gebze – or Gegbuze/Gekbizıyye, as it was still called at this time? First of all, because for studies of the kind attempted here we need an area fairly rich in documents. Documentation, on the other hand, is mostly available in the vicinity of large cities such as Istanbul, Bursa, Aleppo, or Damascus; for only when a sizeable number of courts were reasonably accessible to rural dwellers was there a record of their disputes. Secondly, the district to be studied should not be too large, for local conditions changed significantly even among villages located at short distances from one another. Last but not least, it is an advantage to have a batch of documents that are more or less contemporaneous; while, as we will see, conditions in the countryside were slow to change, it is best not to obscure what change there was by 'mixing' materials from different time periods. Fortunately, in the documentation concerning Gebze all these pre-conditions are fulfilled.

Admittedly, the centre of the district selected here was not a village but a town, which under the name of Dakibyza went back to Byzantine times. Then it had featured as an *emporion*, in other words, a non-urban market, of which quite a number were in operation on the northern shore of the Bay of İzmit.<sup>9</sup> However, Byzantine authors seem to have merely

7 H. Inalcik, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700', *ArchOtt*, 6 (1980), 283-337.

8 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 40-41 (1156/1743).

9 B. Geyer and J. Lefort (eds), *La Bithynie au Moyen Âge* (Paris 2003), 101-102. For comments on Matrakçı Nasuh's miniature of the town see pp. 116-117. The editors have also included

registered the name; records only become somewhat fuller in the sixteenth century, well after the Ottoman conquest. Even so, before the 1900s Gebze was very small, and while it boasted a mosque going back to the time of Sultan Orhan, from the early 1500s its real claim to fame was the Mosque of Mustafa Paşa, completed in 1523. This dignitary had participated in the conquest of Cairo in 1517 and lavishly decorated his pious foundation in the prestigious style of the late Mamluk sultans.<sup>10</sup> Mustafa Paşa's complex, which had rural revenue sources in the Gebze area, included a theological school (*medrese*) cum student accommodation, two libraries, and a fully-equipped kitchen; among the revenue sources we find a landing-stage, presumably on the Bay of İzmit, as well as a fishing weir. The sixteenth-century traveller Hans Dernschwam, otherwise known for his pride and bad temper, thought that the rural surroundings of Gebze were handsome, providing ample pasturage for sheep; these grazing-grounds will occupy us in some detail.<sup>11</sup> Within the district of Gebze we will pay special attention to the village of Tuzla, today a suburb of İstanbul with a significant – and rather accident-prone – shipbuilding industry.<sup>12</sup>

While in Ottoman official parlance Gebze featured as a town, because of its small size it was more than half-rural. In the sixteenth century, the settlement was the centre of a sub-district (*nahiye*) located in the district of Üsküdar and part of the sub-province of Koca-ili, province of Anadolu; today it is situated in the province (*vilayet*) of Kocaeli. The sub-district of Gebze extended all the way to the Bosphorus and included present-day suburbs of İstanbul such as Kısıklı and Kuzguncuk.<sup>13</sup> Accordingly, a record of this sub-district appeared in the abridged (*icmal*) register of 1530, which is available in published form.<sup>14</sup> Such registers record the officially appointed tax-takers (*sahib-i arz*) sub-province by sub-province, including *timar*-holders and higher-level dignitaries enjoying larger tax assignments (*zeamet*, *has*) as well as the administrators of pious foundations. These registers also contain the names of towns and villages in which the *sahib-i arz* had collection rights, thus providing much of the basic information on which officials of the 1740s and 1750s based their decisions. As for the later sixteenth century, Gebze also

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a partial French translation of Dernschwam's sixteenth-century travelogue, which contains a short description of Gebze.

- 10 Evliya Çelebi b. Derviş Mehmed Zilli, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi, Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 304 Yazmasının Transkripsyonu –Dizini*, Vol. 2, ed. Z. Kurşun, Y. Dağlı, and S.A. Kahraman (İstanbul 1999), 88-89. Evliya only describes the Mosque of Mustafa Paşa and the charities connected with it. On the Mosque of Sultan Orhan see *İTT*, Vol. 1, 305-306 (1167/1754).
- 11 J.-P. Grégoire, 'Hans Dernschwam, *Voyage en Asie Mineure* (1555)', in Geyer and Lefort (eds), *La Bithynie au Moyen Âge*, 113-138, see esp. p. 116.
- 12 Curiously the village of Tuzla had 'Niğde' as a second name. Geyer and Lefort (eds), *La Bithynie au Moyen Âge*, 215 mention a settlement called Nikètiata and identify it with the well-preserved site of Eskihisar on the Bay of İzmit. But apparently this identification is not certain and perhaps Nikètiata rather should be identified with Niğde/Tuzla. As an alternative reading of the name, the editors of *İTT* have suggested 'Yiğid (?)' (*İTT*, Vol. 2, 277). However, in view of the Byzantine place-name, Niğde seems to be the better reading.
- 13 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 45-47 (1164/1751).
- 14 İ. Binark et alii (eds), *438 Numaralı Muhâsebe-i Vilayet-i Anadolu Defteri (937 / 1530)*, Vol. 2: *Bolu, Kastamonu, Kengiri ve Koca-ili Livâları Dizin ve Tıpkıbasım* (Ankara 1994), 785-793.

shows up in a few detailed (*mufasssal*) tax registers, but on the whole documentation is sparser than one might expect.<sup>15</sup>

Not only was this mini-town close to Üsküdar and thus to the Anatolian section of Istanbul, it actually was part of the jurisdiction of the Üsküdar judge. The latter possessed well-developed record-keeping facilities that have left us with a significant number of documents. And if the parties to a dispute were dissatisfied with the decision of the Üsküdar *kadı*, it was troublesome but certainly not impossible to appeal to the central authorities just across the Bosphorus. As a matter of fact, these officials might issue a document which found its way into the *ahkâm defterleri* and thus came to be part of our present documentation.

Thus we can regard Gebze and the surrounding villages as part of the rural hinterland of Istanbul, at least in the wider sense of the term. Bursa must have played a role in the lives of Gebze's inhabitants as well, since quite a few pious foundations to which inhabitants of the area paid their dues were located in the former Ottoman capital. Traffic between Bursa and Istanbul must have been a routine affair for the people of Gebze, since travellers mostly crossed the Bay of Izmit at the landing-stage called Dil İskeleyi in the immediate vicinity of the town. Moreover, in the early decades of Ottoman rule, Sultan Orhan, in addition to his mosque, had instituted a pious foundation to finance the ferry-boat that allowed rapid access from Gebze to Bursa.<sup>16</sup> Throughout the Ottoman period, the town, in spite of its small size, benefited from its situation on a major traffic route; yet whether in the eyes of local peasants this ease of access was an advantage or a disadvantage remains an open question.

Obviously not all concerns of Gebze's rural population can be discussed here. But for the present we will focus on what seem to have been the major bones of contention, namely the legal status of agricultural land with special reference to the entry fine known as *resm-i tapu*, the problems posed by people who did not recognise the limits of their landholdings or villages, and the often problematic access to pastures as well as the collection of pasture dues. Furthermore, farm dues (*resim*) and tithes (*öşür*) were the sources of quite a few confrontations, and in this context we will take a closer look at a man trying to establish a private landholding in defiance of governmental orders to desist. We will also pay some attention to the impact of the Istanbul market and the always contentious topic of migration.

### *Gebze's Power-Holders*

In the Gebze district, pious foundations established by sultans and viziers were ancient, rich, and quite numerous. Presumably this state of affairs was another reason why the sub-district appeared in the *ahkâm defterleri* rather more often than one might otherwise

<sup>15</sup> For a discussion of these records see L. Erder and S. Faroqhi, 'Population Rise and Fall in Anatolia 1550-1620', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 15/3 (1979), 322-345.

<sup>16</sup> C. Orhonlu, 'Nehir Gemiciliği', *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Şehircilik ve Ulaşım Üzerinde Araştırmalar*, ed. S. Özbaran (Izmir 1984), 104-115.



expect, as the administrators of important pious foundations were part of the central elite and therefore in a position to make their voices heard. To mention but one example, even in the mid-1700s the revenue sources of Mustafa Paşa's Gebze mosque, *medrese*, and public kitchen were quite substantial.<sup>17</sup> In consequence, the decisions of the relevant administrator must have carried considerable weight in the affairs of the sub-district. In addition, the person responsible for a pious foundation instituted by the Sultan's gardeners cum police officials (*bostanî ortası*) exercised considerable power, as this institution had taken over the collection of the dues paid by the passengers of the ferryboat that gave access from Gebze to the southern shore of the bay, once instituted by Sultan Orhan.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, such personages might not be interested in the day-to-day minutiae of running the foundation entrusted to their care, so that they quite often left the collection of dues to a tax farmer (*mültezim*).<sup>19</sup>

Power-holders at different levels of the administrative hierarchy were not exactly peaceful people: *timar*-holders were often at loggerheads with one another, and in addition we have a record concerning the administrator of the pious foundation of Mustafa Paşa in Gebze arguing with the supervisor (*nazır*) of the kitchen of the same institution, the exact reason remaining obscure.<sup>20</sup> During those same years, a *timar*-holder also complained about a man to whom he had delegated the right to collect tithes in the district of Gebze: while the villagers confirmed that the person in question had collected their dues, he was now refusing to hand them over to the rightful tax-taker.<sup>21</sup>

In a few villages we also find life-long tax farms (*malikâne*), a novelty instituted in the late 1600s. These *malikâne*-holders probably took the place of the ordinary tax farmers who for many centuries already, had collected dues in the territories of many pious foundations.<sup>22</sup> In the villages of Hereke, Kirazlı, Kadılı and Danişmendviranı, all belonging to the pious foundation of Eyyûb-i Ensârî on the outskirts of Istanbul, these life-long tax farmers behaved in such a manner as to get themselves roundly rejected by the local peasants. As for the central administration, its officials refused to recognise the right of the villagers to pay their dues as a lump sum (*maktu*) as the latter had demanded, and forcefully warned those who hid part of their harvests from the tax-takers. At the same time, the *malikâne*-holders were admonished to behave according to the law and appoint underlings (*subaşı*) who would treat the peasants with consideration. We have no way of knowing to what extent these admonitions were successful.

Among revenue-takers in the Gebze district we also find people who held office at the Sultan's court or in the household of the Grand Vizier. Thus the latter's arms-bearer in 1168/1755 had the right to a large tax-grant (*zeamet*). As had been the rule already in

17 *İVT*, Vol. 1, 236-237 (1171/1758).

18 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 40-41 (1156/1743); Vol. 2, 17 (1155/1742).

19 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 16 (1155/1742) is the copy of a command confirming the rights of such a *mültezim*.

20 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 251 (1174/1760); Vol. 2, 265-267 (1174/1761); *İVT*, Vol. 1, 236-237 (1171-1758).

21 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 97-98 (1158/1745).

22 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 233-234 (1173/1760); see also M. Genç, 'Osmanlı Maliyesinde Malikâne Sistemi', in O. Okyar and Ü. Nabantoğlu (eds), *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi Semineri, Metinler - Tartışmalar* (Ankara 1975), 231-296.

the 1500s, this revenue source was what Ottoman bureaucrats called *serbest*, namely the holder possessed the right to certain incidental dues that in a non-*serbest* holding would have accrued to the local governor.<sup>23</sup> But even the doubtless elevated status of the arms-bearer did not protect him from intervention on the part of the governor's men (*ehl-i örf*), who attempted to collect the dues as if the tax grant had been of the 'regular' type.

In addition, even though the holders of military tax assignments (*timar*) by the mid-1700s were no longer an important component of the Ottoman army, some of these people still collected dues in the Gebze area, and they put up a doughty fight against anybody whom they suspected of trying to infringe their rights. As one irate *timar*-holder put it, "the provincial governor (*mirlivâ*), his replacement the *mütesellim*, the commander of local troops (*serdar*), the administrator/tax collector concerned with government revenues (*voyvoda*), the chief of police (*subaşı*) and all the governor's men (*ehl-i örf*)" were laying claim to revenues that by rights should have gone to him alone; admittedly the complainant was lowest on the totem pole when compared to the other tax-takers.<sup>24</sup> Presumably this situation was most uncomfortable for the inhabitants of the village of Nerdübânlu-i kûçek, where in this instance the disputed revenues were located: for frequently the power-holders in dispute were tempted to demand payment one after the other, so that the unfortunate villagers paid their dues several times over.<sup>25</sup>

### *The Legal Status of Agricultural Land*

When members of the subject population fought out a dispute with the local tax-takers, or the latter quarrelled with one another, they quite often disagreed about the legal status of the lands at issue. This multi-faceted problem included the need to establish the boundaries between villages, for tax collectors of all kinds had the right to collect dues in a given settlement but could not impinge on the rights of their neighbours. Expressed differently, determining the legal status of a given field or meadow was only possible once the decision makers knew to which village it belonged. Moreover, peasants also had rights within their own settlement that they could not exercise within the boundaries of another. For the most part, the relevant information was available locally: but when the borders of two villages were difficult to chart, the tax-takers might get into a dispute without end, as happened in the case of the settlements of Tavşanlı and Demürcilü, both located on a little stream called the Hatun suyu.<sup>26</sup> Remarkably, in this case the central administration did not try to simplify the village boundaries or at least record them in detail, although it was foreseeable that the dispute would flare up again in the future. Only in the event of

23 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 338-339 (1168/1755). This order confirms an edict by Sultan Mahmud I (r. 1730-1754).

24 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 376-377 (1169/1756).

25 Presumably in Turkish this settlement was called Küçük Merdivenli; and the settlement of Nerdübânlu-i bozorg would have been Büyük Merdivenli. On a *timar*-holder trying to collect dues in kind after already having received payment in money see *İTT*, Vol. 1, 328-329 (1168/1754).

26 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 218-220 (1163/1750).

a totally new grant do we observe that the authorities carefully delineated the boundaries of the land in question.<sup>27</sup>

Since the mid-sixteenth century if not earlier, the Sultans had claimed ownership of all agricultural land, meadows included.<sup>28</sup> Peasants were therefore no more than tenants with the right to inherit their leases from their fathers; yet while they had only limited rights with respect to the lands that they farmed, such rights were real and enforceable. Thus when a person made uncultivated land into a field (*bozdan almak*), he acquired a right to the resultant holding; yet this prerogative might be contested if fellow-villagers claimed that they needed the relevant piece of land for grazing. In addition, the claim to have opened the land to cultivation might well turn out to be spurious and, if so, the field was in the gift of the local *timar*-holder or other administrator. In the village of Tuzla, for instance, a woman and her son had received the right to such a field, but the family was unable actually to take possession because a village strongman “whose supporters were many” claimed to have created the field by clearing the brushwood that had covered the land.<sup>29</sup> Presumably the woman and her son had credible witnesses, for they were able to obtain a *fetva* supporting their case from the Chief Mufti. But when they applied to the central administration, in other words, at the stage of the dispute with which our document is concerned, they still were unable to take possession of the not-so-recently created field.

Certain gardens and vineyards were private property (*mülk*); and from the seventeenth century onwards we occasionally find fields described as *mülk* too, although we do not know how the owners had acquired them.<sup>30</sup> Gardens and vineyards tended to be most common in the vicinity of towns; and already in the 1600s Üsküdar as well as Bursa, Ankara, and Kayseri were surrounded by belts of garden-land, which in many cases continued to exist until the mid twentieth century when urban sprawl swallowed them up.

Disputes over gardens and vineyards could arise from the fact that when a person planted trees or made them fruitful, the trees became his/her property; the local tax-taker could only lay his hands upon the relevant piece of land and reassign it as a ‘field’ if the garden/vineyard had not produced any fruit – and thereby dues – for three consecutive years. We thus find the administrator of the pious foundation (*mütevelli*) set up in the name of Yıldırım Bayezid (r. 1389-1402) complaining about villagers from Tuzla who had without his permission turned their fields into vineyards/gardens.<sup>31</sup> The admin-

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27 For example: *İTT*, Vol. 1, 191-193 (1161/1748).

28 B. Johansen, *The Islamic Law on Land Tax and Rent: The Peasants' Loss of Property Rights as Interpreted in the Hanafite Legal Literature of the Mamluk and Ottoman Periods* (London 1988).

29 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 263-265 (1165/1752).

30 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 280 (1174/1761) records a *bağ* that was private property. For *mülk* fields in the region of Kayseri see S. Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, Crafts, and Food Production in an Urban Setting 1520-1650* (Cambridge 1984), 263-265. See *İTT*, Vol. 1, 339 (1168/1755): for a claim that an *enginarlık* or artichoke field in the Gebze district was private property.

31 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 195-196 (1161/1748). According to a register of pious foundations (*defter-i evkaf*) cited in 1162/1749 but whose date remains unknown, the village of Nigde/Tuzla had a popu-

istration confirmed that peasants could not do this without first obtaining the *mütevelli*'s agreement; but in this particular instance, it remains unclear what was to happen to the plantations already in existence. In the village of Yenâne (?) it was apparently the rule that an illicit vineyard could be destroyed by the tax-taker within three years of planting; and in a decision involving the village of Kartal, officials also stated explicitly that the tax-taker could destroy an illicit vineyard within the first three years, as long as it had not produced any fruit. Once that had happened however, he could only demand the grape tithe; so perhaps in Tuzla as well the latter had to tolerate the change.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps collecting the grain tithe was more profitable to the foundation administrator than the tithe on fruit; after all, in the case of grain, the rate tended to be higher. Or else the *mütevelli* simply was anxious to not lose any rights over the peasants and therefore objected to their initiatives 'on principle' and without any regard for financial gain.<sup>33</sup>

It remains unclear whether the sale of a garden/vineyard had to be approved by the seller's relatives; there survives a record concerning the family of an Orthodox man who had sold his vineyard and whose heirs threatened to take the land away from the buyer after the seller had died. The Chief Mufti did not regard this move as licit, but local custom may well have been different.

When transferring recognised fruit-bearing gardens/vineyards, the partners to the transaction needed to get an appropriately witnessed document from the local judge (*hüccet*). By contrast, tax-takers did not have the right to give out recognised gardens/vineyards – even when vacant – against payment of a special 'succession due' called *resm-i tapu*, as was the practice when fields and meadows had lost their holders.<sup>34</sup> This matter could become a source of serious problems as the tax-takers in question might be tempted not to recognise the peasants' vineyards/gardens as legitimate. On the other hand, the people holding the right to the tax on grapes in the relevant village, to say nothing of the peasants themselves, might deny the alleged status of the land as fields or meadows and by this means resist attempts to collect the *resm-i tapu* tax.<sup>35</sup>

Similar complications could arise in connection with buildings. From the village of Küçükli there came the complaint of a man who had constructed farm buildings on what had previously been agricultural land; if his claim was true, he had obtained permission to do so from the previous *sahib-i arz*, a *timar*-holder. After some time, a *timar*-holder who had succeeded to the position threatened to have the structure demolished. Upon the complaint of the owner, the administration confirmed that while the *sahib-i arz* had the

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lation of seven Muslim and 257 Christian adult males. The *icmal* of 1530 claims three Muslim and 77 Christian families in addition to bachelors and salt-producers. Binark *et alii* (eds), *438 Numaralı Muhâsebe-i Vilayet-i Anadolu*, Vol. 2, 791. In the village there was a monastery whose claims to certain village lands the administration rejected because they did not feature in the foundation register: *İTT*, Vol. 1, 196 (1162/1749).

32 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 273 (1166/1752); Vol. 1, 305-306 (1167/1753-54).

33 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 297-298 (1166/1753).

34 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 33-34 (1160/1747).

35 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 74 (1170/1757). The ten-year limit also applied to other land-related disputes: *İTT*, Vol. 2, 128 (1172/1758).

right to demolish buildings on agricultural land erected without his permission, he could not exercise this right once ten years had passed; even less did his successors have the right to nullify the decisions of their predecessors.

Another potentially problematic case was that of the land immediately surrounding a mill, for this land was necessary for the cleaning of the millpond and doubtless for the access of customers as well.<sup>36</sup> A man who had rented a mill from the pious foundation of the Küçük Ayasofya Mosque in Istanbul, in spite of his connections with the central administration, apparently was unable to make his neighbour accept that the land in question was an inalienable part of the mill compound. On the contrary, at least for a certain time, the neighbour planted the disputed land with maize; and the dispute seems to have dragged on for years.

A different source of disagreement was the status of lands that once had belonged to pious foundations that had become entirely defunct. Thus the possessions of the former charity of Sultan Orhan connected with the ferryboat over the Bay of Izmit that we have encountered in a different context had been turned into a *timar*, at the fairly late date of 1071/1660-61. In exchange, the grantee, who was a scribe and not a military man, had given up the right to collect a substantial salary; this was a way of saving the central government's money quite common in the 1600s and especially the 1700s. At an unknown date, moreover, the Sultan's gardeners cum police officials (*bostanî ortası*), who, as we have seen, collected ferryboat charges on behalf of their own pious foundation, seem to have 'protected' the local boatmen. As for the latter, they had developed the habit of stationing their boats on a piece of land that should have produced agricultural dues, but now was out of use because of the boatmen's occupancy. As the *timar*-holding scribe lost money on the deal, he protested and the central administration confirmed that indeed this man was the lawful beneficiary of the local agricultural dues. At the same time, the administration decreed that the boatmen and their probable protectors the *bostanî ortası* should stay away from the land belonging to the plaintiff's *timar*. Obviously, the entire dispute would not have arisen if Sultan Orhan's charity had still been operative; we do not know how and why it had come to be defunct.

### *Disputes Involving the Villagers' Entry Fines (resm-i tapu)*

Even more relevant for peasants was the question of land transfer after the holder had died without leaving any sons, or else deserted the village. Ever since the sixteenth century at least, in such cases tax-takers could take back peasant lands and give them out to suitable applicants against payment of the fee known as *resm-i tapu*, which we have already encountered in a different context. When a field did not bear fruit for more than three years, the *sahib-i arz* also could demand its return; this act might cause a dispute if the peasant felt that he had good reason for leaving the field uncultivated, such as drought, lack of oxen, or illness in the family.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>36</sup> *İTT*, Vol. 1, 280-281 (1166/1753).

<sup>37</sup> *İTT*, Vol. 1, 325 (1168/1754); *İTT*, Vol. 2, 308 (1175/1761).

When a peasant died, the situation might be even more complicated. A group of *timar*-holders who tried to give out a piece of land after the previous holder had died heirless thus ran into a spot of trouble: for a claimant emerged who said that he had, when the deceased was still alive, acquired from him the right of possession against payment; now he refused to give it up. We are not told why the previous transfer was not legal; for normally it should have been, as people could alienate their land against payment provided they had obtained permission from the administrator (*sahib-i arz*) responsible. All we do know is that in support of their case the *timar*-holders presented a *fetva* from the Chief Mufti in person. Very occasionally, peasants also disputed the lease of a piece of land that previously had been transferred against payment (*ferağ u tefviz*) and with the permission of the relevant tax-taker; special circumstances must have been involved as, in principle, such transactions were perfectly valid.

Other problems involved the payments due when the land of a deceased peasant went to his heirs: while sons inherited without any payment falling due, daughters, and brothers who shared the same father could only claim the land if they were willing to pay the *resm-i tapu*. However, the local administrator needed to offer the land to these women and men before he contacted anyone else. Presumably, peasants were particularly unenthusiastic about this due, as it hit the family at a time when its survival was already endangered by the death of the breadwinner.<sup>38</sup> At the same time, even if family members were willing to pay the *resm-i tapu* they still might not obtain possession of the land; for the tax-takers might see an occasion for extra gain if they did not offer the land at issue to the bereaved relatives but rather to outsiders, from whom they could collect a higher entry fine.<sup>39</sup>

Female relatives with the right to inherit fields upon payment of the *resm-i tapu* were especially vulnerable if they did not have strong backers, as is apparent from the complaint of two women from the Gebze village of Köseler who, as sisters of the deceased peasant, had a claim only if there were neither descendants nor brothers.<sup>40</sup> Requesting an edict of the Sultan in their favour, Hanife and Ümmü Gülsüm invoked supporters not only from among the “honest Muslims” – presumably of the village – but also presented a *fetva* of the Empire’s chief juris-consult. Apparently their request found favour with the administration; but whether the two women actually received their brother’s land remains an open question. Similar doubts are in order when we analyse the complaint of a woman from the village of Tavşanlı who had been deprived of her right to the succession; but perhaps the influence of ‘her’ tax-taker, a garrison soldier from Boğazkesen fortress who complained in her name, was strong enough to make her claims prevail.<sup>41</sup>

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38 For an example compare: *İTT*, Vol. 1, 340 (1168/1755).

39 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 292 (1166/1753).

40 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 22-23 (1155/1742).

41 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 213-214 (1173/1760).



*Peasant Strategies for Avoiding resm-i tapu*

A text from the year 1170/1757 addressing a complaint concerning tax-takers with revenues in the village of Yakacık recounts some of the means by which peasants might try to avoid paying the hated accession due (*resm-i tapu*).<sup>42</sup> The strategies described were both applicable only if the tax-taker was but rarely present in the locality: for unbeknownst to the latter, villagers sometimes opened up new fields – evidently there was no scarcity of uncultivated territory – and then paid their tithe and other taxes for this newly-won piece of land. If the tax-taker discovered the transaction only after considerable delay, cultivators sometimes refused to pay the *resm-i tapu* since they had supposedly held the fields at issue for a very long time.

When it came to agricultural lands that did not need clearing because they were already in use, a similar strategy involved the interested villagers coming to an understanding with one another: they agreed to transfer fields and meadows among themselves without informing the *sahib-i arz*. Once again, after the new holder had paid tithes and other dues from his acquisition, he would claim that by collecting these taxes, the tax-taker had accepted the legitimacy of the new possessor and thereby lost his claim to the *resm-i tapu*.

However, on the basis of an edict issued in 1017/1608-09, or more than a century before the dispute in question, the administration of Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603-1617) rejected these claims and forcefully took the side of the tax-takers. We may wonder whether this command had been endorsed by later generations of Sultans, as in principle the commands of a deceased ruler were no longer valid; perhaps when the issue came up again in the eighteenth century, some register or other had yielded a convenient confirmation. Officials decreed that in the two transactions just described, peasants would continue to be liable for the *resm-i tapu*. Even worse, only when the new holders were close relatives of the previous one did they have an automatic right to the land once they had paid the requisite tax. Otherwise the *sahib-i arz* could grant the field or meadow to a man of his own choosing, presumably both negotiating a higher payment and asserting his control over the villagers' livelihoods. When the *sahib-i arz* detected previous transactions among peasants that he had not authorised, he could either demand the tax in retrospect or have the transfer annulled; he was completely free in his decision. Moreover, if peasants disputed the claim of the tax-taker on the basis of the fact that he had accepted the tithe and thereby implicitly granted possession, they were automatically to lose the land at issue. This decision put them completely at the mercy of the local power-holder and may have been an attempt to preclude the formation of a 'village aristocracy' capable of challenging *timar*-holders and ultimately the elite in Istanbul.

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42 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 385-386 (1170/1757); Vol. 2, 260 (1174/1761); see also *İTT*, Vol. 2 (1171/1758) concerning the settlement of Temenna.

*Transgressing the Borders of Tax Grants, Pious Foundations, Landholdings, and Villages*

As we have seen in the case of the land needed for the operation of a mill, disputes resulted from the fact that certain people were not willing to respect the borders that separated their own holdings/properties from those of their neighbours. Presumably such cases were common, but most of them could be settled by arbitration within the village, or else by recourse to judges and their adjuncts; only in exceptional cases did the complainant find it necessary to resort to the central administration. Among the cases that did make it to Istanbul, we may count the dispute between the pious foundation (*vakıf*) of Yahşi Bey and a garrison soldier of the fortress of Boğazkesen, or that between the administrators of the *vakıf* of İlyas Paşa in Gebze and its neighbour the *vakıf* of Fazlullah Paşa; supposedly, the administrators of the latter had gone so far as to remove the stones that marked the limits of their lands and usurped the property of the pious foundation of İlyas Paşa.<sup>43</sup>

A similar dispute involved a townsman from Gebze and a villager from nearby Eskihişar; both the contestants bore the title of *beşe*, indicating some connection with the military.<sup>44</sup> The townsman accused the villager of tearing down the signs indicating the boundary between his field and the complainant's vineyard and ignoring the court decision that confirmed the position of the boundary markers. The latter must have been re-erected, presumably by the townsman; yet later on, the man from Eskihişar once again tore them down, ploughing up a significant share of the vineyard and a piece of the public thoroughfare to boot. In addition, he changed the course of a stream passing through his land so that it entered the vineyard and caused considerable damage, a complaint which witnesses confirmed in every detail. As the defendant refused to obey the orders of the *şeriat* court, his opponents now reported him to Istanbul for punishment. But for the time being the central administration let him off with a warning, which, however, contained the threat that if he gave further grounds for complaint, he would be banished from the locality. This story seems to imply that the man from Eskihişar had protectors in Istanbul, perhaps from among his associates in the military. We can also conclude that the central government was not much inclined to intervene in disputes that did not immediately touch upon the Sultan's concerns. It therefore remains an open question whether the accused became more tractable as a result of these official warnings.

A more dramatic story of violated boundaries that the court in Gebze attempted to resolve concerned the possessor of a good-sized landholding (*çiftlik*) that occupied the site of the abandoned village of Kocabeyli, situated on the territory of Gebze.<sup>45</sup> This place must have been located on the border of the sub-district, since the peasants of Şeyhli who were embroiled in a dispute with this *çiftlik*-holder lived not in Gebze, but in the nearby sub-district of Ada. The landholder complained that the people of Şeyhli not only had

43 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 41-42 (1164/1751). The administrator(s) of the Kadı Fazlullah foundation also fought with a number of garrison soldiers over the respective limits of *vakıf* and *timar* lands: *İTT*, Vol. 2, 168-169 (1171/1759).

44 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 301 (1167/1754).

45 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 310-311 (1167/1754).



cut wood in the forest that he had grown (*yetiřdirdiđüm*) but also burnt down the wintering-shelter for his goats, a shepherds' hut, and some of the forest. If true, these gestures smacked of serious contestation; and the *çiftlik*-holder demanded compensation for the damage he allegedly had suffered. As for the villagers, they claimed to have cut wood only in the open uncultivated land freely accessible to them and strenuously denied ever having burnt anything belonging to their opponent. In the end, the parties agreed to settle out of court and resume the amicable relations that supposedly had existed in the past; the plaintiff gave up his suit, and the villagers promised to not cut any wood on the territory of the *çiftlik*.

Presumably in a society that used wood for building as well as for heating, trees were a particularly valuable form of property; perhaps this fact was behind the boundary violation which formed the basis of a complaint on the part of the holder of a farm near Hereke.<sup>46</sup> Âyiře, the daughter of Ali Bey, had lost a wood that belonged to her holding because inhabitants of the nearby village of Tepeköy had cut it down and proceeded to cultivate the land. Perhaps the fact that the current holder was a woman had emboldened the intruders; as so often happened, the complainant had a *fetva* in her favour, but we do not know whether Âyiře succeeded in re-establishing the boundary and replanting the wood.

### *Access to Pastures and the Collection of Pasture Dues*

Animals trespassing on other people's fields formed another kind of boundary violation. Through their *timar*-holder, the villagers of Tepe complained that some people making use of nearby sheepfolds did not control their animals and as a result, the latter either pastured in the growing corn or at least trampled the fields.<sup>47</sup> Presumably the *timar*-holder got involved because his revenue also suffered when the village harvest was thus reduced; and he requested a sultanic command ordering the boundary violations to cease. The administration acceded to his request.

In certain villages, sheep belonging to a number of different holders might share the same pastures, and this situation could give rise to complications. In the villages of Çerkeřlü, Tavřanlı, Tavřancıl, Mallarım, Kâdî[lu], and Demirciler, and also in certain other settlements outside the Gebze district, every autumn the Sultan's herders pastured the sheep belonging to the ruler (*miri koyun*).<sup>48</sup> While the chief herdsman of a sultanic sheep farm (*miri koyun mandrasının ustası*) claimed that no other sheep could graze on this land, at least not in the autumn, in actuality not only proprietors of sheep from the Balkans but also the butchers of Üsküdar brought their sheep to the very same lands. Both the Balkan flocks and those already purchased by the butchers of Üsküdar probably were intended for the city's slaughterhouses; but since the animals had travelled over long distances, the owners must have fattened them up beforehand.

46 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 166-167 (1173/1759).

47 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 379 (1170/1756).

48 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 97 (1158/1745).

Interestingly, the reason for the official prohibition on mixing *miri koyun* and those in private hands was not so much that there was not enough grass available, but rather the possibility that the Sultan's sheep might catch diseases – perhaps anthrax – from the other animals grazing in the district of Gebze. When humans were at issue, medical doctors at the time disputed whether or not contagion was possible; but veterinarians often were more pragmatic.<sup>49</sup>

Perhaps because *timar*-holders had lost much of their military function and thus also their prestige, we quite often find them complaining about dues that they should have collected but that people refused to pay. Thus in 1748, the villagers of Merkebli protested against the attempt on the part of three *timar*-holders and a tax farmer to collect pasturage dues from peasants who grazed their animals on their very own fields, either because the latter were fallow or else after the harvest was already on the threshing-floors.<sup>50</sup> In the court of the *kadı* of Üsküdar the tax farmer could only admit that the villagers were within their rights; for apparently it was mainly the people from outside the village who had to pay pasturage dues whenever they brought their animals into the territory of Merkebli. By contrast, the central administration decided against the villagers in a dispute concerning the pasturage dues payable by the users of the site of Poyrazlu: these dues supposedly belonged to the holder of the large tax grant (*zeamet*) in charge of the locality and the peasants had no share in them.<sup>51</sup> Exceptionally – and intriguingly – the officials did not refer to any registers when issuing this decision.

However, in almost all other cases the “ancient registers” (*defter-i atik*), in other words, the compilations detailing settlements, taxes, and tax-takers including pious foundations, which went back to the 1500s and sometimes even the late 1400s had established a norm from which it was very difficult to deviate. This fact appears with special clarity when people tried to change land use: villagers could not set aside land for grazing if the registers did not provide for this need.<sup>52</sup> It remains unclear what the peasants were supposed to do with their animals, whose number must have been quite substantial as the area had a reputation for its pastures; and given the number of disputes about grazing rights documented in the *ahkâm defterleri*, grassland must have been in great demand.

In a similar vein, in a village belonging to the pious foundation of Nişancı Şemseddin Çelebi, certain holders of fields that they had not cultivated for three years protested at the fact that the representative of the foundation administrator had taken the land away from them and awarded it to someone else against payment of an entry fine (*resm-i tapu*).<sup>53</sup> Once again, the villagers' excuse was that they wished to convert the land to pas-

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49 H. Alkhateeb Shehada, ‘Arabic Veterinary Medicine and the “Golden Rule” for Veterinarians according to a Sixteenth-century Medical Treatise’, in S. Faroqhi (ed.), *Animals and People in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul 2010), 315-332, see p. 325.

50 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 178-179 (1160/1747-48).

51 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 322-323 (1167/1754).

52 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 175-176 (1173/1759).

53 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 234 (1164/1750-51).

ture. But the administration refused to accept this argument: ‘once a field always a field’ appears to have been the motto from which officials refused to deviate. Conversely, the administration did not allow villagers and others to transform rough grazing land (*mera*) into fields; and administrators were explicitly forbidden to collect *resm-i tapu* from such lands prior to their use for agricultural purposes.<sup>54</sup>

As pastures and sheepfolds were considered agricultural lands, they were not private property. Rather, the peasants rented these lands from their tax-takers; as usual, the relevant leases passed from one generation to the next. Such a case is on record for the village of Tuzla, where a family had possession of such lands; but when the head of the family died, the tax farmer who collected dues on behalf of the pious foundation of Yıldırım Bayezid in Bursa attempted to take the lands back. A number of Muslim villagers testified that the holders did indeed possess them by an inheritable lease; and the tax farmer received an order to cease molesting the family.<sup>55</sup>

In addition to the sedentary owners of flocks and herds, there were also some nomads or semi-nomads entering the sub-district of Gebze to pasture their flocks. Our sources mention such temporary users of the local grasslands without giving much detail about the places from which they came and the seasons they spent in the Gebze area; we only learn that the villagers of Darıca were almost ready to leave their fields because of the attacks of migrant Kurds and Turcomans, but also of servitors of the government with landholdings in the area.<sup>56</sup>

Where the “ancient registers” left a matter at least partly open, disputes were all but inevitable. Thus in 1743, the *timar*-holder in charge of the settlement of Pelidli claimed before the *kadı* that the village territory included a winter pasture for which the users had to pay “according to their capabilities”.<sup>57</sup> As not law but custom specified the level of the payment, the users, who unfortunately remain anonymous, claimed that the *sipahi* Mehmed had demanded more than his due. Presumably, local people knew what ‘fair payment’ should have been, but they did not see fit to inform the court. After all, the question directly at issue was not the level of the payment but rather the reputation of the *sipahi*. Did people trust him to make a fair assessment? Witnesses to his good character came from the village of Tavşanlı: they must have been acceptable witnesses because, at least in principle, they should have been neutral in this dispute. But it is also possible that the *sipahi* Mehmed had ensured that these outsiders were called in; for perhaps certain dubious activities of his were well known to everybody in Pelidli, but carried less weight elsewhere. A second document recorded what had emerged from the sixteenth-century records pertaining to this case, namely that the payment for winter pasture was in fact part of the revenue of the *sipahi* and no one else had any right to it. In the same vein, the people sending their animals to the grasslands of the village of Denizli (sub-district of Gebze) needed to pay their dues to the administrator of the pi-

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54 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 159-160 (1172/1759).

55 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 306 (1175/1761).

56 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 19 (1156/1743).

57 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 51-53 (1156/1743).

ous foundation of Mustafa Paşa in Gebze, and none of the villagers was entitled to collect these payments.<sup>58</sup>

From our point of view, it is more interesting to analyse what the *sipahi*'s opponents said and did. They feature only as "the people of the village" (*karye halkı*); and thus we do not know whether the peasants as a whole had decided to act or the contestants were only a coterie of relatively wealthy men. In principle, the villagers did not deny that the *sipahi* had a right to payment. But they wanted clear criteria for its determination: one-tenth of the price for which the revenues once had been "sold" seemed a fair solution, and the peasants were unwilling to pay even an *akçe* more. Presumably by the term "sale" (*füruht*) they meant the amount of money that whoever farmed the dues had paid for the privilege of collecting them. As there is no reference to a life-time tax farm (*malikâne*), this arrangement was probably short-term; and we may even surmise that one of the richer villagers held the contract. Another document also apparently referred to a short-term tax farm: the holders of several large tax grants (*zeamet*) with lands in the Gebze district and elsewhere complained that certain people – their names but not their socio-political statuses are on record – had given out pastures as tax farms and pocketed the revenues.<sup>59</sup>

As we have seen, it was not rare for people with rights to tax revenue to appoint a *subaşı*; this man had police duties but frequently also saw to it that the tax-taker received his dues in full; he even might collect them in person. This fact is apparent from another dispute concerning payment for the use of pasture, in which a man who claimed to have been the *subaşı* serving the previous beneficiary of the *timar*-revenues of the village of Ovacık, had "sold" the pasture dues to a relative against payment of 300 *akçe*. Given the eighteenth-century devaluation of the currency, this was probably a derisory sum.<sup>60</sup> Now the present possessor was only willing to pay the new *timar*-holder the same amount, which the latter was unwilling to accept; he therefore procured a sultanic command confirming his right to the full pasture dues, whose exact level once again remained indeterminate and thus open to further contestations. Given the overall frequency of disputes concerning pasture dues in the vicinity of Istanbul, it is especially frustrating that we do not know any more details.

Other disputes were not about the dues to be paid but about the right of access pure and simple. A notable example involved Tophanelizade El-hac Mustafa, probably an inhabitant of Istanbul enjoying some status but apparently not holding any office in the service of the central administration.<sup>61</sup> This personage held agricultural lands (*çiflik*) on the territory of the village of Tuzla, from where he tried to get his hands on the rough pasture that the villagers "from time immemorial" had been using as commons for their flocks and herds. Hacı Mustafa had claimed that the pasture was attached to his landholding, but in a court case it had already emerged that this was not true at all. However, Hacı

58 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 52-53 (1156/1743); Vol. 2, 257-258 (1174/1760).

59 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 176-177 (1160/1747).

60 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 372-373 (1169/1756).

61 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 306-307 (1167/1754).

Mustafa, in spite of his pilgrimage to Mecca, was not known for his respect for Islamic law and/or its representatives; he continued to harass the villagers, who therefore applied for and received a sultanic command protecting their rights. We do not know whether Hacı Mustafa took this command any more seriously than the previous court decision.

### *Farm Dues (resim) and Tithes (öşür) as Sources of Confrontation*

Overcharging the taxpayers is a widespread abuse whenever we encounter ‘privatised’ tax collection. Gebze was no exception to the general rule, as evidenced by a complaint from the villagers of Maldepe (variant name: Ören), today a suburb of Istanbul.<sup>62</sup> At this time the peasants were on record as so-called *hassa ortakçıları*, in other words they were share-croppers. As the “ancient register” expressed it, the villagers received 18 oxen and a quantity of seed grain from the Sultan’s financial administration; in exchange they had to deliver half the grain harvest, but paid a true tithe on the produce of their vegetable gardens, as was customary in the area. Most importantly for our case, they were exempt from the dues called *resim*. This situation did not change when the village revenues became part of the foundation of “the deceased Prince Mehmed”, a son of Yıldırım Bayezid (r. 1389-1402) who was on record as a *şehzade* and thus did not make it to the throne; given the title, he was probably a person other than Mehmed I (r. 1413-1421), who was also a son of Yıldırım.<sup>63</sup>

In all likelihood, by the term *resim* the parties to the contest meant the *resm-i çift* or farm tax, one of the ancient dues that ‘ordinary’ peasants needed to pay on the basis of the fifteenth and sixteenth-century tax registers.<sup>64</sup> According to the complaint, the *subaşı*s of the village demanded the *resim* on top of everything else; and the central administration confirmed that this tax did not appear in the ancient registers and the peasants therefore did not need to pay it. Presumably, the exemption indicated that the peasants of Maldepe had once been *ortakçı kullar*, in other words slaves settled on the land who paid heavier dues than other peasants and whom Ömer Lütfi Barkan once likened to medieval European serfs.<sup>65</sup> These sharecroppers originally were not peasants in the legal sense of the term and therefore did not pay the *resm-i çift*. Probably by the eighteenth century the details of the arrangement had been partly forgotten, though it is noteworthy that these peasants still had not become ordinary taxpayers, as supposedly had happened in most cases already during the sixteenth century.

Other disputes concerned the tithe (*öşür*). As is well known, Ottoman villagers paid a tithe on the produce of their fields, gardens and vineyards; and these payments were ma-

62 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 133-134 (1159-1746).

63 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 198 (1173/1760) describes this prince as “Sultan Yıldırım Han oğlu Sultan Mehmed Han”; so he may have been the future sultan after all.

64 H. İnalçık, ‘Osmanlılarda Raiyyet Rusûmu’, *Belleten*, 23 (1959), 575-610.

65 Ö. L. Barkan, ‘XV ve XVI Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Toprak İşçiliğinin Organizasyonu Şekilleri’, *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, 1/1 (1939-40), 29-74; 1/2 (1939-40), 198-245; 1/4 (1939-40), 397-447.

jor sources of revenue for the central administration. However, in practice the grain tithe could be significantly higher than one-tenth, because the collectors' fee (*salarıye*) had been joined to it: thus the actual ratio came to one-ninth or even one-eighth. In 1761, the villagers of Arslanlı refused to pay one-eighth and were only prepared to hand over ten per cent or the true tithe, a claim that the central government did not accept.<sup>66</sup> However, the vineyard tax, often assessed in money because it was so difficult to transport the produce, usually took the form of a true tithe. In other cases when the peasants had originally come from outside the village whose lands they cultivated, they paid a tax called *resm-i dönüm*; a tax-taker who tried to collect the vineyard tithe on top of the *resm-i dönüm* was told that this behaviour was illegal. But since the peasants complained that he had used violence and even arrested them, we may wonder how much importance the tax-taker attached to the Sultan's command.<sup>67</sup>

Certain villagers found it burdensome to share their harvest and claimed the right to pay a fixed sum of money (*maktu*); however, probably due to possible devaluations, the foundation administrators of the important institution of Eyyüb-i Ensârî in Eyüp near Istanbul firmly rejected this arrangement, and so did other holders of rights to the tithe.<sup>68</sup> In at least one case the villagers seem to have forcibly resisted the attempt to collect more than a flat rate for the produce of their orchards. As a justification they invoked an entry in the "ancient registers" (*defter-i atik*) that supported their case. Admittedly, this note did not appear in the more recent register but, as the peasants claimed, by tradition (*kadimü'l-eyyâmdan*) they had always paid a flat rate.<sup>69</sup> However, in this case these references to past practice cut no ice with the administration, which obviously wanted to support the newly instituted life-time tax farmers by guaranteeing their revenues. In the case of Tuzla too, the administration refused the claims of certain villagers that they had a right to pay a flat rate for the produce of their gardens and vineyards, and once again required payment of the tithe.<sup>70</sup>

But challenges could also come from another quarter, as not all tax-takers were satisfied with the rates specified in the sixteenth-century tax registers. Thus the villagers of Darıcı and Akpınar reported that the current tax farmer demanded not only the vineyard tithe but also a second tithe on the syrup (*pekmez*) that they prepared from their grape juice. As for the inhabitants of Tuzla, they complained that they had always paid the true tithe on their grapes and other fruit; but now the *subaşı* or local police chief had begun

66 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 305 (1175/1761); L. Güçer, *XVI-XVII. Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Hububat Meselesi ve Hububattan Alınan Vergiler* (Istanbul 1964), 51-59.

67 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 216 (1173/1760).

68 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 107-108 (1158/1745); Vol. 2, 212-213 (1173/1760); Vol. 2, 219 (1173/1760, concerning the *vakıf* of the Sultan Ahmed mosque). The claim of a villager who wanted to pay a fixed sum instead of the grape tithe met with a similar fate: *İTT*, Vol. 1, 188 (1161/1748). By contrast, the administrator failed in his attempt to collect a tithe from a field in the village of Hereke as it paid a lump sum according to the register: *İTT*, Vol. 1, 201 (1162/1749).

69 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 225-226 (1173/1760); Vol. 2, 237-238 (1173/1760).

70 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 277-278 (1174/1761).



to demand one-eighth or even one-seventh.<sup>71</sup> Even worse, he seems to have had armed men at his disposal that backed up his demands with violence. His behaviour had already become the subject of a court case, and the peasants had received documents whose contents the errant *subaşı* had ignored without further ado. Now the latter did not act alone, but owed his position to a personage named Tophanelizade El-hac Mustafa that we have already encountered as a *çiftlik* holder. Presumably, the *subaşı*'s powerful patron was attempting to increase his landholding by driving out the peasants, as had happened quite often in the 1600s and 1700s.<sup>72</sup>

### *In Defiance of Orders: Forging a Private Landholding*

Our suspicions deepen when we learn from the adjunct *kadı* (*naib*) of Gebze that Tophanelizade El-hac Mustafa was involved in yet further illegal activities.<sup>73</sup> In 1157/1745, he officiated as the *subaşı* of Tuzla, while during the previous year he had been in charge of appointing a *subaşı*; he thus exercised considerable power on the local level. According to the adjunct *kadı*, apart from the damage caused by his livestock to Tuzla's fields and gardens, he had managed to appropriate "one-half" of the village lands. When invited to justify his actions in court, Hacı Mustafa quite simply declined, stating that he would only consent to appear before a judge in the capital. Presumably this reply did not sit very well with the adjunct *kadı*, for Tophanelizade thereby expressed his lack of respect for the Gebze judge. In response, the adjunct *kadı* asked for an order from the central administration telling the *subaşı* of Tuzla to appear before the court in Gebze; in other words, the adjunct judge wanted to have his own jurisdiction confirmed. In that undertaking he seems to have been successful; but whether the villagers of Tuzla secured the return of their fields and gardens is a question to which we have no answer. Nor was this the only would-be *çiftlik*-holder whom the villagers of Tuzla needed to contend with: in the 1760s, they seem to have suffered from the interventions of a second person who tried to set himself up as the village strongman; however the chief architect of the period, who as a result of these machinations was unable to have his landholding cultivated, took the matter to Istanbul, one hopes with some success.

To sum it all up: our documentation thus shows that Tophanelizade El-hac Mustafa tried to prevent the inhabitants of Tuzla from pasturing their animals on the village commons, which he attempted to retain for his own use. He also allowed his livestock to damage the crops of his neighbours and usurped agricultural lands belonging to the peasants, both fields that were officially in the Sultan's hands and gardens that belonged to the villagers as personal property. He also overcharged the latter on their tithes; all these activities were facilitated by the fact that Tophanelizade sometimes was the village *subaşı* and

71 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 198 (1173/1760); on Tuzla see Vol. 1, 100-101 (1158/1745). Like villages on the Bay of Izmit, Tuzla also produced cherries: Vol. 1, 195 (1161/1748).

72 B. McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade and the Struggle for Land, 1600-1800* (Cambridge, Paris 1981), 45-79.

73 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 85 (1157/1745).

sometimes had one of his men appointed to the position. Even though all these events date to the mid-1700s, the picture is very similar to that drawn by the officials who under Murad III (r. 1574-95) wrote the *adaletnames* that denounced the oppression of the peasantry by land-and money-grabbing office-holders.<sup>74</sup>

### *Coping with the Market*

Istanbul being so close by, the city's inhabitants formed a market for the produce of certain Gebze villages, although apparently this matter did not give rise to many disputes. In any event, the villagers of Maldepe grew "onions, squash, cucumber, ladies' fingers, and broad beans", while those of nearby Kartal also cultivated vegetables in quantity. In Hereke the peasants grew cherries, presumably for the same market, while a landholder living in Gebze lost 300 vines as well as 39 cherry and other fruit trees because the fire intended to burn weeds in a nearby artichoke field went out of control.<sup>75</sup> Ancient rules also might serve commercial requirements: in Pelidli, the *timar*-holder tried to enforce the law, well attested for the 1500s, that the villagers had to store his tax grains and then take them to the nearest market. Unfortunately, our text does not say where the "weekly market" the *sipahi* alluded to was situated and whether it had any connection with Istanbul.<sup>76</sup>

Presumably, the sale of grapes, documented in yet another dispute record, also connects with Istanbul demand, although the text does not say so: five men, whose title of *beşe* once again indicates a connection with the military, had sold their grapes before ripening to a group of Muslims about whom the register only states that they inhabited the sub-district of Gebze.<sup>77</sup> Now it turned out – surely as expected – that the price of ripe grapes was higher than that of fruit which was as yet un-harvested. Merchants who wanted to be sure of having a supply at hand sometimes resorted to this arrangement, known as *selem*; but it was illegal according to Islamic religious law and thus the owners of the vineyard must have had little trouble getting a *fetva* from the Chief Mufti to the effect that the sale had been illegal. But getting the purchasers to return the goods was another matter altogether, and therefore the sellers asked for a sultanic command, which incidentally went not to the buyers directly but to the adjunct judge of Gebze, their place of residence. But we may also speculate that both sides knew well enough that the sale would not stand up in court, and what was really at issue was a money loan that the soldiers had not paid back so that the lenders refused to hand over the grapes. There are so many aspects of rural transactions that continue to escape us...

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74 H. İnalçık, 'Adaletnameler', *Belgeler*, 2/3-4(1965), 42-149; *İTT*, Vol. 2, 368-369 (1176/1763) (two documents).

75 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 133-134 (1159-1746); Vol. 2, 120 (1171/1758); Vol. 2, 216-227 (1173/1760); Vol. 2, 351 (1176/1762).

76 *İTT*, Vol. 2, 228 (1173/1760).

77 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 147 (1159/1746).



## Migration

Mehmed the Conqueror (r. 1451-1481) and Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512) had brought people into the newly conquered and depopulated ex-Byzantine capital even against their will; and in the later 1500s we find that Anatolian provincials whom the government wished to punish for usury received orders to relocate to Istanbul and take up the profession of butcher, the idea being that given the artificially low meat prices enforced in the capital, the newcomers would go bankrupt in short order.<sup>78</sup> However sporadically, Ottoman officials even in the 1500s also combed the capital for migrants deemed undesirable, who were to be sent back to their villages; and particularly in the late sixteenth century, the Ottoman administration began to reverse its position on migration to Istanbul. A generation later, Murad IV (r. 1623-1640) was especially concerned with returning provincials to their home towns, assuming on the basis of little evidence that the mercenary rebellions of the late 1500s and early 1600s had come to an end. Moreover in the eighteenth century, perhaps partly due to the uprisings of 1703, and 1730 Ottoman officials began to limit the access of petitioners to the capital and chase out would-be migrants.<sup>79</sup>

In the eyes of eighteenth-century Ottoman officials, the migration of villagers was especially problematic. The latter needed the permission of their principal tax-taker before they could legally leave their villages: if the local administrators allowed the move, the migrants were liable to a special tax. However, it was well known that many villagers relocated to towns and could not be traced; and to prevent an endless number of court cases, people who had lived and paid their taxes in a city – including Istanbul – for a period that varied from ten to 20 years counted as legitimate urbanites who could not be removed. In the mid-1700s ten years' uncontested residence made a villager into a townsman.<sup>80</sup> It is within this political conjuncture and legal framework that we must view the migration-related cases that occurred in mid eighteenth-century Gebze.

A special case concerns the tax load of a group of Christian Albanians from various villages in the sub-district of Premedi, province of Avlonya (today: Vlorë); one of these settlements bore the name of Bostani, probably because the inhabitants cultivated vegetable gardens.<sup>81</sup> Back home these men had paid the farm dues due from non-Muslims (*ispençe*). But now they lived in the Bosphorus villages of İstavros (today: Beylerbey), Çengel[köy] and Kuzguncuk, which at this time also formed part of the sub-district of Gebze. These migrants, in whose favour the *kadı* of Üsküdar already had given judgment, now worked as gardeners, apparently for more than just a single year because we learn that the dispute had been dragging on for some time already. The crux of the mat-

78 H. Inalcik, 'The Policy of Mehmed II toward the Greek Population of Istanbul and the Byzantine Buildings of the City', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 23 (1970), 213-249; Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen*, 228-233.

79 H. Andreasyan, 'Celâlilerden Kaçan Anadolu Halkının Geri Gönderilmesi', in *İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı'ya Armağan* (Ankara 1976), 45-54; M. Aktepe, 'XVIII. Asrın İlk Yarısında İstanbul'un Nüfus Mes'elesine Dâir Bâzı Vesikalar', *TD*, 9/13 (1958), 1-30.

80 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 70-71 (1157/1744).

81 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 164-165 (1160/1747).

ter was that the *subaşı* of the Bosphorus villages had demanded a second *ispence* payment, which the central authorities decreed was not permissible given the entries in the “ancient registers” for both the migrants’ home villages and their present places of residence. We do not learn in whose interest the aggressive official had acted, but probably he served the pious foundation of Abdullah Ağa and/or that of Kadı Fazlullah, which both had holdings in this area.

The surviving document is of particular interest because, contrary to the oft repeated official concern about migrants in general and Albanian migrants in particular, the authorities apparently saw nothing wrong with the presence of these gardeners in villages a few kilometres from Istanbul.<sup>82</sup> We do not learn how long the Albanians had been in the Bosphorus settlements of the Gebze sub-district, but given continuing ties to their region of origin, it is unlikely that they had been there for ten years and more and had thus gained the right to ‘permanent residence’. Maybe the reason for this remarkable tolerance was that officials saw them as seasonal labourers whose work, moreover, contributed to the food supply of Istanbul. By contrast, the administration accepted the request of the palace eunuch Osman, in charge of administering the foundation of Yıldırım Bayezid in Bursa, that a Christian resident of Tuzla who had settled in the nearby village of Pendik be moved back to his original home.<sup>83</sup>

### *Where Do We Go From Here? A Provisional Conclusion*

Since the documents published in *İstanbul Tarım Tarihi* have been selected from the extant registers by the editors of the collection, it would be imprudent to draw major conclusions *ex negativo*. However, given the large quantity of documents involved, conclusions on the basis of ‘what is currently available’ are perfectly legitimate. It is to be hoped that they will soon form the basis for hypotheses to be confirmed, modified, or disproved by future research.

We will begin with the peasantry. As recourse to Istanbul cost money, our records probably preserve mostly the complaints of the better-off among the villagers, who may not have been all that wealthy given the multiple demands of the tax-takers. In a few cases we have observed people of peasant background trying to become village strongmen, acquire *çifliks*, and perhaps ultimately join the tax-takers. Unsurprisingly, ordinary peasants complained about these men, but focused more intently on other issues, mostly taxes and particularly entry fines. Given the prevalence of monetary debasement, certain villagers tried, usually without success, to convert tithes into lump-sum payments. Access to pasture and pasture dues were sources of frequent disputes, presumably because of the

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82 S. Faroqhi, ‘Migration into Eighteenth-Century “Greater Istanbul” as Reflected in the *Kadı* Registers of Eyüp’, *Turcica* 30 (1998), 163-183 and eadem, ‘Controlling Borders and Workmen, All in One Fell Swoop: Repairs to the Ottoman Fortress of Hotin (1716)’ in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Political Initiatives ‘From the Bottom-Up’ in the Ottoman Empire. Halcyon Days in Crete VII, A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 9-11 January 2009* (Rethymno 2012), 315-331.

83 *İTT*, Vol. 1, 235 (1164/1751).

good quality of the Gebze pasturage and the demands of nearby Üsküdar for meat and yoghurt. Remarkably, irregular taxes did not enter the record, perhaps because the 1740s and 1750s were a period of – relative – peace. At least the peasants did not often speak of deserted villages or the danger of having to abandon their land; probably the closeness of the capital made for a modicum of security. From a different angle, this situation may help explain why at least in Gebze, if not necessarily in other sub-districts of Koca-ili, we do not find complaints about migration to Istanbul and the resultant difficulty of a much diminished village community in continuing to pay its taxes.

The tax-takers will be our second concern. For when all is said and done, a large number of disputes did not involve peasants at all, but concerned tax-takers of various kinds fighting it out among themselves. It was common for these men to cross the boundaries of their respective tax assignments and demand dues that were not theirs to collect. As the principal tax-takers so often employed *subaşı*s or farmed out their revenues – and sometimes the tax farmer might appoint his own *subaşı* – there were several layers of privileged persons who might lay claim to peasant dues. Presumably quite often these men fought out their disputes on the backs of the villagers, but the records do not provide much information in this respect.

That said, tax farmers did not dominate the scene to the same extent as the ‘master narrative’ of the Ottoman crisis beginning in the late sixteenth century would have led us to expect. But then this master narrative emerged in the 1950s and 1960s, when historians, especially those from the Balkans, were eager to show that like Central and Eastern European princes and tsars, the sultans had encouraged a ‘second serfdom’ linked to major grain exports to capitalist Europe, a process which in turn had made it impossible for the Balkan peoples to participate in the processes of industrialisation, capital formation, and ultimately democratisation that characterised nineteenth-century England or France.<sup>84</sup> However, particularly through the work of Halil İnalcık and Bruce McGowan, it emerged some time ago that *çiftlik* formation and orientation towards the export market, while significant, were confined to certain regions. Certainly where the immediate vicinity of Istanbul was concerned, *çiftlik*s were of less importance than had originally been assumed.<sup>85</sup>

But what our documents reflect most clearly is the overwhelming importance of the ‘forces of tradition’. As Mehmet Genç has forcefully stated, the Ottoman administration had adopted ‘traditionalism’ as one of its principal values.<sup>86</sup> Although the *timar* had ceased to be a mainstay of the Ottoman army already by the late 1500s, the sub-district of Gebze produced revenues that mostly went to the holders of various *timars* and *zeamets*.

84 T. Stoianovich, ‘Land Tenure and Related Sectors of the Balkan Economy, 1600-1800’, *The Journal of Economic History*, 13 (1953), 398-411.

85 McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*; H. İnalcık, ‘The Emergence of Big Farms, *çiftlik*s: State, Landlords and Tenants’, in J.-L. Bacqué-Grammont and P. Dumont (eds), *Contributions à l’histoire économique et sociale de l’Empire ottoman* (Louvain 1984), 105-126.

86 M. Genç, ‘Osmanlı İktisadi Dünya Görüşünün İlkeleri’, in idem, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Devlet ve Ekonomi* (Istanbul 2000), 43-52, see pp. 48-49.

Some of the latter were garrison soldiers; and *zeamets* were often in the hands of courtiers and other members of the elite serving the Sultan in Istanbul. But in quite a few cases we do not know what the *timar*-holder in question was supposed to do: did he hold a mere sinecure or did he actually join the Sultan's cavalry? Even Tophanelizade El-hac Mustafa, the would-be holder of a large agricultural estate, according to our records behaved very much like his late sixteenth-century counterparts might have done.

As noted several times already, many tax-takers did not collect their dues in person but rather through the mediation of a *subaşı* whom they appointed; it remains to be seen whether these tax-takers had already possessed the right to hire 'police' officials in the late 1500s. Further instances of innovation occasionally crop up: thus we find tax revenues in the hands of officials who had given up their salaries to the Sultan's treasury, an arrangement typical of the 1700s but not so widespread in the 1500s. But these cases are the exception rather than the rule; in general, arrangements instituted in the sixteenth century continued to be valid in the 1740s and 1750s.

Did this picture reflect reality or was it mainly an artefact of the bureaucratic imagination? For a historian committed to the idea that Ottoman society possessed dynamism of its own, the second alternative is more convincing. Yet given the support of the Ottoman bureaucracy, those forces that favoured whatever had been in existence since the 1500s acquired a great deal of strength and resilience. With remarkable insistence, the Sultan's officials relied on sixteenth-century tax registers and records of pious foundations, supplemented by an occasional sultanic command from the 1600s or 1700s. Evidently these materials provided a norm to which tax-takers and taxpayers alike were supposed to conform. Of course, it is very difficult to decide to what extent the weight of 'traditionalism' was balanced by 'change in practice' that took place – more or less tacitly – in the fields and villages of Gebze. Market forces, especially Istanbul's demand for fruit, vegetables, and mutton, may well have played a more important role than our present documentation indicates. But the agents of 'change in practice' had a hard time whenever a beneficiary of the old order questioned their activities, and the prescriptions of the sixteenth-century registers hung like a sword of Damocles over the heads of people attempting to deviate from these rules.

COLLECTIVE IDENTITY, COLLECTIVE ACTION,  
AND VILLAGE AUTONOMY:  
CORNERSTONES OF RURAL LIFE IN THE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY  
OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Rhoads MURPHEY\*

THE PRESENT STUDY IS BASED ON DOCUMENTARY evidence drawn from the court records of Isparta in the early seventeenth century. The locality was chosen as a focus for investigation because its geographical position ensured a relative isolation from the distorting market influence exerted by the ‘great’ metropolitan cities in other regional settings that were open to international trade and regional supply networks such as those found in the Aegean and Marmara regions. It was felt that the relatively sheltered position of Isparta from such global and trans-regional economic influences would offer an ideal opportunity for observing the condition of rural life in seventeenth-century Anatolia. Since there is no prospect of reviewing the evidence from the *sicils* in detail in our brief essay, we will attempt instead to present an argument or set of contentions relating to that material which highlights some issues of broader interest and supra-regional significance for the study of the Ottoman rural order. In addition, we will provide a short documentary addendum at the end of this discussion that highlights some key features of the village social environment.

In order to bring the discussion into a more concrete frame, we will be offering in due course some observations regarding the tenacity of tradition by focusing on key areas of daily village life such as the necessity for the sharing of commonly exploited resources. Specifically, we will focus on water for home use, for irrigation of crops and for pasture by considering aspects of its joint ownership and disposal within the village community. Relating to both spheres, that is, the private and the collective, it is a commonly repeated and rehearsed premise made explicit in both *şeriat* and *kanun* law compendiums, as well as in case law, that pre-existing sharing arrangements and resource allocations in use ‘since time immemorial’ – practices that were sometimes carried over from predecessor regimes in particular regions – had a validity and an inviolability that could only be reversed or legitimately challenged in exceptional circumstances. My contention in this paper boils down to the simple observation that many aspects of village life were unaffected by the gradual process of Ottomanisation, a fact that was reciprocally acknowledged and indeed reciprocally supported by state authority and the governing structures of the

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largely autonomous village communities that moderated relations with the state. With respect to the terms of joint ownership and exploitation of communally-held resources and many other economic matters and especially in the sphere of inter-personal and social relations, it is incontestable that the state and its institutions held the position more of passive observer than of active re-organiser and regulator of a whole range of entrenched social norms and practices that it was largely powerless to alter, whatever its own regulatory ambitions. To rule its diverse empire effectively and to minimise the potential for controversy, fiscal expectations and even normative values had to be modified and occasionally set aside to achieve the greater good of smooth governance. With respect to the fine tuning and micro-managing of many aspects of its relations with the inhabitants of the rural and provincial spheres, the state could not afford for practical reasons to be overbearing or over-intrusive and had to learn to accept what it was incapable of changing.

I would further contend that much of the literature attempting to characterise the rural sphere in the Ottoman lands has seriously overemphasised the regulatory presence of the purportedly 'dominant' state while seriously understating and underestimating the capacity and determination of peasants to act as independent agents. As free agents, they were determined to promote and protect their autonomy, capable of exercising free choice and adept at seizing real-life opportunities for themselves. Whenever it seemed feasible and profitable, they were determined to exercise control of their own destinies and hold their own in relations with the would-be dominant state. Our exaggerated estimations of the hegemonic power of the state derive from the inescapable fact that its viewpoint is most fully and powerfully recorded in the surviving historical record, in particular the *sancak kanunnameleri* drafted in the state chancellery and the *mahkeme kayıtları* that survive from the courts of provincial towns to which rural residents of the adjacent regions sometimes had recourse in relation to a range of criminal and commercial matters. However, despite its attempts to impose uniformity, it is clear even from the evidence supplied by institutions organised and controlled by the state itself, that the state was compliant with – in its own way even protective of – an even principled and deliberate preservation of 'age old practice' as a means of regulating its relations, through compromise and mutual consent, with the residents of the diverse rural hinterlands that comprised its vast tri-continental empire.

Before proceeding to an examination of the case-specific evidence supporting the main contentions of my paper, I would like to pause briefly to acknowledge the contributions to my own understanding made by several forerunners who have studied the rural sphere from both a contemporary anthropological and the standard historical perspective. I would like in particular to draw attention to the work of Michael Herzfeld, who in his published work on the village environment in various parts of modern-day Greece has focused on the self-regulating character of rural communities. In an article published in a volume edited by John Burke and Stathis Gauntlett in 1992, Herzfeld skilfully characterised and delineated the manipulative techniques employed by villagers in their attempts to keep the state at arm's length.<sup>1</sup> It is worth remembering that the state whose power,

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1 M. Herzfeld, 'Historical Form and Everyday Experience in Rural Greece', in J. Burke and S. Gauntlett (eds), *Neohellenism* (Canberra 1992), 93-112.

institutional presence, and legal authority the modern villagers studied by Herzfeld confronted and attempted to circumvent has a reach and power over rural communities that far exceeds that of its predecessors of the pre-industrial age. Herzfeld contends that because of a clash of values and understanding between the village community, which calculated and evaluated neighbourly relations in terms of personality and familial ties or affinities and commitments, the villagers were incapable of regarding depersonalised entities such as the state and its institutions and bureaucratic norms as anything other than an alien presence in their midst. The state was to be tolerated for the sake of the villagers' interest in self-preservation, but it was regarded as an entity to be negotiated with using terms, attitudes, customs, and norms that represented more closely their own traditions than the values and norms espoused by the state. In describing the incompatibility of values between officials and state representatives and villagers and arguing for the inappropriateness of applying exclusively state-centred approaches to the analysis of state-peasant relations, Herzfeld says the following:

The statist interpretation of [village] events is not so much wrong as it is inappropriate. Because the state is a legalistic entity framed in the idiom of fixed, absolute definitions, it ill tolerates relativistic conceptions of social life: they cannot easily be codified in law, and permit innumerable challenges to the absolute sovereignty of the state over individual and family action. Statist discourse is in consequence highly literalistic. It cannot easily tolerate the inexact definitions of cultural and social experience that do, in fact, characterise daily usage.<sup>2</sup>

The state-centred and literalistic interpretation of state-peasant relations in the seventeenth century has to be energetically challenged since, in my opinion, it has played a distorting role in defining the terms of the debate that dominates modern historiography on rural affairs in the Ottoman Empire of the early modern era.<sup>3</sup> The notion of a passive peasantry whose only means of resisting the dominant state lay in the extreme solution of insurrection or collective resistance to state authority underestimates both the sophistication and the tenacity of the Ottoman peasantry in devising ways of circumventing or mitigating state demands while re-negotiating the terms of their relationship with the state using their own methods and even their own terms of reference.

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2 Herzfeld, 'Historical Form', 75.

3 Barkan's studies published in the 1930s and later provided a seemingly convincing case for the centralising 'intent' underlying the state's land tenure regime; see in particular the section in his article 'Timar', written for the Turkish Ministry of Education's *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, 13 vols (Istanbul 1940-1986), Vol. 12, 309. Here in the section entitled 'Timarlarda idari ve mali muhtariyet dereceleri' he makes reference to the '*kayıtsız-şartsız*' (unrestricted and unconditional) power of the state over the management of the rural landscape. How far these intentions were realisable 'on the ground' in the provinces has been questioned in literature of a more recent vintage. For a discussion and summary of the work by some contributors to this revisionist trend, see R. Murphey, 'The Ottoman Economy in the Early Imperial Age', in C. Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World* (London 2012), 25-40; in particular, the discussion on pp. 27-28. See also footnote 9 below citing the work of Revel challenging the notion of the 'absolutist' state's ability to penetrate at the municipal and the village levels.



A second argument which advocates the need for a more nuanced understanding of state-peasant relations based on the proposition that all actors and agents representing the two sides (state officialdom on the one hand and peasant actors on the other) is developed in Amy Singer's study of Ottoman Palestine published in 1994. In this study, Singer takes the view that:

Contact between peasants and officials was *largely* defined by fiscal expectation and obligations of either side, but, and this is a very big but, their interactions were far more complicated.<sup>4</sup>

In this paper I will be taking the view that there is a pressing need to re-complicate rural society and re-introduce all the elements of its complexity by re-examining not just the overstated oppositional dynamic present in some of the remoter regions of the Empire such as Palestine and the interior portions of Syria, in particular the Trablus-i Şam region, which remained for much of the early seventeenth century in a position of near chronic revenue arrears with regard to their treasury obligations, but other core regions of the Empire in central Anatolia, and even the immediate environs of the capital Istanbul, which played such a key role in the provisioning of the capital. To a degree the 'tentacles of the state' and its central administrative apparatus had the same problem in penetrating local networks no matter what the geographical distance between a given province and the imperial centre in Istanbul, but the high degree of fiscal autonomy enjoyed by the central and southern districts of Syria coupled with its unusually tenacious non-compliance with regard to the revenue demands of the centre made it an exceptional case.

As previously stated, the two areas in which peasants' rights, privileges, and customary practices were defended most rigorously and tolerated most willingly by the state were grazing rights and irrigation practices. We will thus make these two areas the focus of our brief foray into the complexities of Ottoman rural life by ignoring for the present the documentary record preserved for seventeenth-century Isparta and concentrating instead on an interesting case relating to the environs of Istanbul in the early nineteenth century that reveals very forcefully the resilience and determination of peasants when confronting contemporary power structures and taking action to defend the autonomous rights and economic privileges granted to them by the state in a bygone era. A case recorded in a court judgement (*ilam*) dating from 1811 of the *Havass-i Refia* tribunal encompassing the western suburbs of Istanbul makes the awareness and assertiveness of the village inhabitants of İki Telli, a village located within the district of Bakırköy, with regard to their historical privileges and legal rights quite apparent. The case concerned a question over disputed grazing rights first granted to the villagers dating from the time of the city's capture from the Byzantines in 1453. In the earliest Ottoman legislation on communally-held pasturing rights, the villagers in all parts of the Empire were protected against enclosure, assertion of private ownership, and other forms of exclusion on the grounds that such exclusion resulted in "harm to the general public interest" (*zarar-*

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4 Amy Singer, *Palestinian Peasants and Ottoman Officials* (Cambridge 1994), 17. The emphasis is mine.



*i amm*). Once lands had been categorised as uncultivated (*boz*) or uninhabited (*arazi-yi metruke*), in practice they retained this classification virtually indefinitely. Their initial categorisation was in any case determined on the basis of common usage from time immemorial (*kadimü 'z-zamandan berü*) a phrase whose early use is encountered in the *san-cak* regulations of Hüdavendigâr province dating from 1489.<sup>5</sup>

The location of İki Telli in the western approaches to the capital gave it a strategic position with regard to market-orientated intensive agriculture in the early nineteenth century, and yet its inhabitants successfully asserted their customary pasturage rights for a number of years between 1799 and 1811 before these rights were challenged and overturned in a court of law some three and a half centuries after the regions' incorporation under Ottoman rule. Reference to the villagers' right to assert their access to these lands categorised as 'abandoned' in the mid fifteenth century was not challenged by the court, but it did assert the invalidity of their claim to compensation in the amount of 150 *guruş* per year for ceding these rights on a near exclusive basis to the owner of a local estate (*çiftlik*) named İbrahim (familiar form: İbiş) Ağa on the grounds that as a locally resident farmer he was entitled (regardless of the size of his herd) to access the pasture lands without encumbrance or charge. In this case, the legal principle worked against the villagers claim to compensation, but in many other cases it was successfully used to defend their interests.<sup>6</sup> In the view of the court, it was not İbiş Ağa but the villagers who were introducing a kind of enclosure or private proprietary claim by their charging of rent for access to lands that were supposed to be open and free of access to all village residents without encumbrance.

Another area in which villagers successfully asserted and defended their customary right to make use of shared resources whose division and distribution were determined by local traditions and locally enforced decisions regarding fair use was in the utilisation of water. A further matter for joint decision was the optimisation of irrigation potential and irrigation rights in rural contexts. The reference to long-standing practice and ancient usages is made forcefully explicit in the legal opinions expressed by Chief Justices (*şeyhülislam*) of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries presented in their *fetva* collections. It is this body of evidence that we will turn to next for a further demonstration and discussion relating to our treatment of autonomous spheres of decision-making and the independence of the peasants over key aspects of the management of their own affairs in rural contexts. Our chief source for this section of the analysis is the *Hulasat ül-*

5 Cf. Ö. L. Barkan, *XV ve XVIncı Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Ziraî Ekonominin Hukukî ve Malî Esasları*, Vol. I: *Kanunlar* (Istanbul 1943), 3, §16.

6 The case was recorded in Ziyaeddin Yusuf Efendi's *Sakk-i Cedid*; see the 1329/1913 reprint, 456-458. The work, whose full title is *Cami-i envar al-sukuk ve lami al-ziya li-zev al-şukuk* was first published in Istanbul in 1284/1867, but the collection incorporates material from earlier periods. The *ilâm* itself, headed "*mera nizai ilâmi suretidir*", is dated 11 Muharrem 1226/5 February 1811. It forms a part of the collection of legal formularies and recordings of actual court judgements reached in actual cases with named plaintiffs and defendants. This makes it a real, as opposed to hypothetical, example of the application of judicial reasoning in an actual and explicitly defined Ottoman historical context.

*Ecvibe* of Çesmezade Mehmed Halis Efendi, which summarises and compares the legal opinions of four principal juridical figures of the middle Ottoman imperial era between c. 1670 and 1730.<sup>7</sup> Their legal judgments with regard to resource sharing and shared and joint husbandry are gathered together under two main headings:

- 1) *Kitab al shurb* – section on irrigation
- 2) *Kitab al muzaraa v'el müsakat* – section on partnerships in the agricultural sphere organised on a profit-sharing basis, and particulars governing contracts for the sharing of labour and other related costs for the tending and watering of vines and orchards entered into on the basis of profit sharing.

In these *fetva* collections relating to the above-mentioned chapter headings, one repeatedly encounters language that makes reference in multiple contexts to the force of tradition, precedent, and established custom, especially in the context of irrigation practices. The following phrases are most commonly encountered:

- a) *Mecra-yi kadim*, making reference to the pre-existing course of a irrigation channel
- b) *Kadimden be-hakk*, referring to long-standing rights of precedence in the shared use of a water source for use in the turning of water-powered mills
- c) *Kadimden be-hakk tarlaları sulaya-gelip*, in reference to the shared exploitation of a common irrigation source in turns by several individuals each exploiting their own individual plots of land independently and in turn
- d) *Vaz-i kadim*, *vaz-i muyayyen* and *vaz-i kadimi tagyir*; used in reference to departures from long-established principles and arrangements for the sharing of a single water source relied on by several communities as their sole source of supply.

On the subject of co-operative husbandry arrangements and legally binding contracts drawn up to determine the boundaries of the permissible within the context of the joint exploitation of land by several participants or partners, the law had to remain very flexible and in some ways deliberately vague and indefinite or even ambiguous about what was and wasn't 'permissible' in such contracts in order to accommodate the very considerable differences in terrain, climate, soil, land ownership and cropping conditions – to say nothing of the character and stability of the local population base and labour force – that prevailed in different regions of the Empire. However, on grounds of the pre-eminent need to discourage and prevent exploitative behaviour through action taken unilaterally by one partner to the detriment of his colleague and counterparty within the context of a long-standing agreement whose terms had remained stable and unchanging over an extended time, the courts were willing to consider the argument that the 'reason-

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7 *Hulasat al-ecvibe*, Vol. I (Istanbul 1325/1909). The author, Çesmezade Mehmed Halis, d. 1269/1853 (*Sicill-i Osmani*, Vol. II, 269), was a descendant of the seventeenth-century jurist Çeşmi Efendi, who died in 1044/1634 (*Sicill-i Osmani*, Vol. IV, 93).

able expectation' of partners built up over time should not be overturned or abandoned for the sole purpose of enhanced profit of one partner at the expense of another. On this question, a case extracted from the *Behcetü'l-fetava* of Yenişehirli Abdullah Efendi, who served a twelve-year uninterrupted term as Chief Justice between 1718 and 1730, provides a decisively worded legal opinion. In a hypothetical case concerning the proprietor of a village property, on the one hand, and the village residents whose labour the estate steward made use of for maintaining and exploiting the property, on the other, the legal opinion that was repeatedly and unambiguously expressed confirmed that the customary 50/50 division of the olive harvest deriving from self-seeding olive trees growing within the boundaries of the village could not be altered without the agreement and joint approval of both parties, both labourers as carers and custodians and the *hass* owners as proprietors of the trees.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the undeniable pressure generated by market demand, the notion that market economics or the pre-eminent rights of land exploitation for the benefit of state-affiliated or charitable landowners or private proprietors always prevailed and took precedence in the Ottoman system underestimates the real leverage of the purportedly politically disenfranchised but by no means powerless Ottoman peasants and pastoralists who populated and managed the varied rural landscapes of the diverse territories of the Empire on behalf of their frequently absentee overlords. The relationship between owners and managers had to be based on an equal or near equal division of rights and responsibilities to be workable, and there is strong evidence to suggest that for practical reasons the rural sphere at least when it came to questions of land management, irrigation, and other essential co-operative arrangements organised at the local level was a largely self-governing and autonomous sphere.

Following this extended preamble outlining the working hypothesis governing my study of seventeenth-century Ottoman rural communities, the remainder of the paper will be devoted to an exploration in detail of the dynamics of village life in Isparta, situated in a relatively secluded corner of the Anatolian heartlands of the Empire largely bypassed by the main East-West and North-South imperial highway systems which lay to its north and east. In concluding this introductory portion on the general framework for study of Ottoman rural life, it is perhaps useful to recall how much weight the state itself accorded to a close adherence to the accumulation of customary practice and ancestral wisdom as the best and most effective means for regulating the rural sphere. In the state's view, allowing the rural sphere to remain self-regulating was the most desirable course since in that way it could avoid becoming entangled in disputes which, as the 'outsider' in the equation – albeit a powerful and even influential outsider – it was ill-equipped to resolve on its own without reference to, in many cases amounting to deference to, local custom and practice. Also, because the primary aim of the fiscal state was to collect and when possible maximise its revenues, tampering in any way with agricultural systems that were of proven efficacy and profitability in ways that proved destructive to the existing equilibrium or contributed to 'killing the goose that laid the golden egg' were in no

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8 Cf. the case recorded in the *Hulasat*, 159, Case No. 15.

sense in its own best interest. In a very real sense – as Jacques Revel’s discussion about and questioning of the real power of the pre-modern state to penetrate to the municipal and sub-municipal levels of control informs us – it remains doubtful whether even the relatively developed bureaucracy of the Ottoman state in the seventeenth century possessed the capability of organising and regulating economic relations in the rural sphere at the village level.<sup>9</sup> Still less was the state capable of micro- managing the much more convoluted and impenetrable realm of social relations and interpersonal behaviour and conduct where the customary practices and traditional beliefs and values governing the rural world remained fully entrenched until the tentative emergence of the fully bureaucratised state during the Tanizmat era.

### **Documentary Addendum:**

#### **A mini-corpus of texts drawn from the Isparta Court Records designed to highlight self-regulatory aspects of the Ottoman rural environment in the early modern age**

This section of the paper will focus on cases that illustrate particular types of social interaction and conflict resolution belonging to three principal categories: (1) cases brought to the court’s attention by means of joint petitions and collective action, (2) cases in which guarantees amounting to a kind of positive character reference were procured by the court to ensure the good behaviour of certain troublesome individuals who had a previous record of disturbing the public peace, and (3) cases involving defamation of character, calumny, or false accusations of malfeasance or criminal activity.

#### *Category One: Joint Petitions and Collective Suits*

An interesting category of document that is encountered with considerable frequency in the Isparta *sicils* is collective petitions, complaints, or what, in modern legal parlance, might be called ‘class action suits’. In such cases, a village delegation appeared in court to present a collective view on behalf of the whole community in a matter of common interest. I will give two examples, both connected with the villagers’ perception of a need for personnel changes or the removal of an incompetent or corrupt official, but it should not be supposed that the phenomenon of group representations to the court is encountered only in such cases. The first case involved complaints about the sexual indiscretions of a *cebeci* named Mahmud. In this example, though the defendant is an office-holder, the bringer of the suit is not an anonymous group of villagers but his own brother Ömer, whose wife has, allegedly, also been the object of Mahmud’s unwelcome attentions. The case reaches the *kadi*’s attention not in the first instance but only after repeated attempts to resolve the matter through ‘regular channels’ have failed. In the event, it is only the *cebeci*’s persistent refusal to observe the expected norms of civil behaviour in his relations

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9 Jacques Revel (ed.), *Jeux d’échelles: la micro-analyse à l’expérience* (Paris 1996).

with the villagers (including his own brother Ömer) that results in the court's involvement in the matter. In the document, the situation is summarised as follows:

The residents of the village of Fandas attended the Court of Justice as a general delegation to state their collective resolve and said: "if this man Mahmud remains here resident with us in the village, the rest of us will [certainly] all flee". In unison they cried out in their desperation: "our situation has become [intolerable and] fraught with difficulty".<sup>10</sup>

A second instance of a joint declaration of intent by villagers comes in the context of the de-selection of the incumbent as *köy kethudası* and the putting forward of suggestions regarding his replacement. The document reveals that in the realm of both *azl* and *nasb* for such local office, the residents played a more prominent role than is sometimes implied. The text of the villagers' deposition to the court in this case was worded as follows:

A large group and a numerous crowd from among the residents of the village of Dere Köy presented a collective deposition to the Court of Justice in Isparta saying: "the landholder's steward Süleyman, who is currently residing in our village, is not performing his duties satisfactorily. It is the collective wish of the residents of the village that the person named Abdülkerim who is the subject of this petition should be appointed steward in his place. In our opinion Abdülkerim's appointment would be most beneficial in every respect since it is he who is best equipped to fulfil the requirements and responsibilities of service for the benefit of the humble residents of [our] village."<sup>11</sup>

The expression in such documents of communal preferences and registering of joint consent as a key part of the appointment process conveys a clear message both about the terms of self-governance at the village level and about notions of responsibility as well as accountability of Ottoman office-holders. Incapacity as well as capacity to serve in governance at the municipal and sub-municipal levels was, for a whole range of functionaries, especially local religious functionaries such as *imams*, *mütevellıs* and others, determined locally and confirmed centrally.

### *Category Two: Assumption of Liability for the Behaviour of Neighbours and Relatives by means of the kefalet-i nefıs mechanism*

Another phenomenon encountered in a wide range of activities showing how the community functioned as a self-monitoring and self-regulating entity is the legal declaration

10 'Ummumen Fandas köyü halkı meclis-i şer'e hazır olup, "bir hale varmışızdır ki eğer bu oğlan karyemizde karar ederse, biz firar ederiz. Halimiz müşküldür" deyü feryad eyledikleri (...)' Isparta Şer'iyye Sicilleri [hereafter abbreviated as İŞS], 1018-20/94.

11 'Dere köyü ehalisinden cem-i gafır ve cem-i kesir ... meclis-i şer'de "hala karyemizde kethüda olan Süleyman eda-yı hizmet eylemeyip, karye-i mezbure ehalisine bais-i kitab Abdülkerim kethüda her vechiyle enfa, ve fükera hizmetinin uhdesinden gelmeye kadir kimse olmağın (...) karyede kethüda tayin olunması taleb ederiz". İŞS, 1018-20/109: case recorded in evasıt Rebiyülahır 1018/14-22 July 1609.

of personal guarantee and surety on behalf of a person facing charges before the court. There are many examples showing the wide applicability of the concept of *vekâlet bi'l-nefs* recorded in the *sicils*.<sup>12</sup> Here I will be able to comment on only three cases: two of them involving the registering of a personal guarantee on behalf of household or family members, and in the final case, an example of village leaders taking the initiative to vouch for a fellow villager accused of sexual misconduct.

In the first case, a *sipahi* named Şaban Bey has a claim for personal injury against Mercan, a slave belonging to a villager from Hacılar Köyü named Veli. Rather than prosecuting the case or requiring material compensation for his injuries to be enforced by the court, Şaban settles instead for Veli's (and a second person's) personal guarantee and vow to assume responsibility for Mercan's good behaviour in the future. The text of the agreement takes the following form in the document:

It is recorded that the two persons nominated by the aforementioned slave Mercan, namely his master Veli and another person named Derviş, have both agreed to act as guarantors for all aspects of his [public] behaviour and have accepted personal liability for the consequences [of any future misdemeanours].<sup>13</sup>

The implication of these agreements is that the two guarantors will be held personally responsible (and finable) for any further breaches of the peace perpetrated by Mercan.

In a second case involving Christian town residents of Isparta, the promises of two brothers (Fahri and Filippas) intervening as guarantors for a third brother Gürcü (dubbed 'divane'; crazy or 'touched' in the document) are recorded by the court in a case of alleged harassment lodged by a fourth family member, Fahri's daughter Anna, and her husband.<sup>14</sup> The family feud in this case as in all such cases has a long pre-history prior to its being brought to the court for resolution. In this case, the dispute seems to revolve around Gürcü's claim to lost property or inheritance rights, but what is most relevant to our investigation here is that while Anna's complaints about her uncle's behaviour are duly recorded by the court and while the whole range of insults, accusations and counter accusations exchanged between various family members are also preserved in the court record, the court is itself not disposed to take sides in the family dispute. Its rather minimalist approach to the resolution of the matter was to record, with the agreement of Anna's husband, the appointment of a select peer and familial pressure group to 'influence' Gürcü's behaviour rather than attempting to 'rehabilitate' the 'guilty party' by imposing

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12 On the legal framework within which surety operated at the personal level and the definition of personal liability (*kafala bi'l-nefs*), see J. Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford 1964), 158. For the Ottoman context, see U. Heyd, *Old Ottoman Criminal Law*, ed. V.L. Ménage (Oxford 1973), 238-240.

13 'Mezbur Mercan'ın **her haline** yine ağası Veli, ve Derviş nam kimesne kefil oldular. Kayıt şudd.' İŞS, 1018-20/84.

14 While the events described in this case took place within the confines of an urban *mahalle* in Isparta proper, the mechanism it describes for the appointing of bondsmen or guarantors was a common feature used in resolving disputes in rural settings as well.

a punishment of its own devising. This practically-minded solution is recorded in the *si-cil* record with the following laconic but expressive statement:

In the case of the complainant Anna, whose husband the locksmith Hoca Bali had instituted, on her behalf, a court investigation into the [aggressive and confrontational] behaviour of her legal adversary the defendant Gürcü, the court deemed it necessary for a guarantor (*kefil*) to be appointed. Thus it was recorded that, with their agreement, the accused's brothers Fahri and Filippus were nominated to vouch for their brother's good behaviour, mutually accepting legal liability for any harm (*zarar*) that might result from any future lapses from good behaviour.<sup>15</sup>

In a third case we see again how community activism in defence of its own interests, in particular the preservation of the peace and the protection of its own integrity and reputation played a key role in social regulation. In this case, the elders (*ihitiyar*) of the village of Küçük Hacılar approached the court and gave the following testimonial, unprompted and in the absence of any court summons requiring their presence:

It was previously asserted by some residents of the village in relation to their fellow villager named Buzak that: "you have on several occasions acted as pimp for and go-between for Cevher Hatun." There is, however, absolutely no foundation or truthfulness to such a claim, which is no more than malicious slander against the persons of both parties named. It is pure injustice to spread such rumours when there is no claimant or plaintiff identified in the case. Thus, even though there is no case being brought against Buzak, it is recorded that the two named individuals Hacı Abdullah and Kerim Halife have agreed to stand surety in the event of any claims, accusations or allegations of any kind that may be directed against him. At the same time, other prominent members of the village community attested to Buzak's good character.<sup>16</sup>

### *Category Three: Defamation of Character and False Accusation*

A third category of case represents an area of the law, defamation of character and calumny, that occupied a large part of the court's time, representing a significant proportion of its daily case load. Here I will comment briefly on three cases each showing how procedures for defence against unsubstantiated accusations relied not so much on judicial wisdom or 'decisions' *handed down* by the court as on the reliability of testimony *supplied* to the court by neighbours and fellow community members. In the first case, Ali, a resident of Giran village, appeared before the court complaining of false accusations made against him by a pastoralist named Hacı Gûne who (or so claimed Ali) had a grudge

15 '(...) avratı Anna nam zimmi' nin (...) bais-i keşf olan zevci Çilingir Hoca Bali talebiyle hasımı olan Gürcü'ye kefil lazım olup, iki karındaşları Fahri ve Filipus nam zimmiler **kefil bi'il nefis ve'l zarar** oldukları bade'l-kabul kayd oldu.' İŞS, 1018-20/91.

16 'Bundan akdem karyemizde Buzak nam kimse için "Cevher Hatun ile bazı gün gidi oldun" demişler. Lakin bir vechiyle aslı ve sıhhati yoktur. İmdi, bu hususda mezburun yüzüne iftiradır, zülumdür, ve davacısı yoktur. Buna müteallik **her ne olursa** biz kefil oluruz deyü Hacı Abdullah ve Kerim Halife ve sair ayan-i karye iyiliğine şahadet eyledikleri kayd olundu'. İŞS, 1018-20/94.



against him because of an on-going dispute over grazing rights. In presenting his case to the court, Ali (supported by his fellow villagers) made the following statement:

A pastoralist named Hacı Gûne, being in dispute with us (Ali) over the terms of his temporary sojourn on village land, laid accusations against me with regard to my purported misdeeds saying: “you are a brigand and a person of low character”. However, Hacı Gûne was unable to produce any solid evidence to prove a legal case against me.<sup>17</sup>

When asked to testify on Ali’s behalf, the villagers in their turn made the following statement:

Up to the present time we are aware of no incidents that would indicate Ali’s involvement with brigandage. [To our knowledge] he is consistently well-behaved and a man of good character. What has been said against him by Hacı Gûne is [pure] slander. We vouch for Ali’s good character and agree to act as guarantors for his good behaviour in all respects.<sup>18</sup>

This case demonstrates how reliant the court was in grounding its decisions not just on ‘facts’ only verifiable by detailed on-the-spot investigations, but also on the weight of opinion expressed within the community itself.

In the second case, we encounter a complaint of assault and battery lodged by a certain Ömer against his neighbour and fellow resident of Isparta named İbrahim, a gatekeeper in the central market.<sup>19</sup> Two witnesses support Ömer’s complaint, but when İbrahim persists in denying the charges Ömer asks that a corroboratory statement be solicited from his (and İbrahim’s) neighbours. The neighbours comply with this request by offering a denunciation of the general character of the defendant İbrahim worded as follows:

This man is not a person of good character. His improper behaviour stems from his bad character. The court record confirms that on previous occasions he has been named as “not a good man”. His attribute as a reckless and irresponsible person has been testified to previously. The villagers’ collective statement to the effect: “unless he is able to provide surety or else is imprisoned for a time until he demonstrates his intention to live in peace and harmony [with his neighbours], it is difficult to see how we can co-exist with this person in our midst; it is a great pity that it should be so” was entered in the court record.<sup>20</sup>

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17 ‘Göçer evlülerden Hacı Gûne nam kimse ile mabeynimizde konuk yerine müteallik dava üzere iken mezbur Hacı Gûne bana “Sen sekbanısın. İyi adam değilsin” deyü üzerime nice yaramazlığına müteallik nesne isnad edip, be-hasbi’ş-şer üzerime nesne isbat edemeyip (...)’.

18 “Bu ana gelince mezbur Ali sekbanlık etmeyip, kendü halindedir. İyi adamdır. Hacı Gûne’nin bunun hakkında ettiği iftiradır. Her haline kefil oluruz.” İŞS, 1018-29/68.

19 Once again, this case involves an urban as opposed to a rural setting but the reference to the practice of gathering testimonials to the good (or conversely the bad) character of the accused in cases of this type represents common legal practice. When no direct evidence of bad behaviour from reliable eye-witnesses was available, the next best source for judging the claims put to the court by plaintiffs and their opponents (the defendants) was the opinion of their neighbours concerning their general reliability and behavioural patterns.

20 “Bu adam iyi adam değildir. Bu vaz’-i na-hemvar bundan gelir, ‘İyi adam değildir’ deyü mu-



The court in this instance asked those who knew the disputants best to offer *their* judgement as to whether the actions of Ibrahim constituted a temporary lapse from normal good behaviour or whether (in their opinion) he truly represented a danger to the community. Since the *kadı* was not in a position to make such a judgement by himself, he had by default to rely on the opinion of local figures such as the *imam* of the neighbourhood and shopkeepers at the bazaar who had the opportunity to observe Ibrahim's behaviour at close range on a daily basis. The opinion of such witnesses, whether or not they were actually present to observe the incident currently being investigated by the court, was an invaluable resource for the *kadı* as he attempted to arbitrate difficult interpersonal disputes.

My closing example involves charges of sexual misconduct brought by a husband (named Süleyman) against his wife (named Ayşe). Although he subsequently dropped the charges, the allegations led to a wider investigation with the defamed wife's father acting as advocate and defender of his daughter's (and by extension the family's) reputation in the eyes of the other residents of the village of Göksun. The husband had initially charged his wife with receiving late night visits from his neighbour Ahmed but later relented and registered his satisfaction with her general demeanour with the court:

"My wife Ayşe is a good woman. Up to the present she has shown me no malice or harm."<sup>21</sup>

Asked for their opinion of Ayşe, the villagers replied in similar vein:

"We have, up to the present time, not been witness to any malicious acts on Ayşe's part. She is a good woman. We [the villagers collectively] stand surety for her probity and good behaviour in all respects."<sup>22</sup>

In order to clear the reputations of both parties, further investigations into Ahmed's character were instituted during which the villagers revealed some reservations about him:

"He is not a good man. We cannot stand surety for his good behaviour."<sup>23</sup>

However, given the opportunity to present his side of the story, Ahmed made counter-charges which cast some doubt in turn on Ayşe's virtue:

"Previously Süleyman's testimony was recorded in the Court Ledger to the effect that he had found his wife together in a certain [secluded] place in the company of his household servant Osman holding an oil lamp in her hand."<sup>24</sup>

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kaddema museccildir. Ve kendisi mütehavvirdur. Eğer kefil verip veyahud habs olup dirliği arz olunmaya, biz bu adam ile geçinmek güçtür, hayıfdir dedikleri kayd olundu." İŞS, 1018-20/78.

21 "Benim hatunum olan Ayşe iyi hatundur, bu ana gelince kanlık görmedim."

22 "Bu ana gelince mezbure Ayşe'nin kanlığın görmedik. İyi hatundur. Her haline kefil oluruz."

23 "İyi adam değildir. Kefil olmazız" dediler.

24 "'Bundan akdem mezbur Süleyman zevcesi olan Ayşe (...) kendisi hizmetkârı olan Osman ile bir yerde elinde چراğı ile buldu idi" dediği kayd şudd'.

At this stage of the proceedings Ayşe's father Şaban intervened protesting his daughter's innocence and adding his own denials to the mounting stack of testimonials on Ayşe's behalf. At each successive stage in the case's development the court recorded the charges, denials, counter-charges and denials of the counter-charges without in any way committing itself to a further course of investigatory vigilance. The official record of the case thus ends inconclusively with a full transcript of the denial by the father (by no means a disinterested witness) of Ahmed's counter-charges:

After listening to Ahmed's deposition to the court, Şaban's response in the form of a sworn oath (*yemin*) was recorded in the Court Register. In this oath he denied the truthfulness of Ahmed's claim stating that he had 'seen the manservant Osman together with Ayşe in a [secluded] place' and Şaban further stated his conviction that there was absolutely no foundation to Ahmed's claim that they had indulged in 'indecent acts' (*i.e.*, sexual intercourse outside marriage).<sup>25</sup>

From this selective sample representing three types of personal litigation cases brought before the Isparta tribunal involving, most particularly, the residents of Isparta's outlying villages, it can clearly be seen that the *kadı*'s reach in his attempts to regulate social behaviour or to discourage misbehaviour far exceeded his grasp. His use of informal arbitration methods and alliance with and reliance on community intermediaries to find satisfactory, often compromise, solutions to petty conflicts and disputes arising between 'ordinary citizens' was both pragmatic and effective. The avoidance of a heavy-handed interventionist approach to the administration of justice at the *kaza* and sub-*kaza* levels can be seen – not just from the few examples we have cited here but also from the general pattern of available evidence – to have constituted a characteristic hallmark of the Ottoman judicial regime.

In short, self-governance and self-regulation of rural communities – especially when it came to complex interpersonal relations and social interaction – stood, whether by design or default, as a principal cornerstone of the Ottoman rural milieu.

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25 'Ahmedin kavlı üzere hizmetkârı Osman ile bir yerde görmeyip, fiil-i şeni ettiklerin aslı olmadığına yemin verildiği kayd şudd.' İŞS, 1018-20/80-81.

# A UKRAINIAN VILLAGE IN PODOLIA UNDER OTTOMAN RULE: CHANGES IN SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND PEASANT STRATEGIES

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I RECALL MY FIRST PARTICIPATION IN A CIEPO congress, in 1994, in Amsterdam. As still a greenhorn Ottomanist, I realised that my field of expertise, Ottoman Podolia, was rather marginal to the interests of the majority of the participants, who specialised in more ‘important’ regions such as the Balkans, Anatolia, or at least the Arab provinces. My initial stress turned into despair when I found out that I was to compete for audience with Alexander de Groot, whose paper was scheduled at the same time in another panel, Professor de Groot being not only an established scholar, but the main organiser of the congress. As I expected, my audience turned out to be very small, but I was pleased anyway that I had one at all. To my surprise, among the audience I recognised Professor Abdul-Karim Rafeq, who came to listen to Michael Winter, whose paper on Ottoman Damascus was, curiously, included on the same panel. I think now that in the minds of the organisers, our panel must have been labelled: ‘the topics of no relevance to Ottoman history’. Professor Rafeq was kind enough not to leave the room before I began to read my paper, and, even better, he waited for the discussion and his reaction was indeed enthusiastic. He noticed that the rise of the role of *yerli* janissaries and the prolongation of the *beylerbeyi*’s tenure in the last decade of the seventeenth century, which I observed in Ottoman Podolia, could be regarded as early signs of durable changes that took place in the subsequent decades in the whole Empire and were observed by him in eighteenth-century Syria.

Today, this recollection makes me more assertive, as I believe that my observations on Podolia might be of some use for mainstream Ottoman historians, even though Ottoman rule in Podolia was transient and left no durable traces (perhaps apart from watermelons, commonly believed to have been introduced by the Turks).

The province of Podolia had belonged to Poland since the fifteenth century. Apart from Orthodox Ruthenians (i.e., Ukrainians), who constituted the majority of its population, Podolia was inhabited by Catholic Poles, Armenians, Jews, and other ethno-religious groups. In 1672, Podolia along with its major fortress, Kamieniec Podolski (Ukr.

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Kamjanec', Turk. Kamanıçe), was conquered by Ottoman troops and annexed to the Ottoman Empire. For 27 years it constituted an Ottoman province (*eyalet*) until it was restored to Poland by the Treaty of Karlowitz (1699). Because of the second partition of Poland (1793), Podolia was annexed to Russia. Today it belongs to Ukraine.

The organisation of the Ottoman *eyalet* of Kamanıçe began after the Ottoman conquest of Podolia in 1672, but was interrupted by the outbreak of new hostilities and was completed only after the peace of 1678, in which Poland formally ceded the province to the Porte. Following the demarcation of the new borders, effected in 1680, in the following year, the Ottomans drew up a survey register (*tahrir*), which is today preserved in the *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi* in Istanbul and has been edited by the present author.<sup>1</sup>

The *eyalet* consisted of four *sancaks* and nineteen *nahiyes*. The Ottoman register enables one to appreciate the demographic effects of the seventeenth-century wars and Tatar slaving raids in the south-eastern provinces of Poland-Lithuania, as of the 868 settlements registered in the *defter* as many as 591 (68.1%) were recorded as deserted (*hâli ez raiyet*).<sup>2</sup> Guillaume le Vasseur de Beauplan, a seventeenth-century French military engineer who had spent many years in the Polish service, stated in his book, published after his return to France, that the Tatars usually took a route leading along the watershed between two large rivers in order to avoid obstacles, because river crossing by a Tatar army, loaded with captives and spoils, was difficult and risky, especially when the Tatars were being chased by the Polish troops.<sup>3</sup> A glance at the map drawn on the basis of the data from the Ottoman register proves that Beauplan was right, as most deserted settlements in Podolia were situated along the watershed between the Dniester and the Boh rivers.<sup>4</sup>

One issue which I encountered in the Kamanıçe *defter* and which I still hope might inspire a wider debate regards the mode of data recording. Few scholars who study the Ottoman *tahrirs* address the question of whether the Ottoman census-takers went

1 D. Kołodziejczyk (ed.), *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia (ca. 1681): Defter-i mufasssal-i eyalet-i Kamanıçe*, 2 vols (Cambridge, Mass. 2004).

2 Ibid., 34 and 44 (Table 3).

3 "[L]es Tartares entrent donc dans la frontiere, mais par un chemin qui est tel, c'est qu'il courent entre deux grands fleuves, & vont tousiours par le plus haut pays, & cherchent tousiours les fontaines des petites rivières, qui vont tombant dans les grandes, les unes dans une rivière, & les autres dans une autre, & par ce moyen ils ne trouvent point d'obstacles dans leurs courses"; see [Guillaume Le Vasseur,] Sieur de Beauplan, *Description d'Ukraine, qui sont plusieurs provinces du Royaume de Pologne, contenues depuis les confins de la Moscovie, jusques aux limites de la Transilvanie. Ensemble leurs moeurs, façons de vivres, et de faire la guerre* (Rouen, 1660), 47; see also the schematic map which displays a typical route taken by the Tatars, passing between two large rivers (*Route que tiennent les Tartares*), on p. 48. For a modern English translation of this fragment, see idem, *A Description of Ukraine*, introduction, translation, and notes by A. B. Pernal and D. F. Essar (Cambridge, Mass. 1993), 54-55.

4 See the cut-out map entitled "Kučmans'kyj Tatar Trail within Podolia", published along with Map I in Kołodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia*.

in person to every single village or, rather, visited large settlements only and recorded the data on the neighbouring ones on the basis of evidence provided by local inhabitants, especially the village chiefs. In 1671, during the Ottoman survey in the province of Uyvar (in today's Slovakia) the village chiefs, referred to by the Hungarian term *bíró* (hence the Turkish plural *birolar*) were asked to come to the province centre and bring three other "clever and experienced" men to help in the new registration.<sup>5</sup> Also in the Podolian register, several entries are provided with marginal notes, pointing to the fact that a given piece of information has been recorded according to the testimony of a local village chief, referred to by the Ruthenian (Ukrainian) term *hotaman* (e.g., *ba ahbar-i hotaman-i karye-i mezbur*).<sup>6</sup> Admittedly, such marginal notes usually refer to newcomers who settled in a given village after the survey, whereas during the survey, the Ottoman census-takers probably visited recorded villages in person, at least the ones situated in the vicinity of provincial centres.<sup>7</sup> Still, even if they appeared in person they needed local expertise which could be provided by local elders. For instance, during the demarcation of a *vakıf*, established by Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa Paşa in the Podolian village of Studenycja, an Ottoman census-taker, Halil Efendi, was accompanied by an interpreter named David, possibly an Armenian or a Jew, and the Ruthenian *hotamans* of four neighbouring villages: Roman from Lojivci, Ivan from Ušycja, Pantelej from Teremci, and Stefan from Krušanivka.<sup>8</sup> They apparently acted as local experts both at the demarcation and at the census-taking, and the presence of an interpreter suggests that information between local inhabitants and Ottoman officials was transmitted orally.

5 See E. Tejnil, 'K problematike tureckej topografie a toponymie na Slovensku' [On the issues of Turkish topography and toponymy in Slovakia], *Historické Štúdie*, 14 (1969), 167-178, esp. p. 174.

6 Cf. Kołodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia*, 254-255, 267. The Ruthenian term *ataman* or *otaman*, pronounced in the Podolian dialect as *hotaman*, is of Turkic origin and had been attested in Podolia since the period of the Mongol rule. In time it became widespread in all southern Ruthenian lands and referred to a village chief; see *ibid.*, 22; M. Ljubavskij, 'Organizacija mestnago upravljenja pri Kazimire i ego synov'jax: soslovnyja vlasti v gospodarskix domenax [The organisation of local administration under Casimir and his sons: estate authorities in royal domains]', in *Očerki istorii Litovsko-russkago gosudarstva do Ljublinskoj unii vključitel'no* [An outline of the history of the Lithuanian-Ruthenian state until the Union of Lublin inclusively] (Moscow 1910), 133-137, esp. p. 135; A. Hurbyk, 'Wspólnota wiejska na Ukrainie w XIV-XVIII w. Ewolucja podstawowych form społeczno-terytorialnych [Village community in Ukraine in the fourteenth-eighteenth century: the evolution of the principal socio-territorial forms]', *Przegląd Historyczny*, 90 (1999), 1-18, esp. p. 8; *idem*, *Evoljucija social'no-terytorial'nyx spil'not v seredn'ovičnij Ukrajinі (volost', dvoryšče, selo, sjaabrynnna spilka)* [The evolution of socio-territorial communities in medieval Ukraine (*volost'*, *dvoryšče*, *selo*, *sjaabrynnna spilka*)] (Kiev 1998), 82-84.

7 See Kołodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia*, 22, and the cut-out map entitled "Itinerary of Ottoman Scribes in Kırivçe", published along with Map IV.

8 *Ibid.*, 484 (the list of witnesses entered at the end of the *hududname*).

Yet, some entries in the *defter* suggest an alternative option. In the list of the Armenian dwellers of the province centre, the town of Kamjanec', one finds two strange short names composed of just two Arabic letters each: Ks (*kef* and *sin*) and Ys (*ya* and *sin*). The names in question are apparently K[risdo]s ('Christ') and Y[isu]s ('Jesus'), which, following the Armenian tradition, were never written in full.<sup>9</sup> It would be odd to expect that an Ottoman scribe consciously followed this Christian tradition. He must have rather mechanically copied in Arabic script a list delivered by the Armenian *kethüda* – the elder of the local Armenian community.

In their survey, the Ottomans also benefited from the assistance of a Polish noble, the former chamberlain (*podkomorzy*) of Kamieniec, Hieronim Lanckoroński, who already in 1672 assisted the Ottomans in their first survey of Podolia. In return, Lanckoroński was rewarded with an imperial *berat* confirming his hereditary rights to his estate in Jahil'nycja, situated within the new Ottoman province.<sup>10</sup> A Polish ambassador, sent to the Porte in 1677, complained that his efforts to diminish the territorial loss by arguing that some lands should be restored to Poland because they did not belong to Podolia were frustrated by the fact that the Ottomans were very well informed, as they had at their disposal the ancient Polish tax records from that province, apparently submitted to the conquerors by Lanckoroński and other "imprudent citizens".<sup>11</sup>

As we see, in their survey of Podolia the Ottomans also made use of written documents composed in "infidel" languages and submitted by their new Armenian and Polish subjects. An analogous discovery regarding the Greek islands was made by Ben Slot, who established that certain entries in Ottoman survey registers were exact translations from the preserved Greek originals, provided by Orthodox monasteries on the request of Ottoman authorities.<sup>12</sup> Yet, in all the above cases, regarding Armenian townsmen, Polish nobles, and Greek monks, the Ottoman non-Muslim subjects belonged to provincial elites, so their literacy, evidenced by their drafting and use of written documents, is not that striking.

The matter becomes more intriguing when we further study the Ottoman *defter* of Podolia. In its Arabic-script Ottoman text a mysterious omission of certain letters in sev-

9 Ibid., 88-89 (the reading of the second name is admittedly less certain); on the above two names commonly written in an abbreviated form, see E. Tryjarski, 'Les noms de personnes dans les écrits armeno-kiptchak: un essai de classification', *Actes du XI<sup>e</sup> Congrès international des sciences onomastiques*, vol. 2 (Sofia 1975), 365-381, esp. p. 369.

10 According to a contemporary Polish report, dated 8 January 1673, the provincial *defterdar* together with Chamberlain Lanckoroński were registering Podolian inhabitants (*defterdar pasza z panem Lanckorońskim podkomorzym ludzi popisuje*); in 1677, Lanckoroński tried to reconfirm the Sultan's privilege through the Polish ambassador to the Porte, notwithstanding his continuous presence in the Polish army fighting against the Ottomans in the years 1673-1676, but this time his request was refused and the Ottoman *reis efendi* openly stated that the Porte would no longer tolerate Polish lords in Podolia; see Kołodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia*, 14, and idem, *Podole pod panowaniem tureckim: Ejalet kamieniecki 1672-1699* (Warsaw 1994), 68.

11 Cf. n. 10 above.

12 Oral communication to the author in Amsterdam in June 1994.

eral Ruthenian names is striking, for instance Lukya[n], Roma[n], Osta[p]ko, ĭste[f]ko, and even *hotama[n]*.<sup>13</sup> All these cases have one thing in common: if written in the seventeenth-century Cyrillic cursive known as *skoropys*, these missing letters would have been taken out from the words and written above the main line and thus easily missed by an uninitiated reader.<sup>14</sup> The *skoropys* developed in Poland-Lithuania through the borrowing of abbreviations and cursive forms typical of medieval Latin. In the seventeenth century, it was the most common script used by Ruthenian clerks. Yet, the Ottoman census-taker, even though probably familiar with Southern Slavic dialects and perhaps even of Bulgarian origin himself, as can be evidenced by his specific distorting of some Ukrainian names, was apparently unfamiliar with the Ruthenian *skoropys*. Thus it is likely that the omissions in the *defter* resulted from the fact that the Ottoman scribe, charged with transcribing into Arabic script a Cyrillic list of names composed in *skoropys*, simply overlooked the superscript letters.<sup>15</sup>

If the above hypothesis is correct, we should assume that at least in some villages the Ottoman census-takers were provided with ready-made lists in Cyrillic script, apparently composed by representatives of local inhabitants. The most likely candidates to perform such a task were local Orthodox clergymen, a priest or a cantor (Ukr. sing. *djak*), referred to in the *defter* as *papas* and *diyak*, respectively. Yet, in some of the villages in which we encounter names with omitted letters, a clergyman is not recorded, so the task was probably performed by a lay village chief – a *hotaman*.<sup>16</sup> It would be interesting proof of literacy among the peasant population of seventeenth-century Podolia, since there must have been at least one person in a village able to compile such a list.

During the Orange Revolution in Kiev, on 2 December 2004, the Ukrainian future president Viktor Yushchenko delivered a speech aimed at raising the spirits of the protesters. Invoking the glorious past of the Ukrainian people, he recalled the astonishment of the Patriarch of Constantinople who, on his visit to Ukraine, in the 1640s, had noticed that in every village “even the women and children knew how to read”.<sup>17</sup> Typically for a politician, Yushchenko made a couple of mistakes: the visit took place not in the 1640s, but in 1654, the Patriarch was not of Constantinople, but of Antioch, and the observation

13 Kołodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia*, 136, 139, 143, 145, 166, 169, 203, 204.

14 To give just two examples, the Arabic-script forms *روما* and *اوستافكو* might have resulted from careless copying of the Cyrillic-script forms *Ромѧ* and *Остра"ко*, where the superscript Cyrillic letters *н* and *п* have been omitted.

15 I am deeply grateful to the late Dr Bohdan Strumiński, who first came up with this idea. On *skoropys* and so-called *vyynosni litery* (‘superscript letters’ or ‘uplifted letters’), see V. Panašenko, ‘Do pytanja metodyky i terminolohiji paleohrafičnyx doslidžen’ ukrajins’koho skoropysu XVII–XVIII st. [On the question of methods and terminology in the paleographic research of Ukrainian *skoropys* in the 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> century]’, *Istoryčni džerela ta jix vykorystannja*, 7 (1972), 88–92.

16 For instance, the villages of Zeleni Panivci and Syrvatynyci; cf. Kołodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia*, 136 and 145.

17 For the quotation based on the eyewitness report by Mychailo Wynnyckyj, see L. Bilaniuk, *Contested Tongues: Language Politics and Cultural Correction in Ukraine* (Ithaca 2005), 201.



was made not by the Patriarch but by his son, Paul of Aleppo, who composed a report on Patriarch Makarius's journey. Nonetheless, the citation was genuine. Paul of Aleppo, who travelled with his father through Ukraine to Moscow, reported that "in the Ruthenian, that is the Cossack, lands, many Cossacks and also their wives and daughters can read [...]. Thanks to the clergy, most of them can read."<sup>18</sup> Obviously, this quotation must be treated as an idealised moralistic story, typical of travel reports, but taken along with the data from the Kamaniçe *defter*, it might take us towards a more serious consideration of the problem. In fact, we know very little about the literacy level among the Ukrainian, or any other East European, peasants. Some pioneer efforts to evaluate the level of literacy among the Polish peasants in the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries have produced modest results, pointing to a slow rise in the sixteenth and seventeenth, followed by a sharp decline in the eighteenth century. In royal villages, which enjoyed legal autonomy and self-government, as many as 20% among the village chiefs (Pol. sing. *sołtys*, a function analogous to a Podolian *hotaman*) might have been able to read and sign their names, but this level was much lower in the villages owned by noblemen.<sup>19</sup> The available data typically concern the village elders, who represented their communities in the outside world and whose signatures have been preserved in court registers, while we lack any information on the majority of peasants who never appeared in court, not to mention their wives and daughters. Micro studies like those based on the Podolian *defter* may provide us with a little sharper image of peasant life than we have at our disposal today.

In his recent study of Ottoman Egypt, Alan Mikhail stresses the high level of cooperation between the Ottoman state and Egyptian peasants, based on the mutual inter-

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18 I quote following the Polish selected translation of *Rihlat Makāriyūs* by M. Kowalska (ed.), *Ukraina w połowie XVII wieku w relacji arabskiego podróżnika Pawła, syna Makarego z Aleppo* [Ukraine in the mid-seventeenth century in the relation of an Arab traveller, Paul, son of Makarius, of Aleppo] (Warsaw 1986), 19; on this travel report, cf. V. Sichynsky, *Ukraine in Foreign Comments and Descriptions from the VIth to XXth Century* (New York 1953), 94.

19 A similar level of literacy has been observed among the Lemkos, an ethnic group of Ruthenians, who lived in the Polish Carpathians and used the Cyrillic rather than the Latin alphabet. Yet, in some regions of Poland the level of literacy might have been higher: early nineteenth-century ethnographic data as well as official reports suggest an unusual level of literacy among the Polish peasants who inhabited the mountainous region of Podhale; this region then belonged to Austrian Galicia, but it is rather unlikely that the widespread literacy was the recent fruit of the Josephinian reforms, as these reforms did not bring visible results in the neighbouring regions of Galicia; see W. Urban, 'Umiejętność pisanie w Małopolsce w drugiej połowie XVI wieku [Writing ability in Little Poland in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century]', *Przegląd Historyczny*, 68 (1977), 231-257, esp. pp. 251-252, and idem, 'Sztuka pisanie w województwie krakowskim w XVII i XVIII wieku [The art of writing in the palatinate of Cracow in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century]', *Przegląd Historyczny*, 75 (1984), 39-82, esp. pp. 61-64 and 70-73; I also wish to express my gratitude to Tomasz Wiślicz, who is currently studying the social and religious life of Polish peasants in the early modern period, for sharing with me his observations on the subject. For an early effort to grasp the reasons behind the various levels of peasant literacy in pre-industrial world, see J. Goody (ed.), *Literacy in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge 1968).



est in maintaining the irrigation system in the Nile valley and in drawing mutual benefits from the export of grain to other Ottoman provinces.<sup>20</sup> To be sure, Podolia was not Egypt, but we can observe somewhat similar relations between the Ottoman state and Podolian peasants who collectively auctioned and farmed fish ponds, especially numerous in the north of the province. In return for a down payment, paid as a lump sum in silver thalers (*guruş*), a peasant community could collect fish from a given pond. A lease contract covered three years because according to the local custom, ponds were drained and their fish collected every three years,<sup>21</sup> while a three-year period was also typical for a customary farm contract in the Ottoman Empire – a *mukataa*. The peasants were obliged to repair the dam of the leased pond whenever necessary, but in return they were exempt from other obligations and from the payment of duties and market fees.<sup>22</sup> When compared with pre-Ottoman times, what distinguished Ottoman Podolia was the massive exodus of the Polish Catholic nobility.<sup>23</sup> After the Ottoman state treasury (*miri*) took over the demesnes, forests, and ponds from their former noble owners, Ruthenian village communities, led by Orthodox priests or *hotamans* were now able to negotiate directly with state functionaries the conditions of their lease and usufruct. Village elders came to be regarded as provincial notables (*ayan-i vilayet*),<sup>24</sup> a term unthinkable in contemporaneous Poland-Lithuania, where a peasant remained a peasant and was referred to in of-

20 A. Mikhail, *Nature and Empire in Ottoman Egypt: An Environmental History* (Cambridge 2011).

21 See A. Wyczański, *Studia nad folwarkiem szlacheckim w Polsce w latach 1500-1580* [Studies on a noble manor in Poland in the years 1500-1580] (Warsaw 1960), 176.

22 Kołodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia*, 300-302 and 491-493 (English translation).

23 This exodus was caused not as much by the nobles' patriotic feelings or Ottoman repression, but by the fact that the nobles had been deprived of their seigniorial rights over the peasants. Stanisław Makowiecki, a Polish participant in the negotiations on the surrender of the Podolian fortress of Kamieniec in 1672, recalled that Grand Vizier Ahmed Köprülü allowed the Polish nobles to remain in their demesnes in Podolia but stressed that their peasants would become part of the "imperial flock". In response to the Polish protests, Köprülü added that unlike Moldavia, Podolia had been conquered by the sword and not by treaties, so the Polish nobles could not expect the privileges that had been granted to Moldavian *boyars*; see *ibid.*, 13. Makowiecki's versified relation has recently been published; for the aforementioned fragment, see S. Makowiecki, *Relacyja Kamieńca wziętego przez Turków w roku 1672* [The narrative on Kamieniec being captured by the Turks in the year 1672], ed. P. Borek (Cracow 2008), 172.

24 Although one could argue that the term *ayan*, today commonly associated with provincial grandees who effectively challenged the Sultan's rule in the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire, had a more modest meaning in the earlier centuries, François à Mesgnien Meninski, in his dictionary published in 1680, already translated the term *ayan* with the Latin terms *magnates* and *primores*, while the phrase *ayan-i memleket ve sair ehali-i vilayetün ittifakıyle* was translated into Latin: *consensu, et in unum conspiratione magnatum, coeterorumque incolarum regionis*; see Franciscus à Mesgnien Meninski, *Thesaurus Linguarum Orientalium Turcicae-Arabicae-Persicae. Lexicon Turcico-Arabico-Persicum*, vol. 1 (reprint, Istanbul 2000), cols. 292-293.

ficial documents merely with the Latin title *laboriosus* – ‘a labourious one’, whereas a nobleman would be addressed as *generosus* or *nobilis*, and a townsman as *famatus*. In a legal certificate (*keşf-i hüccet*), issued by the *kadı* of Kamanice in order to confirm the boundaries of the aforementioned *vakıf* of the Grand Vizier, we read that Mustafa Ağa, the *kethüda* of the provincial governor sent to oversee this task, was accompanied by “the local notables, whose names are written at the appendix to this writing” (*zeyl-i kitabda muharrerü’l-esami olan ayan-i vilayet*),<sup>25</sup> while at the end of the document the names of these notables are duly recorded as the witnesses to the legal procedure (*şühudü’l-hal*). The list contains the names of 80 Ottoman functionaries and military officers, an interpreter (the interpreter David mentioned above), an Orthodox priest, and 17 Ukrainian peasants, including seven village chiefs (*hotamans*) and one miller.<sup>26</sup> One can conclude that the empty space, left in the social structure of Podolia as a result of the emigration of Polish nobles, was jointly filled by Ottoman newcomers and the leaders of local Ruthenian peasants.<sup>27</sup>

Huri İslamoğlu-Inan concludes her book on Ottoman peasants by acknowledging that “by leaving the organization [...] of the actual production [...] in the hands of direct producers with hereditary cultivation rights over the land, the Ottoman system afforded the peasantry the minimal space to increase yields in response to changes in demand patterns”. Yet, she hastens to add that most of eventual increase was consumed by surplus extraction and enriched not the peasants but rather the revenue holders – first the *timar* holders and then, with the rise of the *mukataa* institution, the tax farmers.<sup>28</sup> She is certainly right in this rather pessimistic assertion, yet we must remember that peasants in Eastern Europe at that period, most of whom were serfs, had even less autonomy and did not enjoy the state’s legal protection that was, at least in theory, available in the Ottoman *padişah*’s ‘well-protected domains’. If Podolia had remained in Ottoman hands, it is quite possible that a new stratum of peasant entrepreneurs would have developed, comparable to the Bulgarian *celepkeşan* or the Serbian pig traders.<sup>29</sup>

25 Kołodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia*, 295 and 485 (English translation).

26 Ibid., 298-300.

27 A somewhat similar process could be observed in Cossack Ukraine after the great anti-Polish rebellion of 1648. Although Soviet Marxist historiography has long depicted the Cossacks as anti-feudal revolutionary fighters, in fact, having expelled the Polish nobility, the Cossack leaders soon appropriated noble demesnes and even tried to impose corvées on their Ruthenian countrymen, replacing one feudal order with another.

28 H. İslamoğlu-Inan, *State and Peasant in the Ottoman Empire: Agrarian Power Relations and Regional Economic Development in Ottoman Anatolia during the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden 1994), 243-245.

29 A social stratification within the Podolian peasantry is evidenced by the large number of farmhands recorded in the Ottoman register and referred to by the term *naymit* (a term used by the local Ottoman bureaucracy, adopted from the Ruthenian *najmyt*, lit., ‘paid worker’). Farmhands were typically hired in larger households whose heads apparently displayed more entrepreneurial skills than their neighbours. For a treatment of the presence of *najmyts* as the evidence of class struggle in Podolia in the subsequent period, see O. Neselovs’kyj, ‘Najmyty ta najmyčky na Podillju v XVIII st. (Materijaly do istoriji ekonomiky Podillja) [Male and female

By presenting Podolian, or any other, Ottoman peasants as willing co-operators of the state, who assisted Ottoman functionaries during the surveys and struck mutually beneficial deals with Ottoman treasury officials, one risks drawing an excessively idealised picture. Yet one must keep in mind that securing local co-operation was in the proper interest of the state, which could not function without peasant labour. Peasants who violently rebelled against the state certainly risked cruel repression, but the state was more vulnerable to their softer means of protest such as disobedience, neglect or abandonment of their lands. To begin with, even a survey could not be effected without the peasants' co-operation. Economic historians, fascinated by the richness of Ottoman central archives and the – supposedly reliable – massive data stored in Ottoman registers, should always keep in mind the scene recorded in a Jerusalem *sicil* and recalled by Amy Singer in her book on Palestinian peasants. In 1531, in the village of Bayt Jālā, south of Jerusalem, local peasants refused to answer the queries of an Ottoman census-taker and chased him away saying: “your record (*kitābatukum*) is like the wind from a donkey”,<sup>30</sup> a refreshing motto indeed for someone who – like the present author – has sacrificed many years of his life to studying the Ottoman *defters*.

Putting scepticism aside, in the last part of my article I want to turn to the branch of scholarship which has devoted much attention to Ottoman rural society, namely economic history. The rise of scholarly interest in Ottoman tax registers in the post World War II era, evidenced by the impact of publications of Ömer Lütfi Barkan and Halil İnalcık, was followed by a serious critique which is epitomised today by a paper read by Heath Lowry in August 1986, at the Fourth International Congress of the Social and Economic History of Turkey, held in Munich. Lowry, who had spent many years studying the Ottoman *tahrirs*, warned against treating them as a reliable basis for any kind of quantitative study because they contained too many lacunae due to tax exemptions enjoyed by various groups of Ottoman subjects and various territorial units, and because the clerks responsible for drawing up these registers too often copied the data from earlier surveys instead of conducting new investigations; so it is risky to draw any conclusions on demographic or economic changes based on the data contained in subsequent *tahrirs*.<sup>31</sup> In an article published a year later, Suraiya Faroqhi went even further by stating: “there is not really much point in continuing to publish lists of villages, taxpayers, taxes, and pious foundations without any well-thought-out problem to which these data

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farmhands in Podolia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Materials for the history of Podolian economy)]’, *Zapysky Kamjanec’-Podil’s’koho Instytutu Narodnoji Osvity*, vol. 2 (1927), 1–38. The latter article, published on the eve of the Stalinist ‘anti-kulak policy’ and heavily biased against rich peasants, adduces nonetheless valuable data on the presence of a rural labour market in eighteenth-century Podolia.

30 A. Singer, *Palestinian Peasants and Ottoman Officials: Rural Administration Around Sixteenth-Century Jerusalem* (Cambridge 1994), 37 and 127.

31 The paper has been published in H. Lowry, ‘The Ottoman *tahrir defterleri* as a Source for Social and Economic History: Pitfalls and Limitations’, in idem, *Studies in Defterology: Ottoman Society in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Istanbul 1992), 3–18, esp. pp. 8 and 14.

are to provide an answer".<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, in the years 1992 and 1994, two conferences devoted to the study of *tahrir defters* were organised in Konya and Erlangen by Nejat Göyünç and Wolf-Dieter Hütteroth, who also jointly authored a book which presented statistical data drawn from the *tahrir* registers in a way typical of historical geography.<sup>33</sup> Yet, the third conference on the *tahrir defters*, which was planned to be held in Princeton, never materialised, perhaps because its potential organizer, Heath Lowry, had lost interest in Ottoman *tahrirs*.

A disappointment with quantitative sources, typical of the late twentieth century, was not specific to Ottoman studies, but rather reflected a general trend in historiography. Disillusionment with measuring and statistics was not limited to the study of *tahrirs*. If we look into the volume which resulted from a conference on Ottoman trade held in Cambridge in 2002, we will notice that only three out of 14 authors provided their texts with tables, a symptomatic phenomenon if we keep in mind that the conference was focused on such an accountable and measurable subject as trade.<sup>34</sup>

It is precisely in the decade when faith in Ottoman *tahrirs* was on the decrease that I was working on the edition of the Kamanıçe *defter*. I certainly did not want to cut off the tree branch on which I was sitting and notify my Harvard publisher that the source I was preparing to publish was rubbish. Yet I could not ignore some emerging problems. To give an example, I noticed that there was often a stable proportion between the amount of the tithe on beehives (*öşr-i kovan*) collected in a Podolian village and the quota of fines and trial expenses (*niyabet-i cürm ü cinayet*) collected in the same village. Moreover, if the quota of fines and trial expenses was added to the taxes on pasturage (*resm-i otlak*), weddings (*resm-i arus*), wine consumption (*resm-i fuçı*), pigs (*resm-i bid'at-i hanazir* and *resm-i bojik*), and the taxes collected from passing herdsmen, vagabonds, and nomads (*resm-i haymana* and *resm-i duhan*), their sum was equal to the quota of the tithe on beehives.<sup>35</sup> Should we conclude that there was a causal and stable relation between the consumption of honey and criminality, or between the number of bees and the number of slaughtered pigs? Or, rather, was it a matrix imposed on taxpayers in the whole of Podolia, and hence the *defter* cannot be relied on as an indicator of any regional differences in economic activity within this province? For instance, the production of rye, which was cheaper than wheat but required less fertile soils and was more resistant to heavy frosts, is consistently recorded in Podolia as twice as large as the production of wheat with no regard to the location of a given village, as if such factors as the quality of soil, microcli-

32 S. Faroqhi, 'Agriculture and Rural Life in the Ottoman Empire (ca. 1500-1878): A Report on Scholarly Literature Published 1970-1985', *NPT*, 1 (1987), 3-34, esp. p. 24; also quoted in Singer, *Palestinian Peasants*, 16.

33 N. Göyünç and W.-D. Hütteroth, *Land an der Grenze. Osmanische Verwaltung im heutigen türkisch-syrisch-irakischen Grenzgebiet im 16. Jahrhundert* (Istanbul 1997).

34 E. Boyar and K. Fleet (eds), *The Ottomans and Trade* (Rome, 2006) [= *Oriente Moderno*, 25 n. s. (LXXXVI), 1 (2006)].

35 Kołodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia*, 39.

matic conditions, or the proximity to the nearest market did not have any influence on the strategies of local food producers.<sup>36</sup>

I also once had to dash the enthusiasm of a young German computer scientist employed by Professor Hütteroth by explaining to him that there was no point in entering the data from the Podolian register into the universal database that he had created because the terminology encountered in this register was often incompatible with the terminology encountered in other registers. For instance, the compilers of the Podolian register did not recognise the category termed *bive*, which was common in other Ottoman lands and referred to a household headed by a widow. An uninitiated user of such a database, on comparing Podolia with the Balkans, might thus conclude that Ukrainian men led a much healthier life than their Greek or Bulgarian peers, so it was virtually impossible for a Ukrainian male to be outlived by a female.

I have still tried to make some sense of the statistical data contained in the Podolian *tahrir*. The Ottoman register appeared especially reliable in regard to the *nahiye* of Kryvče, situated in the vicinity of the province centre, where I was able to identify all the villages recorded by Ottoman clerks. This area was also better protected from the raids of Tatar nomads and marauders by the nearby Ottoman garrison of Kamañçe, so I chose to treat this *nahiye* as a sample, though I admitted that its production per household was probably higher than in other regions of Podolia. I created a grain production model inspired by the model of Leonid Żytkowicz, a Polish economic historian who had studied agrarian productivity in a seventeenth-century Church demesne in Mazovia (central Poland). My comparison suggested that a Podolian peasant household, at least in the Kryvče district, was better off than a Mazovian peasant household in the same century:

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36 For very similar observations, see J. C. Alexander, 'Counting the Grains: Conceptual and Methodological Issues in Reading the Ottoman *mufassal tahrir defters*', *Arab Historical Review for Ottoman Studies*, 19-20 (1999), 55-70 (the article's first version was read as a paper at the aforementioned 'defterologist' conference in Erlangen in 1994). In studying the quantitative data recorded in two fifteenth-century registers covering the areas of the Morea (Peloponnese) and Euboea, the author observed "certain unnerving results" concerning "a curious, striking correspondence in quantities" between the weight and value of recorded grains. To quote Alexander, "such results should set off bells ringing furiously for the scholar analyzing this data"; see *ibid.*, 59-60. In conclusion, Alexander comments: "All that one may validly infer about grain production on the basis of what these *defters* record is what and how the individual registrars were instructed to record, and to the best of their ability, could conscientiously do so, guided by *in loco* observation (and negotiation) and perhaps by local or regional precedent"; *ibid.*, 59. He then asks: "Are there assessments extracted from on-sight inspection and observed 'average' production, or are they based on some statutory 'average' on the expected proportional production in the two regions? Is it possible that there is a key at hand to what the Ottoman fisc considered the minimum figures laid down for *hane*, the hearth taxable unit, or taxable persons per settlement?"; *ibid.*, 61.

**Table 1:** Grain production per household in seventeenth-century Mazovia and Podolia

	Mazovia <sup>37</sup>	Podolia <sup>38</sup>
crops (wheat, barley, rye, buckwheat, and millet)	2,738 kg.	3,328 kg. (130 <i>keyl</i> )
consumption (assuming 6 persons per household)	1,825 kg. <sup>39</sup>	1,800 kg. (6 x 300 kg)
seed set aside for sowing in the following year	821 kg.	832 kg. (one quarter) <sup>40</sup>
tithe (in Mazovia augmented by other Church taxes)	292 kg.	333 kg.
result	–200 kg. (!) <sup>41</sup>	363 kg.

A Mazovian peasant still had to pay a number of levies to the landowner, calculated by Żytkowicz as worth 137 kg. of grain, and was subject to *corvée*, amounting to two work-days per week from a household in that period. In turn, a Podolian peasant had to pay a number of cash taxes, amounting to 200 *akçe* per household, and the *cizye* poll tax amounting to 300 *akçe*, but these taxes could easily be met if a peasant sold the grain surplus at the market prices. Even if the Ottoman authorities resolved to impose extraordinary taxes, known as the *avarız-ı divaniye ve tekâlif-i örfiye*, a Podolian peasant could still meet these requirements by selling the surplus of honey, the production of which was well developed in the province and is also evidenced by the Ottoman register.<sup>42</sup>

Although I have never treated my model too seriously, I assume that it might be of use, for instance to explain peasant immigration from Poland and Cossack Ukraine to Ottoman Podolia, observable on the basis of the *defter*.<sup>43</sup>

37 See L. Żytkowicz, *Studium nad wydajnością gospodarstwa wiejskiego na Mazowszu w XVII wieku* [A study of the productivity of a rural farm in Mazovia in the seventeenth century] (Warsaw 1969), 80 and 178. Further models of peasant budgets have been recently proposed and discussed in P. Guzowski, 'A Changing Economy: Models of Peasant Budgets in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Poland', *Continuity and Change*, 20 (2005), 9-25.

38 This estimate has already been published in Kołodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia*, 41.

39 Żytkowicz's model is based on the contemporary local weight unit named *korzec* and equal to c. 36.5 kg. He estimated the annual consumption per household as equal to 50 *korców* (Pol. gen. pl. of *korzec*).

40 Andrzej Wyczański, a leading Polish economic historian, estimated that in central Poland, this ratio reached one quarter of the collected seed in the sixteenth century, but in the following century it was higher and reached one-third because of the ecological over-exploitation of soils; see idem, 'Le niveau de la récolte des céréales en Pologne du XVI<sup>e</sup> au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Première Conférence Internationale d'Histoire Économique: Contributions, Communications; Stockholm 1960* (Paris and the Hague 1960), 585-590. Since the Podolian soils were more fertile and at the same time less exploited, because the province was not connected to the Vistula river transport system that enabled the export of Polish grain through the Baltic Sea, I assumed a higher productivity of Podolian soils and only one-quarter of the collected seed to be needed for sowing in the following year.

41 Commenting on this highly pessimistic result, Żytkowicz admitted that apparently he had over-estimated the peasant consumption.

42 Kołodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia*, 41.

43 Ibid., 251 and 267-268.



While writing the present article, I decided to look for new approaches and discussions that might refresh my own attitude. What I found most interesting were several recent publications by Metin Coşgel, whose attitude towards the Ottoman *tahrirs* is characterised by fresh optimism. In an article published in 2004, Coşgel accused earlier scholars, and most notably Heath Lowry, of “an excessively cautious and sometimes even pessimistic attitude [...] regarding the potential uses of these documents,” concluding that “the period of initial optimism gave way to widespread pessimism, contributing to the underuse of *defters* in historical scholarship.”<sup>44</sup> Inspired by current trends in economic history, he proposed to apply sampling methods rather than use the whole massive, but hardly digestible, data contained in the *defters*. He also observed that although the data recorded in the *tahrirs* might not reflect *actual* yearly crops and payments, but the *expected* amounts based on the averages of the previous three years, it is even better for economic historians who prefer average data established on the basis of long-term experience to annual data, influenced by shifting weather conditions and varying from one year to the next, which are less suitable as the departure point for making generalisations.<sup>45</sup>

In another article, published in 2006, Coşgel proposed to compare the grain output per worker in the sixteenth-century Ottoman Empire with the grain output per worker in nineteenth-century Europe as evaluated by a British-American economic historian, Gregory Clark. The results, based on the data on Europe provided by Clark and on the data on various Ottoman provinces extracted by Coşgel from a number of published *tahrirs*, are somewhat surprising, as the agrarian productivity of sixteenth-century Anatolia is shown as higher than that of nineteenth-century Holland, and the productivity of sixteenth-century Ottoman Hungary, although lower than that of sixteenth-century Anatolia, appears almost twice as high as that of nineteenth-century Hungary.

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44 M. M. Coşgel, ‘Ottoman Tax Registers (*Tahrir Defterleri*)’, *Historical Methods*, 37 (2004), 87–100, esp. p. 87.

45 Ibid., 88–89. A more optimistic attitude towards the *tahrirs* has also been recently expressed by Elias Kolovos. Admitting that the figures recorded in the *defters* typically reflect not the real survey and accounting, but rather the system of assessment of the expected production, based on the information obtained from the local community and more or less unified for the whole province, he nonetheless argues that these estimates should not be dismissed as purely imaginative as they contain a general illustration of the peasant economy, even if distorted by the Ottoman taxation priorities and other human factors; cf. E. Kolovos, ‘Beyond “Classical” Ottoman *Defterology*: A Preliminary Assessment of the *Tahrir* Registers of 1670/71 concerning Crete and the Aegean Islands’, in E. Kolovos, P. Kotzageorgis, S. Laiou and M. Sariyannis (eds), *The Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, the Greek Lands: Toward a Social and Economic History; Studies in Honor of John C. Alexander* (Istanbul 2007), 201–235, esp. pp. 210–211.

**Table 2:** Grain output per worker in nineteenth-century Europe and the sixteenth-century Ottoman Empire<sup>46</sup>

Britain	1851	100 (272 bushels)
Netherlands	1850	54
Belgium	1850	37
Sweden	1850	37
Austria	1854	32
Hungary	1854	30
Russia	1870	29
Fertile Crescent	1540	76
Anatolia	1520-1540	64
Hungary-Serbia	1545-1580	53

Coşgel assumed that an average peasant household in the Ottoman Empire consisted of four to five members, including one member ineligible to work because of age or other reasons. He then assumed that the value of available workforce per household oscillated between two<sup>47</sup> and three<sup>48</sup> adult workers. He finally assumed that only a part of the total household labour would be directed towards grain production (between 33% and 50%), reaching the lowest estimate equal to 0.66 adult male labour equivalent ( $2 \times 0.33$ ) and the highest estimate equal to 1.5 adult male labour equivalent ( $3 \times 0.5$ ) per household.<sup>49</sup> One can raise numerous objections to the above estimates, but for the sake of comparison let us accept them and apply them to Ottoman Podolia.

In the *nahiye* of Kryvče, already selected earlier as an example by the present author, the Ottoman survey officials recorded 545 households (including seven Jewish households) in 20 villages.<sup>50</sup> If we apply the method of Coşgel, who converted the output in

46 Data extracted from M. Coşgel, 'Agricultural Productivity in the Early Ottoman Empire', *Research in Economic History*, 24 (2006), 161-187, esp. p. 171 (Table 2) (the text was originally presented at the International Economic History Congress in Helsinki in August 2006); the data on nineteenth-century Europe, presented by Coşgel, are based on those presented in G. Clark, 'Too Much Revolution: Agriculture in the Industrial Revolution, 1700-1860', in J. Mokyr (ed.), *The British Industrial Revolution: An Economic Perspective* (Boulder 1999), 206-240, esp. p. 211.

47 I.e., father, mother, and adolescent child, where the combined labour input of the mother and child is roughly equal to the father's labour input.

48 I.e., father, mother, and two adolescent children, but in this high estimate, the mother's labour input is calculated as equal to that of the father.

49 Coşgel, 'Agricultural Productivity', 184-186.

50 Kołodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia*, 219-48. It is not certain whether the Jews were engaged in agricultural production, but they are counted here anyway. Moreover, four villages were recorded in the *tahrir* as deserted and one village had only one household during the survey so its future taxes were calculated merely by way of estimation (*ber vech-i tahmin*) without any breakdown into specific categories; for the above reason this village and its one household are not counted here.



various grains and legumes into wheat equivalent on the basis of local prices,<sup>51</sup> we will obtain 40,007 Istanbul bushels (*keyl*), equal to 38,807 Winchester bushels used by Clark, of wheat equivalent as the total annual output of the Kryvče district.<sup>52</sup> Still applying the method of Coşgel, we should then convert the number of 545 households into the number of units of the “adult male labour equivalent”, to reach the minimum of 360 ( $545 \times 0.66$ ) and the maximum of 818 ( $545 \times 1.5$ ) virtual workers engaged in grain production in the district. Finally, by dividing the total output by the number of virtual workers, we will obtain between 49 and 111 Istanbul bushels, or between 47 and 108 Winchester bushels, per worker.

**Table 3:** Grain output per worker in seventeenth-century Ottoman Podolia

Britain (see above)	1851	100 (272 bushels)
Podolia	1681	17-40 (47-108 bushels) <sup>53</sup>

If compared with the estimates presented by Coşgel, the agrarian productivity in Ottoman Podolia would be lower than in sixteenth-century Ottoman Hungary and much lower than in sixteenth-century Anatolia, not to mention the much more productive Fertile Crescent.<sup>54</sup> Yet, at the same time the output per worker in seventeenth-century Ottoman Podolia would roughly equal the output per worker in nineteenth-century Russia, Hungary, and Austria, and even almost equal the output per worker in nineteenth-century Belgium.<sup>55</sup>

Should we believe that there was no progress at all in the agricultural production in Eastern Europe between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries and, even worse, that there was a sharp decline in the *per capita* agricultural production in Central Europe (e.g., Hungary) between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries? Frankly, I do not feel competent to answer this question. One rule should nonetheless be observed, irrespective of the period and subject researched: when using quantitative and statistical data, a scholar must compare the results obtained with the knowledge gained from narrative sources, and it is always useful to apply common sense.

51 Coşgel, ‘Agricultural Productivity’, 164; Coşgel took into account the production of “wheat, barley, and other cereal grains and legumes”, whereas the present author extracted from the Podolian *defter* the data on the production of wheat, barley, rye, buckwheat, millet, oats, and peas.

52 The Istanbul bushel was equivalent to 0.97 Winchester bushels; *ibid.*, 180.

53  $38,807$  Winchester bushels /  $818$  virtual workers =  $47$  Winchester bushels per worker;  $38,807$  Winchester bushels /  $360$  virtual workers =  $108$  Winchester bushels per worker.

54 Cf. Table 2 above; see also *ibid.*, 165-66 (e.g., between 87 and 197 bushels per worker in the region of Estergom in 1570, between 99 and 225 in the region of Buda in 1562, between 129 and 294 in the region of Antep in 1574, between 145 and 330 in the region of Hawran in 1596; in the region of Bursa, the grain output per worker amounted between 132 and 300 bushels in 1521, but only between 53 and 121 in 1573; the sharp decline in labour productivity observed in sixteenth-century Anatolia is explained by Coşgel by demographic growth, resulting in relative over-population in the Anatolian countryside; cf. *ibid.*, 168).

55 Cf. Table 2 above.



# AGRARIAN SURPLUS AND AGRARIAN STRATEGIES IN THE VILLAGE MICRO-ECONOMY IN THE SOUTH-WEST PELOPONNESE IN THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Stefka PARVEVA\*

IN 1715 THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE RE-CONQUERED THE PELOPONNESE, ruled at the time by Venice. Its territory was officially added to the Empire after the Peace Treaty, signed in Passarowitz in 1718.<sup>1</sup> The conquest of the peninsula was followed by the issuing of a law (*kanunname*) of the *vilayet* of Mora, which restored the *miri* status of the land and regulated the issues concerning its cultivation and taxation.<sup>2</sup> Parallel to it, there started a process of registering the population, its property and sources of income.<sup>3</sup> One of these

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- 1 During the war between the Ottoman Empire and the Holy League (1683-1699), Venice conquered the Peloponnese in 1687, and ruled it formally after the Treaty of Karlowitz (1699). For more details see: *EP*, s.v. 'Mora' (N. A. Bees, A. Savvides), 239-240; W. Miller, 'The Venetian Revival in Greece 1684-1718', in idem, *Essays on the Latin Orient* (Cambridge 1921), 403-427; D. Hatzopoulos, *La dernière guerre entre la Republique de Venise et l'Empire Ottoman (1714-1718)* (Montreal 1998); S. Sophocles, *A History of Greece* (Thessaloniki 1961), 261-263.
- 2 Ö. Barkan, *XV ve XVIncı Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Ziraî Ekonominin Hukuki ve Mali Esasları*, Vol. I: *Kanunlar* (hereafter *Kanunlar*), (Istanbul 1943), 326-332.
- 3 Information from the Ottoman *defters*, compiled in 1715/1716 in relation to various parts of the Peloponnese has been used in the studies of: N. Göyünç, 'XVIII. Yüzyılda Türk İdaresinde Nauplia (Anabolu) ve Yapıları', in *Ord. Prof. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı'ya Armağan* (Ankara 1976), 461-485; F. Zarinebaf, J. Bennet, and J. L. Davis, *A Historical and Economic Geography of Ottoman Greece: The Southwestern Morea in the 18th Century* (Princeton 2005); J. C. Alexander, 'Conquest and Assimilation: Urban and Rural Real Estate in the Town of Tripolitsa, 1698-1716', *ArchOtt*, 23 (2005-2006) [Mélanges en l'honneur d'Elisabeth A. Zachariadou], 29-46; E. Balta, 'Η αμπελοκαλλιέργεια στον καζά της Τριπολιτσάς (16ος-18ος αιώνας)' [Viniculture in the *kaza* of Tripolitsa (sixteenth-eighteenth centuries)], *Οίνον Ιστορώ* [I tell of wine], VI (Athens 2007), 125-143, tables 30-33; eadem, 'Evidence for Viniculture in Ottoman Morea, 15th-18th Centuries', in *History of the Wine I. The History and Archeology in North-west Peloponnesus* (Athens 2001), 135-141; eadem, 'Venetians and Ottomans in the Southeast Peloponnese (15th-18th Century)', in *Halil İnalçık Armağanı I, Tarih Araştırmaları*, (Ankara 2009), 168-204; S. Parveva, 'Agrarian Land and Harvest in South-West Peloponnese in the Early Eighteenth Century', in eadem, *Village, Town and People in the Ottoman Balkans, Six-*

registers (*defters*), TD 880, concerns the settlements in the districts (*kazas*) of Arkadia (mod. Kyparissia) and New and Old Anavarin (mod. Pylos) in the South-West Peloponnese. The *defter* is dated 20 Muharrem 1128/15 January 1716.<sup>4</sup>

The information included in this document differs from the standard content of *tapu tahrir defters*, as known from the period up to late sixteenth century. The aim of the registration was to determine and describe the real property (*emlâk*) and land possessions (*tasarrufat*) of the Muslim and non-Muslim inhabitants of the towns, villages, and *çiftlik*s. It is mainly because of the aim of the Ottomans to restore the *status quo* that we now have unique information about the property and possessions of the townsmen and villagers, including their houses, fields, vineyards and orchards, giving their extent in *dönüms*, the number of olive trees, sheep, pigs, mills, oil mills, and other important items.

The last part of the survey of the towns, villages, and *çiftlik*s includes a summary of the type and quantity of landholdings and other property, as well as some agricultural products subject to taxation. In this part of the survey the Ottoman registrar gave explanations about the average yield ratio of the most important crops for the urban and rural agrarian micro-economy. Thanks to the preparatory work which the Ottoman administrators had done before estimating an adequate taxation, we can learn some facts about the quantity of grain sown in one *raiye*t *çiftlik* (*çift*), about the average yield ratio and market values per measurement of cereals, olive trees, one *dönüm* of vineyard, and a field of one *evlek*, sown with cotton in the territories of towns, several villages, and *çiftlik*s. The information regarding family landholdings and the yield ratio of cultivated crops has allowed us to reconstruct the quantitative components of the system, i.e., harvest – consumption – taxation – remaining surplus per household, and to seek answers to questions such as: to what extent was agricultural production sufficient to support the family and create a marketable surplus? Did the agrarian system offer incentives to the producer?<sup>5</sup>

This paper continues the study of the people, land, and harvest in the villages in the South-West Peloponnese based in the light of the data of TD 880. It will deal with two main issues: First, the reconstruction of the productive capacity of an average *raiye*t *çiftlik* in the *kazas* of Arkadia and Anavarin. The analysis of the figures will focus on the marketable grain surplus that was left in the farmers' hands after the payment of the tithe and *salariye* and the deductions for subsistence and sowing; second, the analysis of the agrarian strategies in the micro-economy of the various types of settlements, depending

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*teenth – Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Istanbul 2009), 61-110; eadem, 'The Influence of the Market on the Urban Agrarian Space: the Case of the Town of Arkadia in 1716', *Oriente Moderno*, n.s., 25/1 (2006) [E. Boyar and K. Fleet (eds), *The Ottomans and Trade*], 21-49; eadem, *Земята и хората през XVII – първите десетилетия на XVIII в. Овладеяване и организация на аграрното и социалното пространство в Централните и Южните Балкани под османска власт* [Land and people during the seventeenth – first decades of the eighteenth century; reclamation and organization of the agrarian and social space in the Central and Southern Balkans under the Ottoman rule] (Sofia 2011), 140-179, 393-410, 429-434.

4 BOA, TD 880.

5 Parveva, 'Agrarian Land and Harvest', 61-110; eadem, 'The Influence of the Market', 21-49; eadem, *Земята и хората*, 140-179, 393-410, 429-434.

on the environmental conditions, the productive capacity of the *raiye*t çiftlik, and the road and market infrastructure in the area of the two *kazas* under investigation.

*Annual Production of Cereals in the raiye*t çiftlik in Various Types of Villages, Designated by the Ottoman Registrar as 'Model' Villages

The results of the reconstruction of the model of production of cereals in one *çift* in different types of villages, based on the peasants' reports about the sowing rates and the yield ratio of grain, the tax legislation, and cereals' consumption rate<sup>6</sup> indicate that the peasants from the South-West Peloponnese sowed their fields in the *raiye*t çiftlik with the amount of 12-13 to 20 *kiles*<sup>7</sup> of grain (308-513 kg.). Its quantity depended on the soils, the landscape, and other ecological characteristics of the village territories, which determined the yield of the crops in a regular year. From the sown grain the cultivators gained between a 4.6 - 7 times bigger crop, the amount of which varied from 67 to 136 *kiles* (1,719-3,490 kg.). After subtracting the quantity of grain necessary for the payment of the tithe and *salariye*, for sowing and the subsistence of the household, there remained a surplus, which varied between 168 and 1,559 kg. The share of the surplus amounted to 10 % - 45 % of the whole harvest, and its monetary equivalent varied from 164 *akçes* to 1,823 *akçes*. This production model with a surplus was typical of almost all investigated village and urban territories as well as *çiftlik* lands.

6 For details about the average number of people in one family in the districts of Arkadia and Anavarin, the subsistence minimum of grain needed to support a person for one year, the quantity of the tithe (*öşür*), and the adjunct of the grain tithe – *salariye* according to the law (*kanun-name*) of the *vilayet* of Mora from 1716 and the necessary quantity of sowing seed see in Parveva, 'Agrarian Land and Harvest', 87-93; eadem, *Землята и хората*, 145-158.

7 The explanatory texts about the yield ratio of the crops in the villages of the districts made it clear that the measurement in use for the cereals was the *kile* of Istanbul (*İslamboli kile olmak üzere*). BOA, TD 880, f. 26, 30. One *kile* (of wheat) of Istanbul was equal to 20 *okkas* (one *okka* / *vukiyye* was equal to 1.283 kg.) or 25.656 kg. See W. Hinz, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte, Umgerechnet Ins Metrische System* (Leiden 1955). We used the Russian translation of his book: W. Hinz, *Musul'manskie mery i vesa s perevodom v metricheskuyu sistemu* (Moscow 1970), 52; H. İnalçık, 'Rice Cultivation and the *çeltükci-re'âyâ* System in the Ottoman Empire', *Turcica*, 14 (1982), 119. There are some other variations for conversion of the *kile* of Istanbul which do not differ much from the one mentioned above. For such variations see H. İnalçık, 'Weights and Measures', in H. İnalçık with D. Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914* (Cambridge 1994), 990, 991.

**Table 1:** Annual production of cereals in one *rayet çiftlik* (*çift*) in the districts of Arkadia and Anavarin  
Source: BOA (İstanbul), TD 880, f. 17, 26, 30, 34, 45, 64, 78, 80, 83-84, 88-89, 91, 100.

Name	L <sup>1</sup>	Quantity of grain, sown in one <i>çift</i> ( <i>kile</i> )					Annual production of one <i>çift</i> ( <i>kile</i> )					Annual production of one <i>çift</i> ( <i>kg.</i> )				
town; village		Total	whe- at	bar- ley	oats	millet	Rye	to- tal	whe- at	bar- ley	oats	millet	rye	total	surplus <sup>2</sup> (% of the surplus from the total harvest)	money valuation of the surplus ( <i>akçe</i> ) <sup>3</sup>
<i>kaza of Arkadia</i>																
town of Arkadia	p	20	8	12*				104	32	72*				2,669	853 (32%)	997
Filiatra	p	20	8	12*				136	40	96*				3,490	1,559 (45%)	1,823
Gargalian	p	20	8	12*				112	40	72*				2,874	1,030 (36%)	1,004
Likudesi	p	13	4	4	4		1	47	12	16	16		3(?) <sup>4</sup>	1,206	-219 (-18%)	-213
Mali	m	13	6	5	1	1		69	24	25	10	10		1,770	266 (15%)	241
Varibobi	mp	15	8	7*				67	32	35*				1,719	168 (10%)	164
Christianu	mm	15	5	5	2	1	2	73	20	25	12	10	6	1,873	299 (16%)	272
<i>kaza of Anavarin</i>																
Çiftlik Bodran in front of the fortress of Old Anavarin	p	15														
Çiftlik Ali Hoca	p	18	6	6	5	1		92	24	30	30	8		2,361	763 (32%)	743

<i>Çiftlik</i> Rüstem Ağa	p	19	6	7	5	1		123	36	49	30	8	3,156	1,419 (45%)	1,383
<i>Çiftlik</i> Aklina (Kurd Ağa)	mp	18	6	6	5	1		111	30	36	30	15	2,848	1,181 (42%)	1,074
<i>Çiftlik</i> Pıla	p	12						84							
Stelianu	m	15	6	6	3			84	30	36	18 <sup>5</sup>		2,155	663 (31%)	646
<b>Average figures for the territory of the two kazas as a whole</b>		16.9 <sup>6</sup>						92.5					2,375	726 (31%)	739

- i Landscape: The Ottoman registrar has classified the landscape of the respective settlement by recording it above the name in the following way: p=plain (*ovadır*); mp=middle plain, probably hilly plain (*ovadır vasat*); m=mountain (*dağdır*); mm=middle mountain, probably semi-mountainous (*vasat üzere dağdır*).
- ii The figure refers to the quantity of grain remaining after subtracting the quantity needed to pay the tithe and the *salarıye*, for sowing, and the subsistence of the household during the year.
- iii We assume that the whole quantity of wheat is used for food in the family. Thus it is not included in the composition of the surplus. The money valuation of the surplus is calculated on the basis of the average price of barley, oats, millet, and rye in the settlement. As for the villages where the price of the various types of grain is not recorded, we assume it is the lower value registered for the villages and the *çiftlik*s from the respective *kaza*. For the price of the grain, referred to by the term *kara tereke*, we assume the average value of the price of the barley and the oats.
- iv The yield ratio of the rye is not recorded in the survey of this village. We have filled in the column according to the rye yield ratio recorded for the village of Christianu.
- v The text does not record the yield ratio of the sown oats. We have filled in the column according to the available data about the yield ratio of the crop as recorded for the *çiftlik*s in the *kaza* of Anavarin.
- vi The calculations exclude the *çiftlik*s of Bodran and Pıla due to insufficient available data on them.
- \* The figure refers to the yield ratio of *kara tereke* (black grain). We assume that this term denoted the grain used for feeding animals, in particular, barley and oats. However, it could also be a type of wheat.

The *raiye* çiftlik in the village of Likudesi in the district of Arkadia forms the only exception: there the production of grain was insufficient for the subsistence of the household. The peasants there sowed a total of 13 kile (334 kg.) of wheat, barley, oats, and rye, but reaped only 3.6 times more grain, amounting to 47 kile (1,206 kg.). The farmers from Likudesi not only did not get any surplus grain from their *raiye* çifts, but its quantity did not cover even what was needed for taxation, household subsistence, and subsequent sowing. The deficit amounted to 219 kg. or 18 % of the harvest (Table 1). This was due to the low yield ratio of the cereals, as recorded in the survey of the village territory.<sup>8</sup> In addition, it could be said that both the olive trees and the vineyards in Likudesi had a lower yield ratio in comparison to the yield ratio of these crops in other settlements as indicated in the *defter*.<sup>9</sup> Despite that, the production of cash crops and raw silk as well as their sale on the market helped overcome the grain deficit in the village.<sup>10</sup> It was documented that this was the case in earlier times too, when these lands were in the hands of the Venetians (1687-1715). In this period the major part of the revenues of Likudesi came from the cultivation of olive groves and vineyards, and the production of and trade in olive-oil and wine, respectively.<sup>11</sup>

### *Productive Capacity of an Average raiye çiftlik in the Districts of Arkadia and Anavarin*

The data summed up in Table 1 allows us to reflect on the meaning of the figures concerning harvest, consumption, and taxation. This time we will focus on the analysis of the average amounts of sown and reaped grain, i.e., we will outline the productive capacity of the average *raiye* çiftlik in the territory of the two *kazas* as a whole. The emphasis in the ensuing analysis will be on the grain surplus which remained in the peasant's hands after paying the tithe and *salaria* and putting aside the necessary quantities for subsistence and sowing. We will make an attempt to evaluate its quantitative parameters and the respective possibilities or limitations it created for its producer.

8 The survey of the village of Likudesi indicates that the 128 male inhabitants registered there were not involved in growing cereals. They had only 13 çifts. Every sown kile of wheat there yielded a crop of only 3 kiles, and the kile of barley or oats – 4 kiles at the average yield ratio of wheat of 5 kiles from a sown kile for barley – 6 kiles for oats – 6.25 kiles. BOA, TD 880, f. 30-34. For the yield ratio of various types of grain in the villages of the South-West Peloponnese see: Parveva, 'Agrarian Land and Harvest', 87-90; Zarinebaf, Bennet, and Davis, *A Historical and Economic Geography*, 194-195.

9 For the yield ratio of olive trees and vineyards in the districts of Arkadia and Anavarin see: Parveva, 'Agrarian Land and Harvest', 75-77, 95-96; Zarinebaf, Bennet, and Davis, *A Historical and Economic Geography*, 179-188.

10 Although less productive as a yield ratio, the village territory also included a sizeable extent of vineyards (1,184 dönüms), a significant number of olive trees (3,691), four oil mills, 225 mulberry trees, two silk presses, 1,244 fruit-bearing trees; 378 sheep, 95 pigs, 75 beehives, six mills, one tile-kiln, and other items. BOA, TD 880, f. 30-34.

11 S. Davies, 'Pylos Regional Archaeological Project, Part VI: Administration and Settlement in Venetian Navarino', *Hesperia*, 73 (2004), 81-82, 85-86.



The average figures concerning the productivity of the *raiye* *çiftlik* in the South-West Peloponnese reveal the following. In the fields of one *çiftlik* the peasant sowed the average amount of 16.9 *kiles* of grain. This yielded 5.5 times more grain, amounting to 92.5 *kiles* or 2,375 kg. Almost one third (31 %) of the harvest remained as a surplus in the hands of its producer. The monetary equivalent of this surplus was 739 *akçes* (Table 1). The peasant was expected to get this sum if he had sold his grain at the prices indicated in the *defter*.<sup>12</sup> With this sum he had to cover his cash taxes and possibly satisfy the needs of his family for goods which they did not produce at home.

The first question we will address is to what extent the money income from the marketable grain surplus could cover the subsequent monetary payments of the peasant. The main cash taxes which the non-Muslim taxpayer had to pay were the *cizye* and the *ispence*, as well as the levies of the *avarız* category and a new set of local taxes (*tekâlif-i şakka*).<sup>13</sup> In order to be able to evaluate the extent to which the income from the grain surplus could cover all the above-mentioned taxes, we need to take into consideration the rules followed by the authorities in taxing the peasants with the first two – the *cizye* and the *ispence*.

At the beginning of the 1690s a reform in the taxation of non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire with the *cizye* tax was implemented. All adult males were therefore taxed, divided into three categories according to their solvency: *ala*, *evsat*, and *edna*, corresponding to wealthy, medium status, and working poor men.<sup>14</sup> In order to calculate the tax duty of the peasant in terms of the *cizye*, we have to make some suppositions. The first one is related to the definition of the category and the amount of the tax. Undoubtedly, the major factor in determining the tax category of the farmer was the quantity of the land he

12 For the prices recorded by the registrar in the *defter*, see Parveva, 'Agrarian Land and Harvest', 89, Table 11A; Zarinebaf, Bennet, and Davis, *A Historical and Economic Geography*, 180.

13 For the major tax duties of the taxpayers paid in cash during the seventeenth and early eighteenth century see: S. Faruqi, 'Crisis and change, 1590-1699', in H. İnalcık with D. Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 531-545; H. İnalcık, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600 – 1700', *ArchOtt*, 6 (1980), 311-338; B. McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe. Taxation, Trade and the Struggle for Land 1600-1800* (Cambridge 1981), 80-120; idem, 'The Age of the Ayans, 1699-1812', in İnalcık with Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 658-672; 713-723; L. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire 1550-1650* (Leiden 1996), 81-307; S. Demirci, *The Functioning of Ottoman Avârız Taxation: An Aspect of the Relationship Between Centre and Periphery. A Case Study of the Province of Karaman, 1621-1700* (Istanbul 2009); B. Tsvetkova, *Извънредни данъци и държавни повинности в българските земи под турска власт* [Extraordinary taxes and state duties in the Bulgarian lands under Turkish rule] (Sofia 1958); E. Radushev, 'Les dépenses locales dans l'empire ottoman au XVIIIe s. (selon des données de registres de cadastre de Ruse, Vidin et Sofia)', *EB*, 3 (1980), 74-94.

14 The amount of the tax was in the ratio of 1:2:4. See *EP*, s.v. 'Djizya' (H. İnalcık), 562-565 and the bibliography cited there; B. Nedkov, 'Поголовният данък в Османската империя с оглед на България' [Poll tax in the Ottoman Empire with a view to Bulgaria], *Исторически преглед* [Historical Review], 1 (1945-1946), 23-29; E. Grozdanova, 'Събиране на данъка джизие в българските земи през XVII и XVIII век' [Collecting of the *cizye* tax in the Bulgarian lands during the seventeenth – eighteenth century], *Исторически преглед*, 5 (1970), 82-84.

cultivated and the income it could give him for the family subsistence and the payment of the tax rent.<sup>15</sup> We assume that the 'standard' peasant, head of an average household, who possessed one *çift* with the cattle and tools necessary for its cultivation, was classified as in the middle – *evsat* category of payer. The cash equivalent of the *evsat* category of the *cizye* was 5 *guruş* or 600 *akçe*.<sup>16</sup>

The second supposition we have to make concerns the number of persons in the family who paid the *cizye*. Where the head of the household had adult sons, but they were still

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- 15 Apart from the property in the agrarian sector (landholdings and livestock), the process of determining the tax category depended to a certain extent on other factors such as the income from the craft or trade practiced by the taxpayer, his age, marital status, and others. Some importance in determining the category of *cizye* paid by large groups of people for a short or longer period was also attached to other circumstances, such as damage to harvests and devastation of settlements as a result of war or natural disaster, their proximity to border areas, etc. This was the case with the non-Muslim population of the Peloponnese in 1128/27 December 1715 – 15 December 1716, when the *cizyedar* Elhac Ahmed Ağa distributed among the taxpayers 65,050 *cizye evrak* (personal certificates of payment), all of them of the low (*edna*) category, and delivered to the Treasury a total of 19,515,000 *akçes*. (Oriental Department at the Sts Cyril and Methodius National Library, Sofia – hereafter NLCM, Or. Dept., fond 214A, archival unit 233). For more on the criteria for determining the peasant's tax category as well as the questions arising in relation to the sources or, rather, the information missing from them see: E. Balta, 'Le rôle de l'institution communautaire dans la répartition verticale de l'impôt: l'exemple de Santorin au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle', in eadem, *Problèmes et approches de l'histoire ottomane. Un itinéraire scientifique de Kayseri à Eğriboz* (Istanbul 1997), 97-113; M. Sariyannis, 'Notes on the Poll-Tax Reforms of the Late Seventeenth Century: the Case of Crete', *JESHO*, 54 (2011), 39-61; E. Grozdanova, 'Извори за имуществената диференциация сред градското и селско население на Балканите в края на XVII и началото на XVIII в.' [Sources for property differentiation among the urban and rural population of the Balkans in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth Centuries], *Известия на държавните архиви* [Proceedings of the State Archives], 25 (1973), 256-273; eadem, 'Налог джизье с Балканских земель в системе доходов государственной казны Османской империи (по турецким документам XVII-XVIII вв.)' [*Cizye* tax from the Balkan lands in the system of revenues of the state treasury of the Ottoman Empire (according to Turkish documents from the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries)], in A. C. Tveritinova (ed.), *Восточные источники по истории народов Юго-Восточной и Центральной Европы* [Oriental sources on the history of the peoples of South-East and Central Europe], Moscow, 3 (1974), 174-179; S. Dimitrov, 'Село Чупрене през XIX в. (до Освобождението)' [The village of Chuprene in the nineteenth century (to the Liberation)], in I. Undziev *et alii* (eds), *In Memoriam of the Academician M. Dimitrov*, (Sofia 1974), 30.
- 16 For the amount of the tax in its three categories (*ala* – 10 *guruş*; *evsat* – 5 *guruş*; *edna* – 2.5 *guruş*) during the period 1696-1738 see: *EP*, s.v. 'Djizya' (H. İnalçık), 563; E. Grozdanova, 'Поголовният данък и развитието на стоково-паричните отношения в българските земи през XV-XIX век' [Poll tax and the development of commodity and monetary relations in the Bulgarian lands in the fifteenth – nineteenth century], in V. Paskaleva (ed.), *Из историята на търговията в българските земи през XV-XIX в.* [On the history of trade in the Bulgarian lands, fifteenth – nineteenth century] (Sofia 1978), 165; S. Parveva, 'Some Strokes from the History of the Sliven Trade Fair during the First Half of the Eighteenth Century', in eadem, *Village, Town and People*, 135. For the exchange rate of the coins in converting the *guruş* into *akçe* see Ş. Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 2000), 160-163.

unmarried and lived in the father's home, they, too, were subject to pay the tax – although at a lower rate in comparison with their father's dues.<sup>17</sup> Yet, we have to say that this period of the life of the young adult male as taxpayer (from 14-15 years of age onwards)<sup>18</sup> who still lived in his father's home was rather limited in time. The traditional pattern of marriages typical of the Balkan population as well as the presumed early age of marriage did not allow young men to stay unmarried for long.<sup>19</sup> This is indicated also in results from the analysed registration data. In the villages whose micro-economy will be analysed in detail below, the families with one male adult, who is head of household and is liable to taxation, are more numerous than those families where the persons liable to taxation include the father as well as his adult son or other male relative. These families constitute between 58% and 82-100% of the total number of registered families in the settlement. The lower percentage is typical of the rich and populous villages in the plain like Filiatra. Among them there are more often families where in addition to the head of the household, the registered males include his unmarried landless son or his brother. Such families are exceptional or do not exist at all in the smaller and poorer mountain or semi-mountain villages like Mali (mod. Mali), Christianu (mod. Christianoupoli), and Varibobi (mod. Manastiri). Probably the adult unmarried sons in the latter villages had left their families to make a living in the fertile plain, in the cities, or elsewhere.<sup>20</sup> (Tables 3-6, Appendix)

17 Balta, 'Le rôle de l'institution', 106.

18 For more details concerning the age when boys were considered to become adults and were included in the *cizye* registers as well as other tax registrations see: G. Dávid, 'The Age of Unmarried Male Children in the *tahrir defters* (Notes on the Coefficient)' *ActOrHung*, 31/3, (1977), 347-357; E. Elifoğlu, 'Ottoman *defters* Containing Ages of Children: A New Source for Demographic Research', *ArchOtt*, 9 (1984), 321-328; Grozdanova, 'Subirane na danuka cizye' [Collecting the *cizye* tax], 75-90; S. Parveva, 'Към демографския облик на град Никопол през 1693 г.' [Contribution to the demographic characteristics of the town of Nikopol in 1693] in V. Paskaleva (ed.), *300 години Чипровско въстание (принос към историята на българите през XVII в.* [The third centennial of the Chiprovtsi uprising: a contribution to the Bulgarian history in the seventeenth c.] (Sofia 1988), 37-40; O. Todorova, *Жените от Централните Балкани през османската епоха (XV-XVII век)* [Women from the Central Balkans during the Ottoman Era (fifteenth – seventeenth century)] (Sofia 2004), 202-203.

19 For the family, the marital behaviour and the marital age of the rural population in the Balkans see: M. Todorova, *Балканското семейство. Историческа демография на българското общество през османския период* [Balkan family: historical demography of Bulgarian society during the Ottoman period], trans. D. Ilieva (Sofia 2002), 43-57; T. Stoianovich, 'The Balkan Domestic Family: Geography, Commerce, Demography', *Revue des études Sud-Est européennes*, 14 (1976), 472-474; idem, 'Family and Household in the Western Balkans, 1500-1870'; R. Mantran (ed.), *Mémoirel Ömer Lûtfi Barkan* (Paris 1980), 197-199.

20 One of the centres attracting poor and landless peasants from the Balkan provinces of the Empire who were trying to make a living was Istanbul and its surrounding areas. For the reasons for this flow of migrants, the problems related to the overpopulation of the Ottoman capital, the negative consequences for the economic condition of the provinces, as well as the measures that had to be taken to tackle the problem see in the Sultan's *fermans*, sent to the local authorities in Rumeli during the first half of the eighteenth century in S. Dimitrov (trans. and ed.), *Османски извори за историята на Добруджа и Североизточна България* [Ottoman sources for the

Having said all this, we can assume that the only taxpayer in the ‘standard’ or average family under study was the head of the household, whereas his sons – if he had them – were either minors or heads of their own households with separate property and land-holdings. The father in this family was taxed with a *cizye* of 600 *akçes*.<sup>21</sup>

The other monetary expense of the peasant concerned the *ispence* land tax. It amounted to 25 *akçes*. This tax, which had been in force for centuries, was employed again by the authorities in the new law of the re-conquered territory.<sup>22</sup> We have no available data and so cannot say with certainty whether the *ispence* rate was adjusted to the inflation rate and the changes in the value of the Ottoman coin when put into practice.<sup>23</sup> This is why in the ensuing calculations we assume that the amount of the *ispence* was the same as that indicated in the *kanunname* of the *vilayet* of Mora of 1716.

Taking into consideration the suppositions made so far, we can conclude that the peasant who was the only tax-liable male in the family and who cultivated one *raiye* *çiftlik* of average productive capacity owed for both the *cizye* and the *ispence* the total sum of 625 *akçes*. The grain surplus, sold at the market for 739 *akçes*, covered this sum, and 114 *akçes* remained.<sup>24</sup> However, there were still other cash payments that the peasant had

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history of Dobrudja and North-Eastern Bulgaria] (Sofia 1981), 58-61; A. Matkovski, *Крпеноштитвото во Македонија во време на турското владеење* [Serfdom in Macedonia under Ottoman rule] (Skopje 1978), 335-336. See also S. Faroqi, ‘Migration into Eighteenth-Century “Greater Istanbul” as Reflected in the *Kadı* Registers of Eyüp’, *Turcica*, 30 (1998), 163-183; N. Ergin, ‘The Albanian *tellâk* Connection: Labor Migration to the Hammams of Eighteenth-Century Istanbul, Based on the 1752 *İstanbul Hamâmları Defteri*’, *Turcica*, 43 (2011), 231-256.

21 This amount includes the additional sums the *cizye* taxpayer had to pay for the salary and living expenses of the people who were involved in the tax collection and for the service of the central department of *cizye*. Their remuneration was to be paid from the *cizye* revenues collected and delivered at the *cizye* department. About the procedure for distribution of the *cizye* revenues and the payment of the remuneration by the Treasury see, for example, NLCM, Or. Dept. (Sofia), f. 214A, a. u. 233; 145A, a. u. 108; OAK 206/3; BOA, D.CMH 26768; E. Grozdanova, ‘Налог джизье’, 179-204, 217-232; *EP*, s.v. ‘Djizya’ (H. İnalçık), 564-565.

22 Barkan, *Kanunlar*, 327. For the monetary equivalent of the *ispence* during the fifteenth-sixteenth century see: J. Alexander, *Toward a History of Post-Byzantine Greece: The Ottoman Kanunnames for the Greek Lands, circa 1500 - circa 1600* (Athens 1985), 414-426.

23 In 1646, the peasants from the *kaza* of Nevrokop, for instance, complained because in violation of the law, through violence and pressure, they were requested to pay 120 *akçe* for the *ispence* instead of the legal 25 *akçe*. See *Mühimme Defteri* 90, ed. M. Tulum (Istanbul 1993), 108, doc. 131; E. Radushev, *Помаците: християнство и ислям в Западните Родопи с долината на р. Места, XV-30-те години на XVIII век* [The Pomaks: Christianity and Islam in the Western Rhodope mountains and the valley of the Mesta river from the fifteenth century to the 1730s], Part 1 (Sofia 2005), 100; Also see S. Asdrachas, ‘Le surplus rural dans les régions de Méditerranée orientale: les mécanismes’ in *Actes du IIe Colloque International d’histoire. Economies méditerranéennes équilibres et intercommunications XIIIe-XIXe siècles*, Vol. 2 (Athens 1986), 32.

24 In fact, from this sum must be deducted the market taxes which were due from the peasant when selling the grain at the city market. Thus, the *kanunname* of the *vilayet* of Mora stipulates that the market taxes should amount to one *akçe* for every load of wheat and one *akçe* for every two loads of *kara tereke* brought into the market by a mule or a donkey. (*Faslı bac-i bazar*

to make – the levies of the *avarız* category, the local taxes, household expenses, and others. Available sources do not allow us to estimate their rate, which varied depending on the needs of the central treasury and local authorities.<sup>25</sup> Yet, it is clear that the remaining sum calculated above could not meet them completely.

This conclusion is similar to the one reached by Spyros Asdrachas about grain production in the Peloponnesian villages based on the data in a detailed (*mufassal*) *tapu defter* dating from the second half of the fifteenth century.<sup>26</sup> Asdrachas's study reveals that before the payment of the *cizye* and the *ispence*, the grain production in the villages had a surplus. But after subtracting from this surplus the amount necessary for the payment of the two above-mentioned taxes, it becomes clear that the remaining grain was not sufficient for the family subsistence. This means that the production with a surplus was transformed into production with a deficit.<sup>27</sup> One can evaluate in a similar way the harvest in one *raiye* *çift* of average productivity in the *kazas* of Arkadia and Anavarin, though with one substantial qualification. In their case, even after the payment of the *cizye* and the *ispence* there still remained a grain surplus. A potential deficit risk occurred only when the remainder from the surplus had to meet all other levies of the *avarız* category and the new set of provincial taxes, which, since the late sixteenth century onwards, were transformed from extra-ordinary into regular levies. Their inclusion in the annual tax list of villagers created a possibility of transforming the average *çift* from a surplus-making production unit into a deficit-accruing one.<sup>28</sup>

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[...] *Katır ve himar ile buğday ve mercimek ve bakla gelse yükden birer akçe kara tereke gelse iki yükden birer akçe alınur*). Moreover the vendor had to pay one *akçe* per eight *kile* of wheat and barley as a tax of *ihtisab* (*Faṣl-ı ihtisab*:[...] *ve bir kimesne satmak için arpa ve boğday getirse muhtesibden kile alub fûruht olundukda ne mikdar ise sekiz kilede bir akçe alınur*). Barkan, *Kanunlar*, 330.

- 25 We can refer to sums of cash taxes as part of the *avarız* group (*avarız-ı divaniye*) collected in some administrative regions of Anatolia during the seventeenth century. The data are published by Süleyman Demirci, whose research focuses on the *avarız* taxes imposed on the taxpayers in the province of Karaman between 1628 and 1700. The author claims that the most common total sum collected from the two basic taxes included in the *avarız* levies, namely the *avarız akçesi* (400 *akçes*) and *bedel-i nüzul* (600 *akçes*), amounted to 1,000 *akçes* per fiscal unit – *avarızhane*. The *avarızhane* comprised the average number of 11 real households, which paid annually 90.9 *akçes* per household. The average values of the sums due for both taxes of the whole period under investigation amount to 951.86 *akçe* per *avarızhane* and 86.5 *akçes* per household. S. Demirci, *The Functioning*, 95-122.
- 26 The preserved part of the *defter* includes villages and *mezraas* in the *nahiyes* of Halandritsa, Sandameri, Grebena, Holomiç, Vumero, as well as some villages in the *nahiyes* of Patra, Arkadia, Kalavryta, Livadia, and Londar. P. Asenova, R. Stoykov, T. Kashori, 'Селищни, лични и фамилни имена от Северозападен Пелопонес през средата на XV в.' [Settlement, personal and family names of the North-Western Peloponnese in the middle of the fifteenth century], *Yearbook of the Sofia University. Faculty of Slavonic Philologies*, 68/3 (1977), 211-297.
- 27 Asdrachas, 'Le surplus rural', 32-40.
- 28 Here we need to state that the conclusions we have reached concerning the possibility that the grain surplus in the average *raiye* *çift* could cover cash taxes coincide completely with those of S. Asdrachas regarding the short period of time when the adult, unmarried and landless son,



Thus the theoretical constructs, based on the specific source information, reveal that the peasant from the South-West Peloponnese, cultivating the lands of an average *çift*, had to make additional income by tilling more fields and sowing more grain, or, if cultivating only one *çift*, to grow other – cash-crops, and/or raise livestock. Their marketable surpluses had to cover the deficit of means necessary to pay the full amount of cash taxes and obtain from the market the goods necessary for the household.

### *Agrarian Strategies in the Micro-Economy of Different Types of Villages*

These two approaches to solving the problem with the supposed deficit of monetary means were in fact only some of the possible solutions which the peasant or the rural community could put into practice. The Ottoman register reveals that the actual situation offered more options. Depending on the ecological characteristics of the environment, the region consisted of several types of villages. Their villagers had different economic behaviour and they had adopted different agrarian strategies in structuring the village micro-economy. The Ottoman authorities were aware of this variety of economic solutions. This is what made them undertake the 'preliminary investigation' on the basis of which the villages' expected revenues were estimated. The data collected and recorded by the authorised officials during the registration process illustrate to what extent their efforts were justified. As already shown, the quantity of sown grain, the reaped crop, the share and the cash equivalent of the surplus varied significantly (Table 1). The harvest gathered from the vineyards, the olive trees, and the fields sown with cotton varied too, depending on the yield ratio of the crops in the respective territories.<sup>29</sup>

Below we will outline the major agrarian strategies in the micro-economy of different types of settlements in accordance with their ecological characteristics and the productive capacity of the *raiye* *çiftlik*s. A choice of four villages which illustrate the respective agrarian strategies has been made in conformity with the choice of the Ottoman registrar. They are among the villages considered by him to be typical and a 'model' to explain the fertility of the agricultural crops grown in the respective territories. The chosen villages were bearers of the specific features that distinguished one group of settlements from another.<sup>30</sup> Thus, by taking into consideration both the evaluations of the Ottoman registrar and seeking the typology of each group, we will try to find out the specificity of the economic behaviour of the peasants living in villages situated in the plain, on the mountain, or in the semi-mountainous and hilly areas.<sup>31</sup>

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who had already become tax liable, but still lived in his father's home. During this period the production of the average *çift* was in a deficit state as early as the stage of paying the *cizye* and the *ispence*, which both father and son had to pay.

29 Parveva, 'Agrarian Land and Harvest', 75-77, 95-96; Zarinebaf, Bennet, and Davis, *A Historical and Economic Geography*, 179-188.

30 Parveva, 'Agrarian Land and Harvest', 64, 86.

31 The landscape of the administrative district (*territorio*) under Venetian rule with Arkadia as its centre, which after 1715 became again the *kaza* of Arkadia, had the following characteristics: of an area of 945 sq. km., 29.3 per cent was flat, 29.7 per cent hilly, and 41 per cent mountainous,

### *The Villages in the Plain: Filiatra*

In the village of Filiatra the registrar found 274 adult men, recorded in 168 households. Apart from them, there were also six widows.<sup>32</sup> The numerous inhabitants of the village in the plain (*ova*) used to the maximum the fertility of its surrounding lands and the advantages of the town markets and ports a short distance away. They divided the arable land between the crops that provided for their food and those that were produced primarily for the market. The high level of productivity of the *raiye* *çiftlik*s in Filiatra and similar settlements in the plain provided sufficient quantities of grain for the family subsistence, the reproduction of the crop, the payment of the tithes, and a rather significant marketable surplus. The share of the grain surplus there varied between 32% and 45% of the total harvest, and its monetary valuation often exceeded 1,000 *akçe* (Table 1). As far as the farmers from Filiatra are concerned, it becomes clear that they sowed around 20 *kiles* of wheat and *kara tereke* in their *çifts*, but they reaped about seven times more grain (3,490 kg). The surplus which remained in the barn constituted 45% of the harvest. It amounted to 1,559 kg. of grain and could bring the peasant an income of 1,823 *akçes*. Obviously, this sum could cover all his cash payments related to taxation and the family's supply of goods obtained from the market. The sum suggests that in a regular year, this surplus would allow the peasant to make additional investments in his farm (Table 1). This is why the produc-

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as the area under cultivation was 41.5 per cent. The respective figures for the district of Anavarin (Navarino) were the following: of an area of 170 sq. km., 44.1 per cent was flat, 55.9 per cent hilly, as the area under cultivation was 57.1 per cent of its territory. V. Panagiotopoulos, *Πληθυσμός και οικισμοί της Πελοποννήσου, 13ος-18ος αιώνας* [Population and settlements in Peloponnese, thirteenth-eighteenth Century], (Athens 1985), 176-177. The estimates given by the Ottoman registering clerk about the peculiarities of the landscape of every village territory are in accordance with these characteristics of the landscape of the region under investigation. For each and every village he wrote a short note, categorising the landscape of the village territory in the following way: *karye-i mezbur ova* *dır* or just *ova* *dır* – literally meaning “the village referred to is a plain”; *ova* *dır* *vasat* or *vasat üzere ova* *dır* – “this is middle plain” – perhaps the clerk meant a hilly landscape; *dağ* *dır* – “this is mountain”; *dağ* *dır* *vasat* or *vasat üzere dağ* *dır* – “this is middle mountain”, perhaps a semi-mountainous landscape. Thus in the constructs given above we assume that the term *vasat* determines the specificities of the landscape of the village territory, used to distinguish the villages in the plain and in the mountain from those situated in the transitional zones in between them. In the translation of a part from the *defter* concerning the *kaza* of Anavarin, F. Zarinebaf interprets the term *vasat* as characteristic of the soil in the village territory – she translates the construction *dağ* *dır* *vasat* as “Mountain; medium-quality land” or *vasat üzere ova* *dır* as “It is on a plain. It is medium-quality (land)”. Zarinebaf, Bennet, and Davis, *A Historical and Economic Geography*, 56-110. This decision of hers has not been supported by the information about the yield ratio of the crops in the respective village territories. The estimates of the yield ratio of the various types of grain recorded in the villages defined by Zarinebaf as having middle quality of land are also typical of the village territories situated both in the plain (*ova* *dır*) and on the mountain (*dağ* *dır*). What is more, some settlements in the plain have an even lower yield grain ratio than others that have been recorded as villages of middle-quality land as translated by Zarinebaf. The maps and the photos of the villages and their surroundings included in the book do not support the author's thesis either. Ibid., 111-209.

32 BOA, TD 880, ff. 18-26.



tion of grain was one of the foci in the micro-economy of Filiatra. In the village territory there were 56 *raiye*t çiftliks under cultivation. However, the arable land in the village did not satisfy the needs of all the families. This forced them to cultivate the fields of other 25 çifts, which were situated on the territory of neighbouring villages and mezraas.<sup>33</sup> Some of the peasants from Filiatra were even left landless. Very few (only five households) possessed more than one – up to three çifts – in the village territory. Figures show that on average there was 0.5 çift of land per family. However, because of the high fertility of the soils, even the area of a half çift could feed one average farmer's family from Filiatra; in addition, it could provide a small grain surplus (319 kg.), which brought in income (373 akçes) to cover part of the cash taxes (Table 1, 2-2A; Table 3, Appendix).

Another significant sector in the micro-economy of Filiatra and the other similar villages was the production of cash crops – vineyards, olive-trees, citrus, and other fruit-bearing trees, cotton, flax, mulberry trees for feeding the silkworms, and others. Undoubtedly, the successful market realisation of their harvest and the processed products was profitable. The average number per family was 7.7 dönüms of vineyard,<sup>34</sup> 18 olive trees,<sup>35</sup> 5 lidres of flax, cotton<sup>36</sup> and cocoons (Table 2a).

33 The annual grain produce which the villagers of Filiatra gained from the çifts in the village territory and those in the neighbouring villages and mezraas was 282,690 kg. total. The average quantity per household was 1,683 kg, and per adult male 1,032 kg.

34 According to the explanatory notes recorded in the defter, the average yield ratio of grapes per one dönüm of vineyard in the village of Filiatra was 300 okkas (385 kg.). The money valuation of one okka of grapes was one akçe. BOA, TD 880, f. 26. This means that the 1,298 dönüms of vineyards registered in the village yielded an average annual harvest of 499,730 kg. of grapes. The grapes were processed in the two grape presses (*mengene-i angûr*) available in the village.

35 As for the yield ratio of the olive groves in Filiatra, the registrar recorded that the average annual yield ratio of olives per tree (in the document, root – *dib*) was 40 okkas. Twenty okkas were subtracted from the total for those trees which did not produce in the current year, thus taking into account the alternation of poor and rich olive harvests. For that reason, the expected production of olive oil per tree is calculated on the basis of a yield ratio of 20 okkas of olives and is thus considered to be about three okkas of oil on the average. The money valuation of one okka of olive oil is 12 akçes. BOA, TD 880, f. 26. The text refers to the natural phenomenon that olives tend to bear fruit largely in alternate years. However, the revenues expected from the crops were calculated on an annual basis. Probably, bearing in mind the biennial fruiting cycle of the olive tree, the official divided the harvest in order to estimate the annual revenue from the olive oil and its cash equivalent. For this practice see for example: *Voyage en Grèce, de Xavier Scrofanî, sicilien, fait en 1794 et 1795. Traduit de l'italien, par J. F. C. Blanvillain*, Vol. 3 (Paris-Strasbourg 1801), 3-4, 33-34. On the basis of these explanations, provided by the registrar, we could assume that for one biennial fruiting cycle the 2,964 olive trees recorded in the territory of Filiatra could yield 118,560 okkas of olives, out of which 17,784 okkas of olive oil could be produced. For the processing of the olives and the production of olive oil the peasants had at their disposal nine oil mills (*asyab-i revğan*).

36 As for the yield ratio of the cotton (*penbe*) in the village of Filiatra, the registrar recorded that the cotton sown in a field (*tarla*) of one *evlek* yielded the average of 10 lidres of cotton. The money valuation of one *lidre* of cotton was 10 akçes. BOA, TD 880, f.26. One *evlek* was equal to a quarter of a dönüm. See H. İnalçık, 'Weights and Measures', 988-989. The annual cotton

The data on the landholdings of the families in Filiatra reveal that the peasants who had no grain-cultivating fields could be characterised in two major ways (Table 3, Appendix). The first group possessed small to middle-size (from 1 to 3-8 *dönüms*) or very large (between 10 and 25 *dönüms*) vineyards or between 4-5 to 30-40 olive trees. The second group had no landholdings or livestock to bring them income. Obviously, these were the poor inhabitants of the village who cultivated the land of their well-to-do fellow-villagers, who in addition to *çifts* possessed vineyards, olive groves, and some of them oil-presses or livestock. In this connection we need to emphasise that the leading incentive behind the economic initiative of the peasant who cultivated a *çift* of land was not the pressure to increase his small grain surplus. As has already been pointed out, the high fertility of the soils in the territory of Filiatra and the other similar villages in the plain provided a sufficient quantity of grain surplus in the farmer's barn. Therefore, he expanded his agrarian activity by cultivating additional crops – not to gain sufficient means to meet the cash rent, but, rather, motivated by the possibilities for a profitable return on invested labour and capital. The rich gamut of cultivated cash crops points to the *stimuli* created by the market for the peasant in this type of settlement. The income he could receive by selling his agrarian surpluses was the incentive to develop multi-crop farming.

Apart from the arable lands, the peasants from Filiatra possessed pasture grounds where they had built winter quarters – *kışlaks*. They were used more often by 'outside' stock-breeders, who sought appropriate conditions for the winter period for their stock. The inhabitants of Filiatra themselves did not show a particular interest in stock-breeding. On average, a family had 2 sheep and 0.2 pigs. Very few peasants bred between 20 and 100 sheep, and 1-2 pigs. Obviously, the peasants from Filiatra relied on the market for their supplies of dairy products, meat, wool, and hides. Beekeeping also had a certain place in this sector of the village economy. For the production of honey and wax they maintained 70 beehives in the village (Tables 2-2A; Table 3, Appendix).

In addition to the agrarian sector discussed above, the micro-economy of the village included the crafts sector – what is more, crafts beyond the ones practised in domestic conditions and related to the processing of agricultural and livestock produce. A small-scale 'industry' for the production of building materials was organised, with two lime-kilns (*firun-ı kireç*) and two tile-kilns (*firun-ı kiremid*) functioning in the village. Besides, the peasants from Filiatra grew 529 mulberry trees to feed the silkworms. Annually the peasants produced 150 *lidres* (64 kg.) of cocoons, out of which raw silk was drawn. The villagers had two silk presses (*mengene-i harir*)<sup>37</sup> for its processing. The money valuation of one *lidre* of silk (*ipek*) of average quality (*vasatü'l-hal*) produced in the village was 150 *akçes*.

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harvest recorded in the *defter*, which amounted to 450 *lidres* (192 kg.), allows us to calculate the area of this crop sown by the peasants as equivalent to 11.25 *dönüms*.

37 This is a machine, known in European production practices by the term 'calender', in which the processed material (cloth, paper) is made smooth and glossy by being pressed between plates or rollers. See also N. Beldiceanu, I. Beldiceanu-Steinherr, 'Recherches sur la Morée (1461-1512)', *SF*, 39 (1980), 50.

**Table 2:** List of taxable objects and harvest in the villages of Filiatra, Varibobi, Christianu, and Mali

Taxable object *	Number and quantity			
	Village in the plain: Filiatra	Village in the hilly area: Varibobi	Village in the semi-mountainous area: Christianu	Village on the mountain: Mali
Adult male non-Muslim inhabitants	274	13	18	29
Wheat [arable land]	81 <i>çifts</i> <sup>38</sup>	26.5 <i>çifts</i>	10 <i>çifts</i>	20.5 <i>çifts</i>
Vineyards	1,298 <i>dönüms</i>	20 <i>dönüms</i>	28 <i>dönüms</i>	
Grape presses ( <i>mengene-i angûr</i> )	2			
Olive trees	2,964	35	133	
Oil mills ( <i>asyab-ı revğan</i> )	9			
Mulberry trees	529		12	
Cocoons	150 <i>lidres</i> ; 1 <i>lidre</i> = 133 <i>dirhem</i> <sup>39</sup>			
Silk presses ( <i>mengene-i harir</i> )	2			
Cotton	450 <i>lidres</i>		75 <i>lidres</i>	
Flax	300 <i>lidres</i>		25 <i>okkas</i>	
Lemon and orange trees	123			
Fig trees	163			
Pear and apple trees	51	2		
Various fruit-bearing trees	200			
Walnut trees	–			3

38 The people of the village of Filiatra possessed 56 *çifts* in the village territory and 25 *çifts* in the territories of several neighbouring villages and *mezraas*. BOA, TD 880, f. 26.

39 One *dirhem* (Ottoman standard) was equal to 3.207 g. İnalçık, 'Weights and Measures', 988.

Acorns of the valonia oak ( <i>palamud</i> )	30 <i>kiles</i>			
Beehives	70	3	30	13
Pigs	29	3	15	30
Sheep	410	250	245	745
Winter quarters / pastures ( <i>kışlak</i> )	5		3	
Mills	1	1		
Tile-kiln ( <i>furun-ı kiremid</i> )	2			
Lime-kiln ( <i>furun-ı kireç</i> )	2			

- \* The registrar wrote the last part of the inventory of each settlement in the same manner as his colleague who had compiled the classical *mufassal tapu tahrir defters* until the end of the sixteenth century. This means that he recorded the names of all tithes and taxes levied upon the peasants' economic activity (agriculture, stock-breeding, crafts) as well as the agrarian infrastructure in the village – water-mills, fulling-mills, oil presses, wine-presses, silk-presses, and others. But instead of writing down the valuation of the taxes in kind or money, he presented in an overall manner the number and area of the taxable objects and lands or the prognosticated quantities of the harvest expected from them. The columns related to a series of other taxes, concerning the harvest of broad beans, lentils, vegetable gardens, fodder, or marriage taxes and others, were not filled in.

All evidence given so far presents Filiatra as a model of the type of village where the inhabitants had created a complex micro-economy. The landholdings in the territory demonstrate the primary importance given to the multi-crop farming, which included: first, basic grain production for household subsistence and, second, cash crops with high marketable profitability of the raw and processed product – vineyards, olives, fruit, and others. A secondary place in the economic activity of the peasants within the framework of the agrarian sector was given to stock-breeding, where the emphasis fell on the arrangement and maintenance of pastures for wintering the stock of outside stock-breeders. Furthermore, the villagers of Filiatra maintained small-scale 'industries' for the production of building materials and raw silk, which formed another sector in the micro-economy of the village and generated revenues for the Treasury (Table 2; Table 3, Appendix).

### *Villages in the Mountains: Mali*

The profile of the economic activity of the peasants from the mountain village of Mali was different.<sup>40</sup> In Mali, 29 adult men, members of 27 households, were recorded. In ad-

40 The registrar recorded the following about the village: *karye-i mezbur dağdır*. BOA, TD 880, f.42.

dition, five widows were registered as living there. The agrarian spheres in which the villagers' efforts were concentrated were grain production and stock-breeding. In the village territory there were 20.5 *raiye*t *çiftlik*s under cultivation.<sup>41</sup> The cereal harvest was particularly important for feeding the family in the mountains; therefore every family tried to cultivate the land of at least one *çift*. The efforts of the mountain farmer were not rewarded with an abundant harvest. The lower fertility of the soils in the uplands provided for a much smaller surplus in his barn in comparison with the surplus remaining for the peasant living in the plain. The peasant from Mali sowed in his *çift* a total of 13 *kiles* of wheat, barley, oats, and millet. During harvest he usually gathered in a 5.3 times bigger crop, amounting to 69 *kiles* (1,770 kg.). This gave him a small surplus of grain - only 266 kg. (15% of the harvest), which could bring him 241 *akçes* (Table 1). This sum covered only a small part of what was necessary to pay cash taxes.

The second sphere in the agrarian activity of the peasant from the mountain was stock-breeding. For him it was the primary source of marketable surplus. The man on the mountain relied on dairy products, meat, wool, and hides for his monetary income. Seventy per cent of the households in Mali (excluding the widows) bred 20 to 100 head of sheep (on average, 28 sheep per household). The number of houses where pigs were bred was the same. In addition to the above-mentioned domestic animals, the peasant of Mali bred horses, donkeys, and cows<sup>42</sup> (Table 2; Table 6, Appendix). Horses and donkeys were of great significance for the mountain-dweller. Only with their help could he travel through the mountains where there were no roads and carry his surplus production to the plain or the town markets. When ecological conditions permitted, in some of the settlements designated by the Ottoman registrar as mountainous, the peasants also cultivated small areas of vineyards or olive-trees.<sup>43</sup> In most cases, however, the quantity of their crop generated no surpluses; rather, it was meant to meet the demands of the family.

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41 The cereal harvest gathered from the fields of the village amounted to 36,285 kg. of grain in total. The average quantity per household was 1,344 kg. and per adult male - 1,251 kg.

42 The registrar began to record this kind of livestock - horses, mares, donkeys, and cows - from folio 41 of the *defter* onwards, without being very consistent in that regard. This means that the inhabitants of villages in the plain such as Filiatra and Gargalian, for example, whose lists are recorded before f. 41 of the *defter*, certainly bred cattle on their farms - just like the peasants in other villages in the plain, recorded in the later part of the *defter*.

43 For example, see the villages of Podemenu (mod. Flesias), Viristia, Raftopulo, Lendekada (mod. Rodia), and others, BOA, TD 880, ff. 37, 43, 44.

**Table 2a:** Average values\* of landholdings, livestock, and production of flax, cotton, and cocoons per household in the villages of Filiatra, Varibobi, Christianu, and Mali

Village	Number of households (without widows)	<i>çifts</i>	Vineyard <i>dönüms</i>	Olive trees	Sheep	Pigs	Beehives	Flax, cotton, cocoons <i>lidres</i>
Filiatra	168	0.5	7.7	18	2	0.2	0.4	5
Varibobi	11	2.4	1.8	3	23	0.3	0.3	—
Christianu	18	0.6	1.6	7	14	0.8	1.7	8
Mali	27	0.8	—	—	28	1.1	0.5	—

\* The average figures of the landholdings (*çifts*, vineyards, and olive trees) of the peasants in Filiatra have been calculated on the basis of their quantitative parameters as presented in Table 2. They differ from the ones in Table 3 (Appendix) because in addition to the fields, the vineyards, and the olive-trees recorded for each household, they include those recorded as “*Emlâk-i Venedik*” (Venetian property). The latter are said to be in the hands (*der yed*) of the villagers, and almost every property is given the name of its current possessor.<sup>44</sup> That means that the figures in Table 2 reflect more fully the quantitative parameters of the lands and the crops cultivated by the peasants on the village territory. They give the total sum of the number of *çifts*, olive-trees, and *dönüms* of vineyards, as recorded by the registrar in the sum total of the village inventory of Filiatra.

### *Villages in the Hilly and Semi-Mountainous Area: Varibobi and Christianu*

In between the two types of agrarian strategies adopted by the peasants in the plain and in the mountains, there existed variants that were typical of the settlements in the hilly and semi-mountainous area. They combined basic features from the micro-economies of Filiatra and Mali. Depending on the specific ecological conditions, the reclaimed lands in their territories presented combined forms, as the emphasis fell to a different extent on grain production, cash crops, or on animal husbandry.

A good example in this respect is the village of Varibobi (mod. Manastiri).<sup>45</sup> As the registrar has noted, it is situated in the “middle plain” (*ovadır vasat*), which perhaps means having a hilly landscape. Eleven households with 13 adult men and three widows were registered in it. The grain yield ratio in the village was lower than the average for the region – one sown *kile* of wheat yielded only four *kiles*, and one *kile kara tereke* five. In one *çift* the peasants sowed 15 *kiles* of grain and gained 4.5 times more – 67 *kiles* (1,719 kg.). From this harvest there remained an insignificant surplus of 168 kg., which constituted 10% of the reaped grain. After being sold on the market, it brought the peasant only 164 *akçes* (Table 1). The village households (with the exception of those of the

44 For details on the arranging of information in the *deFTER* see in Parveva, ‘Agrarian Land and Harvest’, 62-64; Zarinebaf, Bennet, and Davis, *A Historical and Economic Geography*, 56-110.

45 BOA, TD 880, f. 45.

widows) overcame this low grain yield and the extremely inadequate cash income from the surplus by cultivating more than one *çift* of land. Almost all villagers sowed the fields of 2-2.5 *raiye*t *çiftlik*s. One family is recorded to have possessed even 6 *çift*s, which were cultivated probably by hired seasonal labourers. In the village there was a total number of 26.5 *çift*s under cultivation.<sup>46</sup> The peasants from Varibobi augmented their income mostly by vine-growing and sheep-breeding. Most of the families owned between 2 and 5 *dönü*ms of vineyards (at an average of 1.8 *dönü*ms per household) as well as 10 to 50 sheep (at an average of 23 sheep per household). Very few peasants were engaged in bee-keeping, bred cows and pigs, or cultivated olive groves; one of the farmers possessed a mill (Tables 2, 2a; Table 4, Appendix).

In the semi-mountainous (*vasat üzere dağdır*) village of Christianu (mod. Christianoupoli)<sup>47</sup> there were 18 adult men, all of them heads of households. The peasants were involved in a wider circle of agrarian activities: they cultivated grain, vineyards, olives, cotton, flax; they had flocks and herds, and were engaged in bee-keeping. Only 10 *çift*s were cultivated in the village.<sup>48</sup> The *raiye*t *çiftlik* in this type of villages was also characterised by a low yield of grain: from the sown 15 *kiles* of wheat, barley, oats, millet, and rye, the peasant gained about 4.9 times bigger harvest amounting to 73 *kiles* (1,873 kg.) of grain. It provided him with a small surplus of 299 kg., which constituted 16% of the reaped grain at the value of 272 *akçe*s (Table 1). The peasants of Christianu added to this small surplus the ones produced in their vineyards (at an average of 1.6 *dönü*ms per family), olive groves (7 trees per family), fields of cotton,<sup>49</sup> and flax (8 *lidres* per family), as well as the surplus from sheep breeding (14 head per household), beekeeping, and other activities. The extent of the arable land, the heads of livestock, and the number of beehives suggest that most of the families produced enough to satisfy their subsistence needs and get cash income to pay their taxes. Only one or two of all the peasants, who combined on their farms grain cultivation, animal husbandry, and beekeeping, could expect bigger surpluses (Tables 2-2a; Table 5, Appendix).

The analysis of the agrarian activities of the peasants in the last two villages reveals that the micro-economy functioning there resembled in its structural characteristics the micro-economy of the villages in the plain. Yet, there was a difference of principle between the two. It was predetermined by the productive capacity of the *raiye*t *çiftlik* on their territories. As we have already seen, the fertility of the soils provided the peasant from Filiatra with sufficient marketable grain surplus to meet his needs for monetary means. In all other agrarian initiatives which he undertook, he was stimulated by the mar-

46 The annual grain production in the village was 45,554 kg. total. The average quantity per household was 4,141 kg., and per adult male – 3,504 kg.

47 BOA, TD 880, f. 64.

48 The annual grain crop from the ploughed lands in the village was 18,730 kg. The average quantity per household was 1,041 kg. of grain.

49 The small extent of the lands on which cotton, vineyards, and olives were cultivated in the villages of Christianu and Varibobi is possibly the reason why the registrar failed to record the annual yield ratio of these crops – unlike the information given on the yield ratio of the various types of grain sown in one *çift* in their territories.



ket, by the possibility for profit and new investments in the farm. Unlike him, the peasant from Varibobi and Christianu was forced to sow more land with cereals and seek income from additional crops and stockbreeding because of the low yield ratio of the grain and the insufficient harvest from the fields. The surpluses expected from them he offered on the market with the basic purpose of getting cash income with which he could meet his tax dues.

\* \* \*

We may conclude that the demographic and economic potential of the villages was formed in accordance with the ecological characteristics and resources of the territory. To a great extent it was also influenced by the incentives offered by the local and regional economic infrastructure – markets, ports, roads. These factors created for the peasants differing potentials for producing and realising marketable surpluses by adopting strategies in forming the agrarian micro-economy of their settlements adequate for the environment. In the populous and fertile villages in the plain, which were close to town markets and ports and whose land produced a large grain surplus, villagers created a complex economy that combined multi-crop farming, animal husbandry, and in addition, small-scale ‘industries’ related to the production of building materials and raw silk. Unlike them, because of the restrictions of the natural resources and the smaller harvest from the *çift*, people in the mountain villages usually focused their agrarian activity on grain production and livestock-breeding. Between these two types of agrarian strategies, there existed a range of varieties that were characteristic of the settlements in the semi-mountain and hilly areas. The reclaimed land in their territories displayed various combinations of grain production, cultivation of cash crops, and/or animal husbandry.

## APPENDIX

Table 3: Property and land possession\* of the villagers of Filiatra

Household	House	Number of <i>çifts</i>	Vineyard <i>dönüms</i>	Olive trees	Pigs	Sheep	Oil mill ( <i>asyab-ı revğan</i> )
<b>Mahalle Mihano</b>							
m** + 1 s**	1	1	15	20			
m + 3 s	1	1	20	10	2		1
m	1						1
m + 2 s	1	1	10	160	2		
m + 2 s	1	2	25	100			1
m + 2 s	1	1	20	20	1		
m + 1 s	1						
m	1						
m + 1 s	1	1	10	8	1		
m	1						
m + 1 b**	1						
m + 2 b	1	1	10	8			
m	1						
m + 1 b	1	1	8	5			
m + 1 b	1						
m + 2 s	1	1	15	15			
m + 2 s	1	1	7	10			
m	1						
m + 1 s	1	1	1	17			
m	1						
m	1	½	4	60			
m + 2 s	1	1	20	20			
m	1	1	10	54			
m + 1 b	1						
m + 1 s + 2 b	1	1	10	30	1		
m	1	1	4	4	1		
m + 1 s + 1 b	1	½	4	4			
m			2	3			
m + 1 s	1		2			20	
m	1		3	6			

\* The table includes the properties of the households, recorded by the registrar in the first part of the *defter* of the village. Apart from these, some households perhaps possessed and cultivated fields, vineyards, and olive groves which were recorded in a separate rubric as “*Emlâk-i Venedik*” (Venetian property). For part of these Venetian properties the registrar has written the name of the peasant in whose hands (*der yed*) they happened to be at the moment of registration. He added them into the total recapitulation of the lands and the other agrarian properties in the village. The results, as summed up by the clerk, are given in Table 2.

\*\* m =man, a head of household; s=landless son(s) recorded after the father; b = landless brother of the head of the household who is recorded after him probably as a member of the family.

Household	House	Number of çifts	Vineyard dönüms	Olive trees	Pigs	Sheep	Oil mill ( <i>asyab-ı revğan</i> )
m + 1 b	1	1	5	8			
m + 1 b	1						
m	1						
m + 1 b	1	1	5			100	
m	1	1					
m	1						
m	1	1	15	10			
m	1		5	15			
widow			4				
church			10	50			
church			5	8			
<b>Mahalle Lagta (?)</b>							
m		1					
m	1	1	20	10		30	
m	1						
m	1	½	8	15			
m + 1 s	1						
m	1	1	7	8	1		
m	1						
m	1						
m + 2 b + 1 son of his brother	1		8	15	1		
m + 2 s	1		10	25	1		
m	1						
m + 2 s	1	1	15	20			
m + 1 s	1	1	25	20	2		
m	1						
m + 2 s + 1 b			4				
m + 1 s	1	1	5	10	1		
m + 1 s	1	1	4	10	1		
m	1	½	4	10			
m + 1 s	1	1	12	14	2		
m + 1 b	1						
m + 1 b	1				2		
m + 1 b	1						
m	1						
m	1	½					
m			3	8			
m + 1 b	1	½					
m	1	1	2	7			
m	1						
m	1						
m							

Household	House	Number of <i>çifts</i>	Vineyard <i>dönüms</i>	Olive trees	Pigs	Sheep	Oil mill ( <i>asyab-ı revğan</i> )
m	1		2				
m							
m	1	½	6	10			
widow			6	10			
widow			1				
widow				5			
church			2				
<b>Mahalle Domasano</b>							
m	1	1	10	6			
m + 1 s	1	1	15	40	2		
m + 1 s	1						
m + 1 s	1	1	18	45	3		
m	1						
m + 2 s	1	1	20	30			
m + 1 s	1	1	5	6			
m + 2 b	1	2	15	15			
m	1						
m							
m	1		5	10			
m + 2 s	1	3	12	30	2	20	
m + 1 b	1						
m	1		15	40			1
m							
m	1						
m	1		25	30			
m + 2 s	1						
m	1	1	10	20			
m	1						
m + 1 s + 1 b	1	1	20	60			
m + 2 s	1		2	10			
m	1						1
m + 1 b	1						
m	1						
m + 1 s	1	½	10	7	1		
m	1						
m	1						
m			3	8			
m	1	1	15	15	2		
m	1	1	15	50			
m + 1 s	1	1	5				
m	1						
m			2				
m	1						
m	1						

Household	House	Number of çifts	Vineyard dönüms	Olive trees	Pigs	Sheep	Oil mill ( <i>asyab-ı revğan</i> )
m	1		2	4			
m			2	2			
m	1						
m	1						
m	1						
m	1						
m	1		2				
m	1		6	8			
m	1	1	4	6			1
m							
m + 1 s	1	1	30	150			1
widow			5				
widow			2	4			
church - monastery			8	15			
church - monastery			15	20			
church - monastery			10	11			
<b>Mahalle Dordan (?)</b>							
m		1					
m + 2 s	1	1	18	30		30	
m + 2 s	1	1	20	40	2	50	
m	1	1	20	30			
m + 2 b	1	1	20	60		60	
m + 1 b	1	1	10	20			
m + 1 b	1	½	18	20			
m + 3 b	1	2	20	50			
m	1	1	6	15			
m							
m + 2 b	1	1	8	40			
m + 3 b	1	1	8	10			
m + 1 b	1	1	10	20		20	
m + 1 s	1	1	15	15			
m			30	6			
m			1	4			
m	1		2				
m	1		2	1			
m			1				
m	1		3	5			
m			2				
m + 1 s + 1 b	1	1	6	6			
m	1	1	15	100			1

→

Household	House	Number of <i>çifts</i>	Vineyard <i>dönüms</i>	Olive trees	Pigs	Sheep	Oil mill ( <i>asyab-ı revğan</i> )
Vineyard in possession of ... ( <i>bağ der yed-i...</i> )			1				
Olive trees in possession of ... ( <i>zeytun der yed-i...</i> )				5			
<b>Mahalle Yortano (?)</b>							
m	1	1	15	15			
m + 1 s	1		15	20			
m	1						
m	1						1
m + 1 s	1	1	30	50			
m + 1 b	1						
m + 1 s	1	1	5	25			
m + 2 s	1	½	6	15	1		
m + 1 s + 1 b	1	1	8	40		100	1
m	1	2	3	50			1
m + 1 b	1						1
m + 1 b	1	1	5	10		80	1
m + 1 b							
m	1						
m			2	3			
m	1						
m	1		6	10			
m + 1 b	1	1	5	10			
m	1	½					
m							
m	1		10	8			
m	1	1					
m							
m	1	½	4	5			
m	1	½	4	5			
m		½	4	9			
m	1						
<i>Vakıfs</i> of the monastery St Yorgi		32 <i>dönüms</i> ( <i>tarla</i> )	15	20	2	12	

\*\*\*The registrar recorded the total extent of the fields (*tarla*) of the *reaya* in the village as 2,783 *dönüms*.

**Table 4:** Property and land possession\* of the villagers of Varibobi

Household	House	Number of <i>çifts</i>	Vineyard <i>dönüms</i>	Olive trees	Sheep	Pigs	Cows	Beehives	Mill
m+ 1 s	1	1,5	2	30	50				1
m	1	2	2		25		2		
m + 1 s	1	2,5	5		30		5		
m	1	6	3	5	30				
m	1	2	2		25				
m	1	2	2		30	1	2		
m	1	2	2		20				
m	1	2	2		10				
m	1	2,5			30			3	
m	1	2							
m	1	2			10	1			
widow	1			2 pear trees					
widow (?)	1					1			
widow	1								

\* The registrar recorded the total extent of the fields (*tarla*) of the *reaya* in the village as 1,500 *dönüms*.

**Table 5:** Property and land possession\* of the villagers of Christianu

Household	House	Number of <i>çifts</i>	Vineyard <i>dönüms</i>	Olive trees	Sheep	Pigs	Cows	Horses	Beehives
m	1	1	6	20	50	2	6	2	5
m	1	5 <i>dönüms tarla</i>			25				5
m	1	1/2	3	20	60	1		1	10
m	1	1/2				2		1	
m	1	1	2	5		1			
m	1	1	1	3		1			
m	1	1	2	6					2
m	1	7 <i>dönüms tarla</i>	1	6					5
m	1	1	2	5		1			
m	1	1	1,5	10		2			
m	1	1/2	2	9		1			
m	1	1	1	6	50	1			3
m	1	1/2	1						
m	1	8 <i>dönüms tarla</i>			50	1			
m	1	1	2	6				1	
m	1	2 <i>dönüms tarla</i>	1,5	5		1			
m	1		2	7		1			
m	1			15					

\* The registrar recorded the total extent of the fields (*tarla*) of the *reaya* in the village as 500 *dönüms*.



**Table 6:** Property and land possession\* of the villagers of Mali

Household	House	Number of <i>çifts</i>	Sheep	Pigs	Horses	Donkeys	Cows	Walnut tree
m	1	1	70				2	1
m	1	1	20	1	1			
m	1	1	20			1	1	
m	1	1		1			1	
m	1	1/2	25	1		1		
m	1	1	20	4				
m	1	1	20	2			2	
m+ 1 s	1	2	100	3	1			
m	1	–	20					
l+ 1 b	1	1	20	1			2	
m	1	1	30	2	1			
m	1	1	30	1		1		
m	1	1	50	2			2	
m	1							
m	1							
m	1	1	50	3			1	
m	1	1	30		1		1	
m	1	1	50	1			1	
m	1	1	30	1		1		
m	1	1	50	1		1		
m	1	1	50	2		1		
m	1							
m	1	2	60	1	1			
m	1						2	
m	1							
m	1			1				
m	1			1				
widow	1			1				
widow	1							
widow	1					1		
widow	1			1				
widow	1						1	

\* The registrar recorded the total extent of the fields (*tarla*) of the *reaya* in the village as 1,200 *dönüms*.

*List of the names of settlements cited in this paper*

Anavarin, town, center of the *kaza*, modern town of Pylos  
Arkadia, town, center of the *kaza*, mod. town of Kyparissia  
Varibobi, village in the *kaza* of Arkadia, mod. village of Manastiri  
Gargalian, village in the *kaza* of Arkadia, mod. town of Gargalianoi  
Lendekada, village in the *kaza* of Arkadia, mod. village of Rodia  
Likudesi, village in the *kaza* of Arkadia, mod. village of Lykoudesi  
Mali, village in the *kaza* of Arkadia, mod. village of Mali  
Pedemenu, village in the *kaza* of Arkadia, mod. village of Flesias  
Raftopulo, village in the *kaza* of Arkadia, mod. village of Raftopulo  
Stelianu, village in the *kaza* of Anavarin, mod. village of Stylianos  
Filiatra, village in the *kaza* of Arkadia, mod. town of Filiatra  
Christianu, village in the *kaza* of Arkadia, mod. village of Christianoupoli  
*Çiftlik* Aklina (Kurd Ağa), *kaza* of Anavarin, mod. village of Iklaina  
*Çiftlik* Ali Hoca, *kaza* of Anavarin, deserted  
*Çiftlik* Pila, *kaza* of Anavarin, mod. village of Pyla  
*Çiftlik* Rüstem Ağa, *kaza* of Anavarin, deserted



# THE QUESTION OF ABANDONED VILLAGES IN OTTOMAN ANATOLIA (SEVENTEENTH TO NINETEENTH CENTURIES)

Oktaý ÖZEL\*

IT HAS BEEN QUITE A LONG TIME SINCE Xavier de Planhol and Wolf Dieter Hütteroth published their pioneering studies outlining the historical changes in settlement patterns of Ottoman Anatolia and addressing the subject of abandoned / lost villages.<sup>1</sup> And it has been nearly 40 years since Suraiya Faroqhi published her study on the same subject, where she reviewed the literature of the time with certain new findings...<sup>2</sup>

Based largely on the extensive work and field research that they carried out in the 1950s and the 1960s, de Planhol and Hütteroth established a historical perspective which still holds its value and developed arguments central to the scholarly debates regarding the historical geography of the Ottoman Empire as well as modern Turkey. De Planhol studied the settlement history of the region from Byzantine Asia Minor and the eleventh century, which marks the invasion of Seljuk Turks, to the mid-twentieth century. In approaching this history, he emphasised the interaction between nomadic and sedentary lifestyle that went hand in hand with agriculture and animal husbandry as two economic systems. De Planhol pointed to the ebbs and flows of this interaction and to its major historical turning-points. He tried to develop a historical understanding and an explanation of the consequences brought about by the pressure that the two lifestyles and economic systems exerted periodically on each other as the main determinants of settlement patterns in rural Anatolia and Syria. It is worth noting in this context that de Planhol drew our attention mainly to the interplay between the moments of expansion and contraction of nomadism and semi-nomadism, certain settlement policies and economic priorities of the Ottoman

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- 1 X. de Planhol, *De la plaine pamphylienne aux lacs pisidiens. Nomadisme et vie paysanne* (Paris 1959); W. D. Hütteroth, *Ländliche Siedlungen im südlichen Inneranatolien in den letzten vierhundert Jahren* (Göttingen 1968).
- 2 S. Faroqhi, 'Anadolu'nun İskânı İle Terkedilmiş Köyler Sorunu', *Türkiye'de Toplumsal Bilim Araştırmalarında Yaklaşım ve Yöntemler* (Ankara 1976), 289-302.

government, and the periods of expansion of agricultural economy. He exemplified this interplay with the case of Turcoman-*Yürüks* and Kurds.<sup>3</sup>

Hütteroth, on the other hand, focused his studies primarily on the transformation and evolution of agricultural economy and settlement patterns, elaborating further the historical framework proposed by de Planhol. He supported his exhaustive field research with the information provided by fifteenth and sixteenth-century tax registers. Hütteroth provided a striking illustration of the contrasting developments witnessed throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the settlement patterns and economies of Syria and Central Anatolia, both being regions dependent mainly on dry farming. To him, the following fundamental global characteristics of sixteenth-century economic and demographic expansion were also experienced in the Ottoman countryside: the expansion of agriculture and the emergence of new villages as extensions of old ones, the former being termed ‘satellite settlements’ in this study by reference to a phenomenon Yunus Koç points to as fragmented villages;<sup>4</sup> an increasing volume of arable fields opened in marginal lands, and finally the settling down of nomadic and semi-nomadic groups who established their first permanent settlements on mountain slopes and in former winter quarters during a period of “pressure exerted by peasantry on nomads”.<sup>5</sup> Hütteroth argued that, along with the political and military instability of the period that followed, which coincided with the great financial crisis of the late sixteenth century, long wars, and widespread Celali violence at the turn of the seventeenth century (climate change and deadly epidemics such as plague have also recently been added to this list<sup>6</sup>) reversed the above tendency, leading eventually to the disruption and radical

3 X. de Planhol, ‘Geography, Politics and Nomadism in Anatolia’, *International Social Science Journal*, 11 (1959), 525-531.

4 Y. Koç, ‘XVI. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Köylerin Parçalanması Sorunu: Bursa Ölçeğinde Bir Araştırma’, *Uluslararası XIII. Türk Tarih Kongresi, 4-8 Ekim 1999, Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, Vol. III/3 (Ankara 2002), 1961-1970. Hütteroth also pointed to such settlements which gained their independence in time, especially in his subsequent study: ‘The Influence of Social Structure on Land Division and Settlement in Inner Anatolia’, in P. Benedict *et al.* (eds), *Turkey: Geographic and Social Perspectives* (Leiden 1974), 19-47.

5 de Planhol, ‘Geography, Politics and Nomadism in Anatolia’, 526.

6 I thank Taylan Akyıldırım for this information he has provided. Also see W. J. Griswold, “Climatic Change: a Possible Factor in the Social Unrest of Seventeenth Century Anatolia,” in H. W. Lowry and D. Quataert (eds.), *Humanist and Scholar: Essays in Honor of Andreas Tietze* (Istanbul and Washington, DC 1993), 37-57. Sam White’s most recent contribution to the study of climate change in the Ottoman Empire in conjunction with the series of great Celali rebellions of the turn of the seventeenth century deserves a special mention here. Making use of a number of contemporary observers and Ottoman archival records, and combining them with the recent dendrochronological findings for the period concerned, White develops a bold argument about the destructive impacts of the perpetual climatic fluctuations of Little Ice Age in that adverse weather conditions at their peak also functioned as a direct cause for the explosions of the greatest of these rebellions in the Anatolian provinces, particularly in the provinces studied by Hütteroth. See S. White, *The Climate of Rebellion in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 2011).

transformation of settlement patterns. In his view, the process of destruction, whose profound and lasting impacts on the settlement patterns in Anatolia were to continue until as late as the nineteenth century, had thus begun in the seventeenth century. A perceptible recovery of rural settlements in Ottoman Anatolia is observed only by the mid nineteenth century, mainly after the 1860s, under totally different circumstances in terms of population and economy.<sup>7</sup>

The critical developments that Hütteroth pointed to and that we tend to interpret within the context of the crisis that the Ottoman Empire underwent in the seventeenth century were the following: violence; dispersal of population; complete disappearance of a large number of rural settlements; agricultural lands being abandoned and left uncultivated; and renomadisation...<sup>8</sup> Hütteroth reached these conclusions on the basis of his research on the examination of Ottoman archival material as well as comprehensive field research that he personally conducted. Tracing particularly the villages mentioned in sixteenth-century *tahrir defters* or tax registers but not in the village lists and maps of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, he found that the majority of these villages had long been abandoned and had fallen into ruins over time.

Hütteroth's studies draw upon relatively limited archival material, consisting mainly of fifteenth and sixteenth-century tax registers, sporadic records in *mühimme registers* (outgoing imperial orders) and *sicils* (court registers) from the subsequent periods. As far as the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries are concerned, Hütteroth could not benefit from the great potential of *mufassal avarız* and *cizye* registers (registers of extraordinary taxes imposed on all subjects and head-tax paid by non-Muslims), the existence of which he only sensed but did not know of for certain,<sup>9</sup> and which he, therefore, could not use. Neither was Hütteroth able to use the registers of population surveys of the early

7 Hütteroth, *Ländliche Siedlungen*. See also, idem, "Ecology of the Ottoman lands," in S. Faroqhi (ed.), *Cambridge History of Turkey*, vol. 3: *The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839* (Cambridge 2006), 18-43.

8 Later, Bruce McGowan explored these changes within the context of the then expanding global market relationships. B. McGowan, 'The Study of Land and Agriculture in the Ottoman Provinces within the Context of an Expanding World Economy in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries', *IJTS*, 2/1 (1981), 57-64; idem, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade and the Struggle for Land, 1600-1800* (Cambridge 1981).

9 W.-D. Hütteroth, 'Methods of Historical Geography: Examples from Southeastern Turkey, Syria and Irak', in *V. Milletlerarası Türkiye Sosyal ve İktisat Tarih Kongresi, Tebliğler, İstanbul 21-25 August 1989*, (Ankara 1990), 491: "[In] the period between the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the rich sources of the 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century, known types of defter (except the *tahrir* ones) are not compiled with the intention of completeness of all settlements or population in a given area. There could be, theoretically, one exception: *Avârız* defters might have village lists. If they were kept in a proper way, they should at least contain a list of places in which the *avârız* was to be taken, and that were surely all villages known to the regional authorities. *Avârız-defters* perhaps could give us some idea about what was left from the early Ottoman infrastructure after the desertion processes of the Celâli- and other uprisings. Surely one will not find such detailed lists as in the *tahrir-defters* of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but even simple lists of village names could supply us with information about continuity or change in the rural landscape."

1830s, as these exhaustive and systematic archival records of the first Ottoman census were not opened to researchers until recently.

On the other hand, the rapidly expanding fields of Ottoman studies and the increasing number of research projects carried out during the last decade have also placed within the context of the Ottoman Balkans some of the subjects addressed by de Planhol and Hütteroth, who drew upon the examples of Anatolian and Syrian provinces. Vera Mutaftchieva's studies, covering a period extending to the early nineteenth century, research by the new generation of historians on different regions, and notably Machiel Kiel's exemplary studies, both published and unpublished, clearly point to a period of crisis in the seventeenth-century Balkans as well.<sup>10</sup> Current information suggests that phenomena such as the widespread abandonment of villages, the dispersal of population, and the shifting of settlement patterns hold true also for regions to the west of Istanbul. Current studies that draw attention to the impacts that violence associated with wars and banditry, the ever-growing economic pressure exerted on peasantry, climate changes, and foreign market demands have on agricultural economy establish that the various Balkan regions under Ottoman rule were influenced, each in its own way, and to varying degrees, by the general Ottoman financial and administrative / military crisis, though differing from one another in their distinctive ecological, topographical, economic, and climatic features.<sup>11</sup> As far as our question is concerned, the emphasis Bruce McGowan places on rural destruction, the decrease in population, and the desertion of a great number of villages in the seventeenth-century Ottoman Balkans is of particular importance. As suggested by McGowan, all these were caused by the dispossession and displacement of peasantry which accompanied the disintegration of the 'protective relationship' peculiar to the former *timar* system, binding peasants to their village (land) and to the *sipahi* (feudal cavalry corps).<sup>12</sup> In any event, future discussions regarding the possible factors behind the similar developments that took place in Anatolia and in the Balkans, where the Ottoman Empire was nearer and more open to the European climate and 'financial world', promises to yield more satisfactory results, thanks to the ever-varying and increasing amount of archival material. As a matter of fact, the limited and partial use of other historical sources from the seventeenth century, and notably the recent use of

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10 See F. Adanır and S. Faroqi (eds), *The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography* (Leiden 2002); *Cambridge History of Turkey*, Vol. 3. See also V. Mutaftchieva, *L'anarchie dans les Balkans à la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Istanbul 2005).

11 Bruce McGowan's studies from the 1970s continue to fill an important void in this field. See esp. his *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe* (especially the observations and comments in the Introduction). See also G. Veinstein, 'On the Çiftlik Debate', in Ç. Keyder and F. Tabak (eds), *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East* (Albany 1991), 35–53; S. Laiou, 'Some Considerations Regarding Çiftlik Formation in the Western Thessaly, Sixteenth–Nineteenth Centuries', in E. Kolovos *et al.* (eds), *The Ottoman Empire, The Balkans, The Greek Lands: Toward A Social and Economic History. Studies in Honor of John C. Alexander* (Istanbul 2007), 255–277; S. Stefanov, 'Everyday Life in the Balkan Provinces of the Ottoman Empire during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries', *Bulgarian Historical Review*, 3–4 (2002), 50–86.

12 McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, 61–70.



detailed *avarız* and *cizye* registers can be interpreted as a sign that the road to a new and more productive manner of research and debate is being paved.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, it is highly likely that studies drawing upon these sources will confirm our impression that the history of seventeenth-century Anatolia / Syria, which we tend to examine within the context of Celali depredation and consider ‘an exceptional case’, does not in fact constitute an exception, but that it must, on the contrary, be treated within the same meta-analytical framework (‘crisis and its manifestations’) as that of the Balkan provinces, each of which witnessed distinctive and sometimes contrary developments during the general crisis.

The present study can be seen as an attempt to further Hütteroth’s essential findings and observations regarding the Central Anatolian plateau through new material supporting his arguments to a striking extent. The research, findings, and questions of Wolf-Dieter Hütteroth, that esteemed historical geographer of the Ottoman Empire who has recently passed away, have unfortunately not yet been elaborated and expanded upon by students of the Ottoman Empire. The present essay thus aims to contribute to the field of Ottoman historical geography by focusing on the Rûm province, which is to the north of Konya-Karaman, and specifically on rural Amasya.

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I deem it unnecessary to recount the manifestations of the sixteenth-century economic and demographic growth witnessed in the entire Mediterranean region and the Ottoman Empire, including, in this context, the examples of the Rûm province and the Amasya region, as these are no longer unknown to historians. I have argued elsewhere in detail that rural Amasya had its share of this economic and demographic growth: it doubled its population; witnessed the expansion of cultivated lands and the emergence of new arable lands on lowlands, mountain slopes, and even highlands; saw the appearance of new villages on vast fertile plains, and the gradual sedentarisation of nomadic and semi-nomadic Turcomans, who established villages on their former winter pastures on mountain slopes, as a result of which they began to give more weight to agriculture, which gradually became a part of their daily economic activities.<sup>14</sup> A closer look at sixteenth-century tax registers which provide us with substantial information shows that other developments accompanied the macro-level transformation in question. Among them are: an actual shrinkage of the size of lands cultivated by peasant families, an apparent

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13 For a comparison between early tax registers and seventeenth-century registers in terms of the changes in settlement patterns, see P. P. Kotzageorgis, ‘*Haric ez Defter* and *Hali Ane’l-Reaya* Villages in the *kaza* of Dimetoka/Didymoteichon (Fifteenth-Seventeenth Centuries): A Methodological Approach’, in E. Kolovos *et al.* (eds), *The Ottoman Empire, The Balkans, The Greek Lands*, 237-254. See also N. Moacanin, *Town and Country on the Middle Danube, 1526-1690* (Leiden and Boston 2006).

14 See O. Özel, ‘Population Changes in Ottoman Anatolia during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries: the “Demographic Crisis” Reconsidered’, *IJMES*, 36 (2004), 183-205; idem, *After the Storm: The Collapse of Rural Order in Ottoman Amasya, 1576-1643* (forthcoming).

increase in the population of landless peasants, and, finally, an exponential increase in the number of unmarried adult men. And again, various studies have adequately demonstrated that similar developments can also be observed to a varying degree in the entire Ottoman Empire.<sup>15</sup> As far as these developments are concerned, the Rûm province and rural Amasya appear to be quite typical examples.

Again, current research reveals that the economic and demographic growth of the sixteenth century became unsustainable towards the end of the century. The delicate balance between population, economy, and politics was upset and economic society (*société économique*) began to dissolve rapidly under the corrosive pressure of the power struggles taking place at the heart of the Empire. Equally destructive were the ruling elites' and high office holders' increasingly frantic competition, not to mention the disruptively long campaigns which went hand in hand with the periodic explosions under the peculiar conditions of the turn of the seventeenth century. The period is referred to in the literature as a time marked by widespread violence, banditry, and rebellions led by large Celali armies. The economic and demographic developments of the previous century virtually turned on their head. And throughout the Empire, the Rûm province and the Amasya district were among the regions most affected by the devastation.

The phenomenon of abandoned / lost villages is one of the least studied aspects of the demographic crisis. Mustafa Akdağ's studies from the 1940s in focusing on the Celalis and the sporadic information that he provided, which have since been referred to in each new study on the subject, have shown that the successive major Celali rebellions led to the dispersal of population in rural Anatolia and to the abandonment of villages. The first and most violent phase took place against a setting of perpetual war in the early seventeenth century. It is clear that the information Akdağ provided and some of the striking examples he presented led to the more or less established opinion that a 'great flight' (*kaçgun*) of such a scale had indeed taken place during the period. Such a portrayal was further strengthened by other official records and accounts of the time that point to the same phenomenon. This was at times referred to in dramatic and even grotesque language. Recent systematic studies of different types of archival material have revealed that there exists evidence similar to that presented by Akdağ which proves that the same situation holds true for the different regions of Anatolia.<sup>16</sup> Foreigners' accounts which have become increasingly accessible to researchers constitute yet another set of information suggesting that village settlements not only in the Anatolian provinces and Syria but also in the Ottoman Balkans witnessed a dramatic depopulation, the desolation of the countryside, as well as widespread banditry and *harami* violence.<sup>17</sup>

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15 Compare M. A. Cook, *Population Pressure in Rural Anatolia, 1450–1600* (London 1972); Özel, 'Population Changes'.

16 G. Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites at the Court of Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–1617) and His Immediate Predecessors', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 2010.

17 For an observation made in the 1620s, see T. Roe, *The Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe, in his Embassy to the Ottoman Porte, from the year 1621 to 1628* (London n.d.), 66–67. For some contemporary observations made in the 1590s, see J. W. Zinkeisen, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches in Europa* (Gotha 1855), 784. Cf. Kotzageorgis, 'Haric ez Defier'.

Before entering into the details of the big picture, it should be pointed out that there is a need to historicise the dissolution and periodic collapse of the rural order and economy, and to develop its regional map through in-depth research, as there might always be exceptions to this general pattern, i.e., regions falling outside the above-mentioned trend. On the other hand, it is equally clear that the Rûm province and the Amasya region do not constitute such exceptions.

Detailed *avarız* and *cizye* registers from the early and mid seventeenth century, which have not been studied systematically until recently, show, in a much more elaborate way and over and above what Mustafa Akdağ and Hütteroth could show in their works, that this province was deeply affected by such trends and developments. This has been confirmed by studies carried out for the regions of Amasya, Tokat, Canik, and Bozok. Indeed, these archival records reveal that 10 to 50% of the villages in the above regions were abandoned / emptied, and that this phenomenon was at times accompanied by a decrease of 80-90% in the tax-paying population. I see and interpret this as additional proof that attest to the big picture pointed to by the other records and witnesses of the period, and even to the similar case of the Konya-Karaman region, which was identified by Hütteroth through field research. It should also be noted at this point that such a picture appears to become a reality of rural Anatolia in general as similar *avarız* and *cizye* registers from the mid seventeenth century onwards regarding other Anatolian provinces are studied by historians. To put it simply, we are now talking about sources that provide new evidence which supplements the limited knowledge of 40 years ago which Suraiya Faruqi noted and interpreted. These new sources enable us to attempt systematic and quantitative comparisons.

Indeed, even a brief inquiry into and the results of an initial study of these records suffice to demonstrate that the displacement of peasants and the abandonment of villages is a widespread seventeenth-century phenomenon throughout Anatolia, including regions from Şebinkarahisar<sup>18</sup> to Trabzon<sup>19</sup> and Erzincan,<sup>20</sup> from Harput<sup>21</sup> to Erzurum,<sup>22</sup> from

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- 18 See F. Acun - M. Öz, *Karahisar-ı Şarkî Sancağı Mufasssal Avâriz Defteri (1642-1643 Tarihli)* (Ankara 2008).
  - 19 H. Bostan, '17. Yüzyıl Avâriz ve Cizye Defterlerine Göre Of Kazâsının Nüfusu ve Etnik Yapısı', *XIV. Türk Tarih Kongresi (Ankara, 9-13 Eylül 2002), Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, Vol. 2/1 (Ankara 2005), 413-429.
  - 20 M. İnbaşı, 'Erzincan Kazası (1642 Tarihli Avâriz Defterine Göre)', *Atatürk Üniversitesi, Türkiye Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 41 (2009), 189-214; E. Kul, '1642 Tarihli Avâriz Defterine Göre Şirvan Kazâsı ve Köyleri', *Atatürk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 44 (2010), 271-289; H. Bulut, '1643 Tarihli Avarız Defterine Göre Erzincan Şehri'nin Mahalleleri', *History Studies. Prof. Dr. Enver Konukçu Armağanı* (Special Issue, 2012), 21-30.
  - 21 M. A. Ünal, '1056/1646 Tarihli Avâriz Defterine Göre 17. Yüzyıl Ortalarında Harput', *Belle-ten*, 51/199 (1987), 119-129.
  - 22 M. İnbaşı, '1642 Tarihli Avâriz Defterine Göre Erzurum Şehri', *Türk Kültürü İncelemeleri Dergisi*, 4 (2001), 9-32; idem, 'Bayburt Sancağı (1642 Tarihli Avâriz Defterine Göre)', *Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, Vol. 10/1 (2007), 89-118.

Sivas-Arapgir-Eğir<sup>23</sup> to Antakya,<sup>24</sup> from Aleppo<sup>25</sup> to Konya-Karaman, and from there to Denizli<sup>26</sup> and Manyas.<sup>27</sup> Especially when compared carefully with similar data from the last ‘classic’ surveys conducted at the beginning of the last quarter of the sixteenth century, the data derived from these *avarız* and *cizye* registers appear to have considerable potential to shed light on the seventeenth century in terms, at least, of the changes in population and settlement patterns. In the pages which follow I will attempt to put this assumption to the test and to extend the scope of the scholarly discussion up to the 1830s.

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As can be seen from the topographic map below, the Amasya district has a broken landscape intersected by deep valleys cut in four directions by the Yeşilırmak River and its several tributaries (see Map 1). The larger western part of this region in particular, which we assume to have borne the same geographical features in the sixteenth century, abounds with lands most suitable for agriculture. These lands are characterised by pleasant slopes, at the centre of which lie the vast Merzifon and Geldingen (Geldigelen) plains to the north and to the south respectively, gradually giving way to high hills and mountains. The greater part of these lands, including those that surround the deep river beds in the direction of east and north, has an altitude of from 300 m. to more than 1,000 m. and consists of fertile arable lands. In the sixteenth century, there used to be densely populated settlements at the lower and the higher altitudes of these lands, with the exception of the thinly populated settlements at altitudes higher than 1,000 m. According to the *tahrir* register of 1576, there were 379 village settlements and ten supplementary lands (*mezraas*) with a number of settled families scattered over six sub-districts within the boundaries of the district. Of these villages, 372 were inhabited, and seven of them appear to be devoid of population (*hâli*).<sup>28</sup> In addition to these villages,

23 E. Çakar and F. Kara, ‘17. Yüzyılın Ortalarında Arapgir Sancağında İskân ve Nüfus (1643 Tarihli Avârız-Hâne Defterine Göre)’, *Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 15/2 (2005), 385-412.

24 E. Çakar, ‘17. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Antakya Kazasında İskân ve Nüfus (1678/1089 Tarihli Avârız-Hâne Defterine Göre)’, *Belleten*, 67/252 (2004), 431-459.

25 M. Öztürk, ‘1616 Tarihli Halep Avârız-Hâne Defteri’, *OTAM*, 8 (1997), 249-293.

26 T. Gökçe, *XVI-XVII. Yüzyıllarda Lâzıkıyye (Denizli) Kazâsı* (Ankara 2000).

27 Ö. Küpeli, ‘Klasik Tahrirden Avârız Tahririne Geçiş Sürecinde Tipik Bir Örnek: 1604 Tarihli Manyas Kazası Avârız Defteri’, *TTK Belgeler*, 32/36 (2011), 113-199.

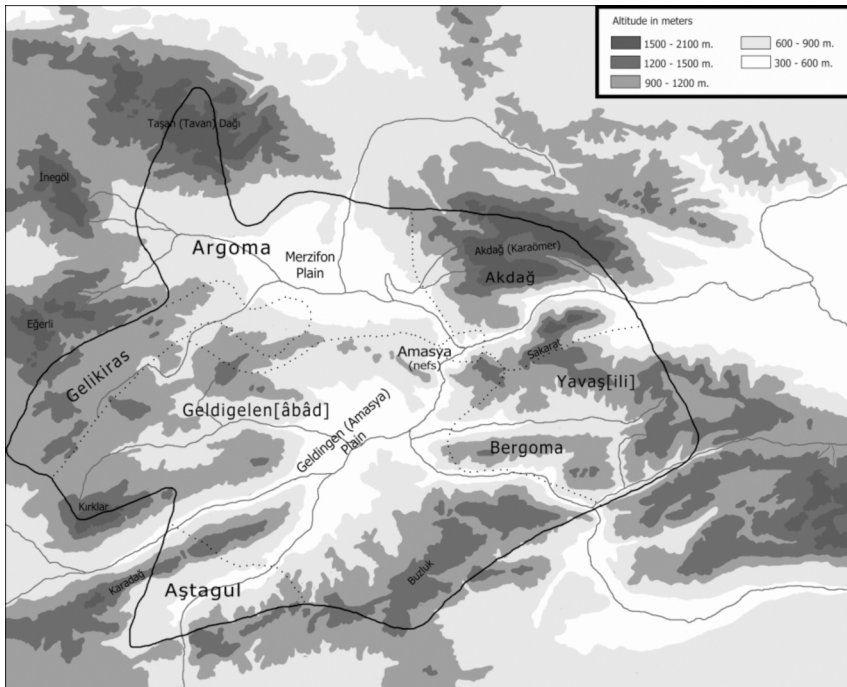
28 The reason why these villages were empty or abandoned can be found in a record regarding an imperial decree issued in response to a report presented to the Divân-ı Hümâyûn (the Imperial Council) by Ömer Bey, who conducted the census: “*Ve bâzı karyeler derbend yerinde vâki olub, sengistan ve tenk yerlerde olub me’aşları müzâyaka üzere iken âyende ve revende gâyet kesret üzere üzerlerine konup bu yüzden ekseri perâkende olub, ol makule mahûf yerler hâli kalduğunu bildirmişsin.*” (“And you have reported that certain villages which are located on mountain passes, stony terrains and barren lands with hard living conditions have been visited by excessive number of travellers ‘coming and going’. It is because of that that most of these dangerous villages were abandoned and left uninhabited.”) See Ö. L. Barkan, ‘Türkiye’de

there were 77 *mezraas* cultivated by peasants from the neighbouring villages. Also, there were 14 *etrakiye* villages, i.e., semi-nomadic Turcoman villages, established at varying altitudes on mountain fringes and slopes surrounding the whole district. In the light of sixteenth-century standards, these data attest to a dense rural settlement pattern. The region was a fairly typical example of the economic and demographic growth of the century. Furthermore, the population of these villages appeared to be larger than the average. Of the 212 villages that I could identify on twentieth-century maps, the majority with an adult male taxpaying population (*nefer*) of more than 100 and many more of those with more than 200 taxpayers were located at an altitude of 600-900 m. In other words, the majority of the villages established on the lowest plains, which one would expect to be the most densely populated, in fact had a taxpaying population of fewer than 100 and even 50.

This population pattern is consistent with the settlement patterns which Hütteroth observed in the Konya-Karaman region. The settlements established on vast plains at low altitudes were small and middle-sized, yet the area on the whole was quite densely settled. We must also add that some of these were 'satellite settlements' established in the sixteenth century by people who had left the main village. Some of these settlements developed and maintained an organic relationship with the main or mother village, whereas most managed to become independent economic entities. As far as rural Amasya is concerned, this phenomenon is well illustrated by Yenice and Çardaklu, both administratively belonging to the Argoma district, which boasted vast plains. In 1576, population figures for Yenice and Çardaklu were recorded together with two other villages (Salurcu and İnaldı). A much better example is Hakala (today's Yolpınar), which was recorded in the sixteenth-century registers as the central village (*nefs*) of the Akdağ sub-district, and which, with its four neighbourhoods, appears to have been a town at an earlier date. In the 1520s, Hakala brought forth a satellite settlement a few kilometres to the north-east. The populations of Hakala and this new settlement, which was called Değirmenderesi (literally 'Mill-stream'), probably because it was established near a mill on the bank of a stream of the same name, were recorded in the registers together (183 adult male taxpayers, 61 of whom were single men). It seems that Değirmenderesi emerged rather as a *mezraa*, i.e., as an arable field, at the beginning of the century, and it was not detached from the main village of Hakala until 1576, when the former became a self-contained village with a population (187 adult males, 57 of whom were single) even greater than that of the latter. Let us move on, noting that among these examples, the Çardaklu/Salurcu and Hakala/Değirmenderesi pairs were established between the fertile lands on the left bank of the Tersakan stream on the plain of Merzifon and the skirts of the high Akdağ mountain right to the east of these lands.

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İmparatorluk Devirlerinin Büyük Nüfus ve Arazi Tahrirleri ve Hakana Mahsus İstatistik Defterleri, II', *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, II/2 (1940), 232.



**Map 1:** Topography and the sixteenth-century sub-districts of Amasya

It did not take long before this settlement pattern of 1576, which seems to be relatively sustainable in terms of the balance between population-land-settlements, took a turn for the worse and underwent a complete change. It would not be inconsistent with the archival records and chroniclers' accounts of the period to argue that the extraordinary circumstances, i.e., the intertwined spirals of war, economic oppression, and banditry (the great earthquakes and the droughts that occurred in the same period because of irregular climatic phenomena might also be added to this list) in which the whole region was caught from the 1580s onwards, shattered the economy-society of the region. This was a time when the pressure exerted on the land by the increasing population, which we assume to have maintained its tendency to rise, was no longer sustainable. The ensuing explosion of violence and destruction was obviously and closely related to and even nurtured, in a way, by the havoc created by the Celalis. And, it would not be unreasonable to argue that the closely related demographic, economic, and political phenomena exerted pressure on and nurtured each other in the most negative way possible. Consequently, the population and the economy of the region, which showed a tendency to grow consistently but in an unbalanced manner from the 1580s onwards, could no longer bear this pressure.

The sources demonstrate that beginning with the 1590s, the Rûm province and the Amasya district began to contribute on a local scale and through their internal dynamics



to the spiral of violence, which escalated increasingly and became an integral part of the general imperial crisis of the turn of the seventeenth century. On the other hand, the same sources also show that this province was one of the central regions most subject to the widespread Celali violence. A close reading of the conditions that prevailed in the region after 1608, when the first and most intense phase of the rebellions was suppressed by the state through counter-violence, reveals that perhaps the most crucial development greatly influencing the course of events was the dispersal of population en masse, termed ‘the Great Flight’ by Akdağ to denote the phenomenon whereby masses of peasants left their homes and dispersed in all directions for survival. It is time we acknowledged that there is no exaggeration to using the term ‘the Great Flight’, as it perfectly corresponds to reality. Let us listen to the Grand Vizier of the time, who desperately implored the Sultan, as for the treasury had fallen short of the routine expenditures of the central administration and the salaries of the soldiers as early as 1601:

My Sultan, the treasury remains nearly empty (...) the expenses are incalculable, and we do not know how to meet them (...) it is now time to pay another set of salaries, and we struggle to remain sane as the treasury is empty. Would I dare impose on our very noble Sultan if our country was prosperous and it was possible to collect taxes? (...) it is not within the power of any person to collect all this money from the countryside, especially at this time of upheaval.<sup>29</sup>

So “at this time of upheaval” it was “not within the power of any person” to collect taxes from the countryside, including the Rûm province and the Amasya district, which had sunk into the mire of misery and conflict. The state chronicler Solakzâde, on the other hand, was rather tight-lipped about this situation and contented himself with hinting at it using official, and hence cold, language: “The upheaval prevalent on the opposite side [i.e., Anatolia] and the state of sorrow caused by the Celalis have crossed all the limits.”<sup>30</sup>

Unfortunately, we do not have any regularly-kept tax registers from the first ten years of the 1600s that are relevant to the region under examination. Notwithstanding the fact that attempts were made, in spite of the circumstances, to survey and register the tax-paying population which resided in districts on the periphery of the centres of violence (Manyas, for instance), it is apparent that succeeding in such an attempt was impossible in provinces such as Rûm, which happened to be at the center of violence.

29 For the report/briefing (*telhis*) by Yemişçi Hasan Paşa, the then Grand Vizier, to the Sultan, see C. Orhonlu, *Osmanlı Tarihine Aid Belgeler: Telhisler (1597/1607)* (Istanbul 1970), 30, 34: ‘Pa-dişahım hâlâ hazinenin müzyakası kemalindedür (...) mesarıfa nihayet yok, nereden tahsil edeceğümüz bilemezüz (...) şimdi bir mevacib dahi gelüb erişdi, hazine olmaduğundan aklumuz başımızda değildir. Eğer memleket ma’mur olub akça tahsili mümkün olsa devletlü padişahumdan sakınur mıydum? (...) bu ihtilal zamanında bu kadar hazine taşradan tedarük olunmak makdur-ı beşer değildir.’

30 Solak-zâde [Mehmed Hemdemî Çelebi], *Solak-zâde Tarihi*, Vol. 2, ed. V. Çubuk (Ankara 1989), 241: ‘Öte yakanın ihtilali ve Celâlilerin melali hadden ziyade oldu.’

According to the information derived from other sources, rural Anatolia basically disintegrated, fell into ruin, and its social order was shaken to its foundations. When it comes to the picture of destruction in the aftermath of the storm of violence, which was quelled to some degree again by use of force, we might once again look at the relevant literature, giving only the following example: inspectors sent by the Ottoman government to the region in 1604 reported that 33 of the 38 villages within the boundaries of the Bacı district of Ankara were completely abandoned. Similarly, 80 villages that used to make up two-thirds of the settlements in the districts of Haymana were reported to be deserted.<sup>31</sup> We will come back to this particular example at the end of the essay.

Returning to the region of our analysis, one might easily argue that the countrysides of both the Rûm province and the Amasya district had their share of this wave of destruction. It is therefore obvious that the settlement patterns and economic infrastructure of the region suffered the first severe blow in this period. Let us also add that the restoration of the 'peaceful' atmosphere in 1608 by 'Kuyucu' Murad Paşa was extremely deceptive and nothing more than a temporary breather. It was indeed so, as we do not know how many peasants who left their homes for survival en masse were able to return to their villages, houses, and farms. Neither do we have any substantial information as to whether the peasants who managed to go back to their villages were able to find and settle in their houses and farms upon their return. There is also the question of whether peasants who were deprived of their lands and male adults, who had probably begun to experience difficulty in getting married, had a good reason to go back to their villages, after having left their homes under the circumstances outlined above. We have sporadic evidence that some peasants obviously returned to their lands, thinking that a good many of the 'surplus population' had disappeared in that turmoil (and turned into 'waste/lost population') and thus hoping that they could take advantage of this situation and find lands to settle and cultivate. And they were probably right in thinking so.

But let us remember the following facts without jumping to a conclusion in haste: 1) peasants who made 'the Great Flight' were not the only ones to think and act in the above manner. Chiefly military men with *askerî* status (i.e., the ruling elite) from all ranks in the provinces, who themselves were also subject to and active participants in the same disorder and turmoil, had already come to make similar calculations either out of desperation or mere opportunism. Getting the drop on peasants and employing all their means, including their arms as well as the military and social standing which they still enjoyed over the peasantry, these imperial dignitaries settled on the lands abandoned by fleeing peasants, beginning to establish their own farms. 2) Murad Paşa had destroyed a great portion of the Celali forces, but the remaining parts of this great violence-generating machine, consisting of tens of thousands of men, was spread uncontrollably across the Anatolian countryside. It did not take long before they returned to their now normal routines, that is, to banditry. Provincial governors, who served in the countryside as the representatives of the short-circuited imperial administration, had also long made a habit of contributing to banditry through their own retinues, consisting of thousands of men

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31 M. Akdağ, *Celâli İsyanları (1550–1603)* (Ankara 1963), 251–252.



of a Celali type. These forces seized every opportunity systematically to ‘patrol’ villages through *devirs* to plunder and seize everything hidden away by peasants who remained on or returned to their lands.

The Anatolian countryside was thus being caught in the spiral of violence which continued to mount in the decades after 1608. Neither the peasants who stayed nor those who fled could have a lasting peace in such an atmosphere. Whatever was left behind by the rebellious Celali forces was seized by bandits, who had by then established themselves in the countryside. In the absence of detailed historical sources directly relevant to these issues, we can only guess/estimate the magnitude of the famine, shortages, and diseases experienced during this period.

By the 1620s, the machine of violence had generated large armies again, and these rebellious troops were this time commanded by Abaza Mehmed Paşa. His rebellion wreaked havoc once again on Anatolian provinces from Erzurum to Bursa. Furthermore, the entire Rûm province had its share of violence. The region also suffered from the intermittent wars between the Ottomans and the Safavids of Iran. Let us take a closer look at what the author of *Kitab-ı Müstetab* wrote at that very moment:

Military campaigns against Persia and the Rûm province have been undertaken every year [since the reign of Sultan Murad III] until today, as a consequence of which not only were the majority of the subjects in Anatolian provinces scattered and wretched, but also many turned into bandits and Celalis, and the majority of the villages went to wrack and ruin (...) as of now, only one fourth of these villages and arable lands from Scutari to Karaman, from Aleppo to Baghdad, from the Sivas region to Arz-ı Rûm (Erzurum) and to Van, remains intact (...) and there remain [almost] no people in the provinces.<sup>32</sup>

This excerpt can be read as a laconic account of the tragic aftermath of the developments which we are trying to point to in this essay. In brief, the situation prevailing in the 1620s does not appear to be any brighter than in the first decade of the century. The important point, as far as the subject of this study is concerned, is that the number of ruined, and partially or wholly abandoned, villages in the Anatolian provinces had indeed reached to the extent where any seemingly exaggerated portrayal of the phenomenon by contemporaries was thoroughly warranted. In other words, the settlement pattern of rural Anatolia was drastically altered: settlements in the Anatolian countryside shrank dramatically in size, and a large number of villages were abandoned, some disappearing for good. To give an example from another region which made its way into texts written by the historians of the period, most of the large and prosperous Armenian villages in the Kayseri region were completely deserted: their former inhabitants left the

32 Yaşar Yücel (ed.), *Osmanlı Devlet Düzenine Ait Metinler, I. Kitâb-ı Müstetâb* (Ankara 1988), 17, 20: ‘[Üçüncü Murad zamanından] bu zamana gelinceye değin her yıl gâhî Acem ve gâhî Rumeli’ne seferler olmağla Anadolu memleketlerinde reayanın ekseri perakende ve perişan olduklarından maada niceleri dahi eşkiya ve celali olub kuranın dahi ekseri harab ve yebab olmuştur (...) şimdiki hâl Üsküdar’dan Karaman ve Haleb üzerinden Bağdad’a varınca ve Sivas canibinden Arz-ı Rum’a (Erzurum) ve Van’a varınca kura ve mezariden dört bölükden ancak bir bölüğü ma’mur kalmıştır (...) vilâyetde reaya kalmamıştır.’

region to settle in lands and farms located between Istanbul and Edirne. Reports written by members of the Ottoman financial bureaucracy, who took action by the order of Murad IV, awakened to the situation on his way to Baghdad during a military campaign, provide us with detailed information as to the number of peasants who abandoned their villages in the district of Kayseri alone: 35-40,000. This was indeed a significant magnitude by any standards of an early modern agricultural society and should not be underestimated. The last piece of information to add here regarding this particular case is that these people who were forced by the circumstances to flee their villages could not be brought back to their homes.<sup>33</sup> The large part of the similar picture that we encounter when we analyse the aftermath of the storm of violence in the Amasya region, that is, the picture of a largely depopulated countryside, which turned virtually into a village cemetery, was probably produced by the events that took place between the 1590s and the 1630s. At this point, let us listen to Kâtip Çelebi, who personally witnessed some of these events (what is more, Kâtip Çelebi mentions a group living on the outskirts of Istanbul, this group consisting of peasants who made the 'great flight' mentioned above in the example of Kayseri):

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33 Nâimâ Mustafa Efendi, *Târih-i Nâimâ: Ravzatü'l-Hüseyn fi hulâsati ahhâri'l-hâfıkayn*, ed. M. İpşirli (Ankara 2007), Vol. II, 808-809: 'People inhabiting the villages of Kayseri and Anatolia had suffered terribly during the Celali revolts. When the Sultan went off on the Revan campaign (in 1635), seeing, on his way, that the region lay in ruins and was abandoned, he inquired into this situation, and was informed that Celali violence had brought misery to peasants, the majority of whom had therefore moved to Istanbul. When the noble order of the Sultan regarding the resettlement of all the subjects who had left their homes during the last 40 years reached Bayram Paşa, the latter appointed Seyyid Mehmed Efendi, displaced from Egypt, as *mevla*, and Hüseyin Ağa, a retired *kethüda bey*, as *mübaşir*. For a couple of months, Bayram Paşa took a lot of trouble to inspect the quarters of Istanbul. However, his efforts did not yield any fruit. If they had, the revenues of the treasury would have multiplied. But it is known to all who have a good understanding of the situation that this is immensely difficult.' ('Kayseri ve Anadolu etrafında olan karyelerin erbabı Celali istilası zamanında perişan olup padişah Revan seferine gittikte (1635 yılı) ol havalıyı hâli ve harabe görüp sual ettikte Celali teaddisinden perişan olup ekseri varıp İstanbul'da tavaddun ettikleri haber vermeleriyle kırk seneden beri terk-i vatan eden reaya mekân-ı kadimlerine icla olunmak babında Bayram Paşa'ya hüküm-i şerif vârid olup, paşa-yı mezbur dahi Mısır'dan ma'zul Seyyid Mehmed Efendi'yi mevlâ ve kethüda beylikten mütekaid Hüseyin Ağa'yı mübaşir tayin edip bir kaç ay İstanbul mahallâtını teftiş belasına müptela oldu. Lâkin emr-i asir olmağın netice vermedi. Bu maslahat mümkün olaydı nice hazine husule gelirdi. Lakin gayet müteassir olduğu ehline ma'lumdur.) For the case in question, see *The Travel Account of Simeon of Poland* (Introduction and Annotated Translation by G. A. Bournoutian) (Costa Mesa-California 2007), 309-310; H. D. Andreasyan, 'Celâlîlerden Kaçan Anadolu Halkının Geri Gönderilmesi', *İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı'ya Armağan* (Ankara 1976), 45-53. Cf. R. Murphey, 'Population Movements and Labor Mobility in Balkan Context: A Glance at Post-1600 Ottoman Social Realities', in M. Delilbaşı (ed.), *South East Europe in History: The Past, The Present and the Problems of Balkanology* (Ankara 1999), 91-94; M. Akdağ, 'Celâlî İsyanlarında Büyük Kaçgunluk, 1603-1606', *TED*, 11/2-3 (1964), 1-50.

Subjects, who grew weaker after the emergence of the Celalis, ran for their lives and leaving their villages, they settled in the city. Even the outskirts of Istanbul still teem with them.<sup>34</sup>

And let us see how Koçi Bey summarised in 1632 all that was happening: 'In brief, the atrocities and oppressions against the *reaya* [subject people] which we witness today have not ever been witnessed in history, in another land, or under another reign.'<sup>35</sup>

It seems possible to describe the 1630s as a period where chronic violence continued under circumstances similar to those of the 1610s, albeit in a less intense manner. Perhaps, once more, peasants tried desperately to return to their villages, and the number of these people, whom we can call peasant 'remainders' or former peasants, decreased each time. And perhaps some refused to leave their villages and managed to survive in one way or the other. There was also an army of the poor, who were certainly even more miserable. The poor could produce barely enough to survive and put all their life energy and power into holding on to what they had at hand. As the 1640s dawned, this army of the poor appears to have had and raised children at obviously decreasing rates under severe hardships. In view of the laws of demographic mechanisms, it is only natural that these new generations were more vulnerable to the harsh living conditions, that they had a lower chance of survival, and that they also decreased exponentially in number. Yet another factor that contributed to the population decline in the entire first half of the century was epidemics, such as plague, which were not lacking at all in Anatolia.

It was under these very circumstances, in 1641, that Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha, the Grand Vizier of Sultan Ibrahim, who viewed the entire situation from the perspective of state finance, decided to step in to alleviate this 'financial crisis' by taking certain measures: he not only tried to stabilise the currency by coinage reform, as Ottoman coins had been debased and the currency had become unstable, but also demanded that a detailed survey of the taxpaying population be conducted and that the results be recorded in a *defter* (tax register). To this end, he issued instructions and sent teams to all the districts of the empire, including the Balkans, Syria, and, of course, the Rûm province to work closely with local *kadis* (judges) and the security forces under *subaşı*s (chiefs of local security forces).

Considering the circumstances, to what extent the latter managed to accomplish this duty remains uncertain, as low-intensity violence continued and local officials persisted in 'patrolling' the countryside under *devir*. The survey and registration team, accountable to the *defterdar* (treasurer) of Rûm, Mehmed Murad Efendi, began to go from village to village with a copy of the former registers so as to determine and register the taxpaying population as carefully and as minutely as possible. Fair copies of the results were made

34 Katip Çelebi, *Düsturü'l Amel li-İslâhi'l-Halel* (Istanbul 1280 [...]), 127: 'Celaliler zuhuru ile reayaya za'af gelüb, terk-i diyar ve karyelerden şehre firar itdiler. Hâlâ İstanbul etrafı bile doludur.'

35 Koçi Bey, *Koçi Bey Risâlesi*, ed. A. K. Aksüt (Istanbul 1939), 48-50: 'Velhasıl şimdiki halde reaya fıkaraşına olan zulm ü taaddi bir tarihde ve bir iklimde ve bir padişah memleketinde olmamışdır.'

piecemeal and the finalised *defters* (registers) were submitted for the Sultan's approval and signature in early days of the year 1643.

This is how the detailed *avârız* and *cizye* registers of 1641-1643, as well as summary registers<sup>36</sup> and even briefer, report-like *defters* based on these detailed registers, all of which are preserved today in the different sections of the Ottoman archives, came into existence. These are the seventeenth-century-style *tahrir defters* (tax registers) referred to at the beginning of the essay. It is particularly important for this study that we can draw a comparison between the data provided by these registers, regarding especially the taxpaying population and settlement patterns, with relevant data provided by the last 'classic' tax registers of the 1570s. Such a comparison yields valuable information not only about the extent of depopulation but also about the deserted, depopulated, abandoned, and devastated villages. It was these very registers the absence of which troubled Hütteroth deeply throughout his research. Current accessibility of the detailed *avarız* and *cizye* registers of the 1640s seems to have facilitated our work to a great extent (even though it has also raised new questions for us to ask...). Even the few and rather descriptive studies conducted in recent years clearly show that these sources have already proved to be vital in that they provide us with information not only about the demographic changes that took place in the seventeenth century, but also about the changes that were witnessed concurrently in settlement patterns.

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Now let us have a closer look at the data provided by the *avarız* register of 1643 for rural Amasya,<sup>37</sup> bearing in mind also the example of 1576, and try to trace the villages abandoned by 1643.

When we render the crude numbers found in this register into words, the following picture emerges: out of the 372 villages recorded within the borders of the Amasya district in 1576, only 228 appear to still exist in 1643. Dozens of uninhabited *mezraas* which were previously recorded, that is, the lands cultivated by the peasants of the neighbouring villages, were not even recorded in the register of 1643. One may assume that these *mezraas* were either still uninhabited during the 1641-42 survey or they had already fallen into the hands of the members of the military class (*askerî*). If the latter is the case, then there is the possibility that the arable lands in question were recorded in the registers as *askerî* farms under the villages to which they were attached. According to our calculations, 144 villages within the district vanished from the records during the intervening period, that is, after 1576. As a matter of fact, a number of these villages might well have existed in 1643 among the 24 villages that I assume to be 'newly appearing' settlements, some of whose names I could not read. So we might suppose that the real number of lost

36 See Turan Gökçe, 'Osmanlı Nüfus ve İskân Tarihi Kaynaklarından "Mufasssal-İcmâl" Avârız Defterleri ve 1701-1709 Tarihli Gümülcine Kazası Örnekleri', *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi*, 20/1 (2005), 71-134.

37 BOA, MAD 776. For details, see Özel, *After the Storm*.

villages was in fact a little smaller, that is, around 140. If we take this latter number as a basis for the calculation, the resulting picture tells us that roughly 35% of the village settlements that existed in the late sixteenth century somehow disappeared from the records as of 1643. On the other hand, 15-20 new villages appeared in the meantime in the whole district. In short, the picture of the period in question was as follows: around 140 lost villages versus 15-20 new villages...

This being the case, the first question that comes to mind is whether their non-existence in this register does necessarily indicate that these 140 unrecorded villages were indeed deserted or empty at the time of the survey. Theoretically speaking, the answer is 'no'. It is primarily because some peasants might well have hidden individually or collectively from surveyors in a period when evading such surveys was a widespread tendency among them. However, if we take this reasoning to an extreme, a counter-argument can also be made: that a tremendous amount of effort has to be put into making a village look as if it was long deserted and in ruins, even though this is highly unlikely. But then, it can also be argued that no such effort was needed, considering that during this period of collective violence and destruction, peasants' houses were so wretched and ramshackle that they could hardly be called houses. We can assume that a small number of peasants living in such settlements, which were on the verge of turning into ruins, could easily make themselves invisible, and with a little help from the local men in charge, these settlements could have easily been registered as uninhabited villages.

Some of the inhabited villages could also have gone unregistered for other reasons. The known cases supporting this assumption are the following: a) some villages were exempted from taxation (*muaf*), and thus left out of the register; b) peasants living in villages whose revenues belonged to the Sultan, to viziers, to imperial pious endowments, and foundations established for the provisioning of Mecca and Medina, could have been left out of the survey or the register, or recorded in a separate register; c) former members of the military class became the new landlords or the constituent elements of future landed aristocracy as they seized the *mirî* (state-owned) lands left behind by fleeing peasants during 'the great flight', and established farms on them. And as they needed labour in a period of shortage of manpower, they might have helped peasants living in the same village or the surrounding villages evade the surveys in return for protection. It is theoretically possible in all three cases that a great many peasants who resorted to such means went unrecorded in the survey.

However, a) the first two possibilities pertain rather to the classic survey practice of the sixteenth-century *timar* system. Furthermore, it was clearly ordered in the *firman*s (imperial decrees) issued for the survey of 1641-1642 that those who were exempt from taxation be also counted and registered as such in the *defter*. b) The villages of imperial domain (*hasshâ*) and *vakîf* villages were also included in the survey of 1641-1642, irrespective of the number of registered subjects living in them. And these peasants and their particularities were recorded in the same register and not in separate registers unless their village was too populous. To give an example from the Amasya district, the villages whose revenues were allocated to various *vakîfs* or assigned to the Palace, as well as the peasants living in these villages were neither left out of the survey nor recorded in

separate registers. In cases where they were recorded in separate registers, it is not difficult at all to piece together the big picture using these registers along with others. c) It was expressly ordered in the survey of 1641-1642 that the many peasants who settled in these villages in the hope that they could avoid paying taxes be counted and registered in their new settlements without being forced to return to their former villages. Therefore it is extremely unlikely that village settlements were left out of the survey unless they had been abandoned altogether.

On the contrary, the central government, which undertook the surveys of 1641-1642, was well aware of the severe conditions prevailing in the countryside. Indeed, these surveys were conducted so as to end the existing turmoil and to bring the state records up-to-date in a reliable manner.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, the Ottoman government tried to prevent its subjects from evading the survey to the best of its ability, and warned the surveyors of this possibility from the very beginning. Most important, individual attempts possibly made by peasants who were liable for taxes to evade the survey did not lead to entire villages' going unrecorded in the registers. In short, no village was left outside the 1641-1642 survey of Amasya because of its former tax-exempt status. On the contrary, the content and format of the registers compiled as a result of these Empire-wide surveys differed from one region to another and caused changes in the registration system, as a result of which, in some cases, even certain abandoned villages were recorded in the registers. Just as Ömer Bey, who conducted the survey in the region in the 1570s, was ordered to do... In such cases, empty arable lands and abandoned village settlements were noted down as 'empty' or 'ruined' and their estimated tax revenues were recorded in view of the possibility that they could be repopulated in the future.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, even when a district or

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38 'In order to avoid paying *avarız*, *cizye*, and other dues, the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects and the groups of tributaries and unbelievers abandoned the lands which they had previously inhabited, to settle in the *vakıfs* of Sultans and viziers, of the Two Holy Cities, in the imperial *hass* lands, and in the free and exempt towns and villages. This resulted in a decrease in [the number] of established households (*avarız-hanes*) and a severe deficiency in the income of the treasury. Moreover, those commissioned to collect *avarız* and dues and other provisions had a great deal of difficulty in collecting [these dues and taxes], and since the peasants have left their old places and settled in other places, their dues are also imposed on those who remained. This is a severe injustice to the subjects. [All this] has reached my Exalted Royal Ears. (Memalik-i mahrusemde vâki olan avarız hanesine dâhil olan müsülman ve zimmi reaya ve haracgüzar ve kefer taifesin mücerred avarız ve cizye ve sair tekâlif vermemeğin için kadimi sakin oldukları yerlerinden kalkub evkaf-ı selatin ve vüzera ve haremeyni'ş-şerifeyn ve havass-ı hümâyûn ve serbest ve mu'af olan kasaba ve karyelere varub tavattun eylemeleriyle kadimi haneye kesr ve hazine malına külli noksan geldüğünden maada her sene avarız ve tekâlif ve sair zahire cemine me'mur olanlar cem ve tahsilde ziyade usret çeküb ve o makûle kadimi yerlerinden kalkub âhar yere varub sakin olan reayanın tekâlif dahi yerinden mevkud olanlara tahmil olunmak ile reayaya külli taaddi olduğu mesami-i aliyye-i hüsvâneme ilka olunmağın...) Amasya Court Register, (*Şeriye Sicil*) No. 4, p. 149-150.

39 For example, when the detailed *avarız* register of 1642 is compared with the seventeenth-century tax registers, it can be seen that the number of villages registered in the sub-province of Ispir in both registers is nearly the same (approximately 140). The only difference is that 30 of



a sub-district was left out of the survey or a register, this situation was not passed over in silence. In most cases, the reason for this choice was explained in a marginal note.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, researchers rarely encounter misleading or enigmatic points in these registers, and when they do, they can easily demystify these points by comparing them to other similar registers or orders concerning the surveys.<sup>41</sup>

So, data provided by detailed *avarız* and *cizye* registers (and also summary registers, in our case), prepared following the 1641-1642 survey, should be interpreted within the context of the specific conditions and extraordinary developments of the period in question. Besides, our purpose is to carry out an analysis based on settlement units, rather than a discussion of population. From this standpoint, it appears more reasonable to argue that the 'disappearance' of some 140 villages across the Amasya district from the register of 1643 reflects the unusual circumstances and the realities of the time, than to jump to a hasty conclusion that the surveys, and the registers for that matter, are not reliable. Therefore, it is particularly important for our study that, when these surveys are read against the background of the extraordinary conditions insistently pointed to by the other sources of the period, they provide us with information which is strikingly consistent with the principal developments and main trends of the period outlined above.

In the light of these explanations, let us now take a closer look at whether or not these 140 villages, which appear to have disappeared between 1576 and 1643, have any distinguishing features.

The distributions of these 'missing' village settlements by sub-districts enable us to make the following initial observations: the detailed numbers in Table 1 indicate that among the six sub-districts, the ones with the largest number of abandoned villages are Argoma, Geldigelen, and Akdağ. The common characteristic of these areas is that they all boasted fertile lowlands (Argoma and Geldigelen entirely, and Akdağ partially). Of these 140 abandoned villages, 125 were within the boundaries of these three sub-districts. The characteristics of the other sub-districts seem to account for the varying

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these villages were noted down as "empty", that is, abandoned, in the *avarız* register of 1642, which includes notes like the following written down next to the names of these villages: 'it is registered with a tax of quarter *avarız-hane*, if ever to be reinhabited.' (toprağı muteberdir [the land is of good quality], reâya olursa rub' hâne vermek üzere kaydolundu.) See İ. E. Çakır, '1642 Tarihli Avâriz Defterine Göre İspir Sancağı', *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 2/8 (2009), 115, 119. Another example is from the village of Persut in the Şiran district (Kul, 'Şiran Kazâsı ve Köyleri', 276): 'The aforementioned village, a devastated and abandoned village which has no trace of habitation, was recorded in the in the name of *zeamet*-holder, Ali, as he accepts to pay the fixed amount of two hundred *akçes* per year to the treasury as *avarız* in return for the right to use and cultivate these lands, and as this agreement was beneficial for the treasury. The fixed amount of *avarız* per year: 200.' (Karye-i mezbur harabe ve viran ve eser-i ra'ıyyetden bî-nâm ü nişan olub züemadan Ali'nin beher sene miriye iki yüz akçe avarız bedeli ber-vech-i maktu verüb ziraat ve tasarruf etmek üzere kabul edüb kabulü miriye nâfi olmağla deftere kayd olundı. Bedel-i avarız ber-vech-i maktu fi sene 200).

40 For the example of Konya, see BOA, MAD 3074.

41 For a discussion on these subjects, see O. Özel, 'Avâriz ve Cizye Defterleri', in H. İnalçık and Ş. Pamuk (eds), *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Bilgi ve İstatistik* (Ankara 2000), 35-50.



number of abandoned villages within their boundaries: almost the entirety of the sub-districts of Bergoma and Yavaş-ili, registered jointly as Ezinepazarı in 1643, is mountainous, with the exception of narrow strips of cultivated land in deep river valleys. The number of lost villages in this region to the south-east of the city of Amasya is ten, whereas the number of newly appearing villages is seven, meaning that in the region of Ezinepazarı the unprotected villages were abandoned, and new villages were thereupon established in more secure locations. Yet another feature of this region is that the villages here managed to maintain their average population size, compared to their counterparts in other regions. Another example is the Aştagul sub-district (today's Ortaköy in the Çorum area), located on the main pass flanked by mountain ranges in the direction of Zile-Yozgat along the river Çekerek. With the exception of one small settlement, nearly all the villages in the Aştagul sub-district, which were much larger in population than the village average in the district, managed to remain inhabited. However, the cost of this was that, in the 1640s, these large and relatively prosperous villages of the past became a mere shadow of themselves, with a population varying between 15 and 50 taxpayers at the most.<sup>42</sup> As for the situation in the Gelikiras sub-district, it exhibits another feature: towards the 1570s, Gelikiras had been made an independent administrative unit, consisting of villages spread over an undulating terrain where the Argoma and Geldigelen sub-districts met, and whose revenues were allocated entirely to the pious foundation serving the needs of the poor of Mecca and Medina throughout the sixteenth century.<sup>43</sup> In this region, which boasted fairly large settlements, most of them being larger than the district average, seven villages were lost and three new ones appeared by 1643. The importance of this sub-district for this study lies in the fact that even though it consisted solely of *vakf* villages, Gelikiras could neither remain untouched nor avoid losing most of its population.

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42 According to a record in the *avarız* register of Tokat province and its districts of 1601, the *avarız* tax of the year in question could not be fully collected because nearly all of the inhabitants of the Yıldız, Kafirni, Tozanlu, and Artukabad sub-districts had abandoned their villages. This record is important for our study in that it identifies the location of these sub-districts, which were 'en route' to Sivas just like the villages of Aştagul, as a major factor in the abandonment of their villages: 'The *avarız* taxes could not be fully collected from the above sub-districts because their inhabitants fled from Celali oppression, because these sub-districts were on a route to Sivas, and because their inhabitants dispersed in fear.' (... Celâli cürmünden hurûc etmeğin zikrolunan nahiyeler Sivas tarafında yol üstünde olmağın, ahali-si havflarından etrafa perakende olmağın avarızları tamamen cemine mahal olmadı). BOA, MAD 15615, p. 6.

43 See A. Gürbüz, '1576 Tarihli Defter-i Evkâf-ı Rûm'a Göre Amasya Sancağı'ndan Hameyn'e yapılan Vakıflar', *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi*, 5 (1990), 253–262.

**Table 1:** The number of abandoned villages in the Amasya district between 1576-1643

<i>Sub-district</i>	<b>1576*</b>	<b>1643**</b>	<b>% (-)</b>
Amasya (the city)	3	1	66.66
Akdağ	48	18	37.5
Argoma	117	55	47.00
Aştagul	9	1	11.11
Bergoma/Yavaş[ili]	46	10	21.73
Geldigelen	127	52	40.94
Gelikiras	22	7	31.81
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>38.70</b>

\* the number of inhabited villages

\*\* the number of abandoned/empty villages

This point is important in another respect as well. It has been repeatedly pointed out in the literature that the registered inhabitants of such ‘free’ *vakf* villages and imperial domains were exempted from certain taxes, this privilege of tax-exemption making these settlements less likely to be abandoned. As a rule, the taxes involved here were *avarız* and *tekâlif*, i.e., customary taxes, and the government carried out the surveys of 1641-1642 primarily to establish full control over these two groups of taxes. As we have already seen in the excerpt from the *firman* concerning the 1641-1642 survey, the very motive behind this survey was the fact that peasants living in ordinary (*timar*) villages flooded into *vakf* and *hassa* villages because of their tax-exempt status (and, perhaps, the expectation of better protection in this time of turmoil). However, data provided by the registers reveal that the post-1576 conditions had a severe impact on these villages, which also lost a significant portion of their population. For instance, the adult male population of the *hassa* village of Kolay in the district of Argoma decreased from 189 to 47 in the period between 1576 and 1643. We also know that there were *hassa* villages in other regions which were completely deserted as well. To give but one example, 16 such villages, along with a few *vakf* villages in the Antakya district, were still in ruins in 1678.<sup>44</sup>

It is no coincidence that those sub-districts that contain the largest lowlands in the Amasya province appear to have suffered most from the loss. This means above all that the most vulnerable villages were located on these plains. Secondly, the least populated villages were also in this area, and, as noted above, some of these were ‘satellite villages’ which came into existence during the growth and expansion process witnessed in the sixteenth century. This is also significant, as it is in line with Hütteroth’s observations on the Konya-Karaman region. Hütteroth had observed that the majority of lost villages were unprotected small villages located on flat lowlands and that their percentage in such regions reached 90%, whereas it remained somewhere between 30%-50% in the high-

44 See E. Çakar, ‘17. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Antakya Kazasında İskân ve Nüfus’, 445.

lands.<sup>45</sup> It seems that the Amasya region suffered relatively smaller losses compared with the plains of Konya-Karaman.<sup>46</sup>

Despite the fact that the Argoma, Geldigelen, and Akdağ districts lost so many villages, few new village settlements appeared in these areas. By the 1640s, 52 villages were abandoned and only 11 'new' villages were established in Geldigelen, which had 112 inhabited villages within its borders in 1576.<sup>47</sup> In any event, this district lost a substantial number of villages and its new villages were very few in number compared to those which it lost. Argoma, the second largest and most densely populated sub-district of the Amasya province, the majority of whose villages were on the fertile plain of Merzifon, lost 55 villages, that is, 47% of its 117 village settlements. The number of its new settlements, on the other hand, remained as low as two. In other words, nearly half of its villages disappeared, but almost no villages were established in this region. Similarly, the district of Akdağ, which extended into the large lowlands of the same plain to its west, lost 18 of its 48 villages and gained no new ones. In short, if we consider the cases of these two districts on the Merzifon Plain together (we can even include in our consideration the district of Geldigelen, which is located on the second largest plain with the same name), densely populated plains appear to have suffered the most devastating blow and lost a great number of villages which were entirely abandoned by their inhabitants. The reason behind the emergence of only a few new villages in these lowlands probably lies in the fact that the settlements here were small and unprotected, and that the region was wide open to attacks of all kinds throughout the period under consideration.

The smallest villages (with an adult male population of fewer than 25) constitute 45% of the abandoned village settlements in the whole of Amasya: 64, that is, 80% of the 82 village settlements which had such a small population appear to have been abandoned between 1576 and 1643. As can be seen in the table below (Table 2), the rate of abandon-

45 Hütteroth, *Ländliche Siedlungen*, 184-185. Long ago, Necdet Tunçdilek reached a similar conclusion regarding the Eskişehir region. See N. Tunçdilek, 'Eskişehir Bölgesinde Yerleşme Tarihine Bir Bakış', *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, 15/1-4 (1953-1954), 189-208.

46 This said, a comparative look at the relevant data reveals that, as far as the countryside of the neighbouring provinces of Canik and Bozok are concerned, the nominal decrease in the number of villages was around 10% in the same period. See M. Öz, 'XVII. Yüzyıl Ortasına Doğru Canik Sancağı', in M. A. Ünal (ed.), *Prof. Dr. Bayram Kodaman'a Armağan* (İzmir 1993), 193-206; idem, 'Bozok Sancağında İskan ve Nüfus (1539-1642)', *XII. Türk Tarih Kongresi, Ankara, 12-16 Eylül 1994, Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, Vol. 3 (Ankara 1999), 787-794; idem, 'Population Fall in Seventeenth-Century Anatolia: Some Findings for the Districts of Canik and Bozok', *ArchOtt*, 22 (2004-2005), 159-171. However, a detailed comparison between the abandoned villages and the newly appearing ones in these provinces might result in an increase in the number and percentage of abandoned villages. In any event, we need more detailed and systematic analyses to be able to make comparisons that are more meaningful.

47 I put the word 'new' in inverted commas in order not to rule out the possibility that some of these settlements, whose names I could not read, might actually be old villages. If that is the case, then the number of lost villages will slightly decrease, thus leading to an equal decrease in the number of the presumably new villages.

ment decreases as one moves from these small villages to more populous ones. At this point, we would make another interesting observation: large villages which had an adult male population of more than 250 according to the register of 1576 were not entirely abandoned, regardless of the extent of their loss of population.

**Table 2:** Abandoned villages of 1643 and their average population in 1576

sub-district	“adult male population ( <i>nefer</i> )”					total
	1-24	25-49	50-99	100-199	200-250	
Amasya (city)	—	—	—	1	—	1
Akdağ	10	7	1	—	—	18
Argoma	28	10	9	6	1	54 (+1)*
Aştagul	—	—	—	1	—	1
Bergoma	—	2	1	—	—	3
Yavaş-ili	5	1	1	—	—	7
Geldigelen	20	9	15	7	1	52
Gelikiras	1	2	4	—	—	7
Total	64	31	31	15	2	144
(%)	(44.44)	(21.67)	(21.67)	(10.48)	(1.39)	

Two more points to complete the picture of the Amasya countryside in the 1640s: first, abandoned settlements include nearly all of the relatively populous *Etrakiye* villages established in the decades prior to 1576 by nomadic Turcomans who were in the process of sedentarisation. Of the 14 *Etrakiye* villages registered within the borders of the whole of Amasya in 1576, only four seem to have survived by 1643. The literature refers to this as ‘renomadisation’. The second, however, is indicative of a reverse trend: 10 *mezraas*, which were uninhabited in 1576, appear to have developed by the 1640s into inhabited villages with a modest population. One may argue that a portion of the runaway peasants might have settled on these plots of lands located on secure sites, probably on mountain slopes and high plateaus, and that these fields thus evolved in time into permanent settlements. When considered along with the 15-20 newly established villages, the emergence of such settlements suggests a significant shift from flat lowlands to highlands, mountain slopes, and high plateaus. This is but a manifestation in the Amasya region of another historical transformation observed by de Planhol and Hütteroth.

An extension of this observation is that fertile plains and undulating lands surrounded by the slopes of mountains of varying heights were vulnerable first to bandit raids, which became widespread in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, and made the whole region open to the greater destruction of the large Celali armies of the turn of the seventeenth century. That the region lies on the main East-West route that the Ottoman army took each time it set out on a campaign to the East or to fight against the Celali armies was a great topographical advantage to the Celalis and bandits. This, in return, prolonged the likelihood of the abandonment of village settlements. Furthermore, this route

ran along the very plains and valleys mentioned above. Thus, one may reasonably argue that the Amasya region also fell victim to its location and topography. Let us take a look at the following statement in a *firman* dated 1643 and addressed to the *kadı* (judge) of Osmançık, a district a little to the north of Amasya that bore the same characteristics as the latter, in order to see how this situation was interpreted in the capital of the Ottoman Empire:

It is notified that the aforementioned town is located on a route, that it is not lacking in messengers who stop by as they shuttle between the seat of the Sultan and Baghdad, Kurdistan, Georgia, and the frontiers of Persia, that all of its villages where travellers had long been seeking lodging have gone to wrack and ruin, that the subjects inhabiting this town and its villages have been having difficulty in receiving travellers, and that they no longer have the means to pay the *avarız* tax and to serve the travellers.<sup>48</sup>

Leaving aside the special location of the Amasya district, not only the local and foreign historical sources and *nasihatnames* (advice literature) of the period referred to the fact, irrespective of the reason behind it, that all of the Anatolian provinces had been witnessing violence from as early as the beginning of the century. This violence had already wrought havoc on the entire region in the initial phase of the Celali rebellions. Let us read a document from 1611, written directly by the finance bureaucrats of the state:

The situation is that the peasant subjects inhabiting the provinces of Anatolia and Karaman and Sivas and Maraş and Erzurum have abandoned their lands because of the cruelty and oppression of the Celalis and bandits, settling in the capital city of Istanbul, and Rumeli. Since the countryside still lay in ruins, not even a single *akçe* could be collected as *cizye* (head tax) previously paid regularly each year by its non-Muslim subjects and *bedel-i nüzul* (occasional taxes) by its Muslim subjects in these provinces.<sup>49</sup>

Lastly, what did the peasants who abandoned their villages en masse do, and where did they go? The above passage tells us that a great many of them flooded to the big cities, and especially to Istanbul. Similar historical records from the regions of Amasya and

48 'Kasaba-i mezbure yol üzerinde bulunmakla taraf-ı sultaniden Bağdad, Kürdisan ve Gürcistan ve bilcümle Acem serhadleri tarafına ulaklar varub gelmekden hâli olmayub ve kadimden menzil hizmetine tayin olunan karyeler bilkülliye harâb olmağın, menzil hususunda kasaba-i mezbure ahalisi ve kurra reayası ziyade usret çeküb hem avarız hem nüzul hizmetini eda etmek iktidarları olmaduğı ilâm olunmağın.' BOA, KK 2576 (*Mâliye Ahkâm Defteri*), p. 129, document dated 3 Safer 1053 (23 April 1643).

49 'Kazıyye oldur ki vilâyet-i Anadolu ve Karaman ve Sivas ve Maraş ve Erzurum'da Celali ve eşkiya ve zorbaların zulm ü teaddilerinden terk-i vatan edüb mahruse-i İstanbul'a ve Rumlî'ne gelen reayadan mukaddema sakin oldukları karyelerinde iken her sene keferesinin üzerlerine lâzım gelen cizye ve bedel-i nüzul akçelerin ve müsellimlerinin üzerlerine lâzım gelen bedel-i nüzul akçelerin viregelmişler iken hâlâ vilâyet viran olmağla cizye ve bedel-i nüzul akçelerinden bir akçe hâsıl olmaduğundan gayrı....' BOA, D.MKF, File: 4/122, document dated 5 Cemaziyülevvel 1020 (16 July 1611), mentioned by Günhan Börekçi, 'Factions and Favorites', 28-29.

Tokat point out that some of these peasants fled to the north of the Black Sea region, as far as Kefe.<sup>50</sup> There is also documentation suggesting that peasants suffering from intense violence fled to safer regions nearby, which might well be the logic behind this picture. Peasants fled from the Rûm province toward Erzurum and at times in the opposite direction... It would be wrong to conclude that in this atmosphere of violence people had but one option: to run away. Many peasants in fact chose to join the bandits in order to make a living, but more important, for survival. We should bear in mind that the Celali phenomenon in general and violence in particular could not have reproduced itself for such a long time unless a significant number of peasants joined their ranks. However, matters as difficult but also important as this are beyond the scope of this study, and they deserve to be addressed and discussed separately.<sup>51</sup>

Then again, one should not think that the only reason behind the abandonment of villages at this period was the spiral of violence, which also induced the members of the *askerî* class to Celaliism through the employment of certain mechanisms for internal exploitation. Yes, maybe it was the most easily identifiable and the most effective major reason. Nevertheless, factors such as food scarcity, famine, malnutrition, and excessive rainfall as well as drought brought about by climate change (which in fact seems to have been a global phenomenon)<sup>52</sup> in the various provinces of the Empire in this period could well have led to a similar outcome, at least in the regions where these phenomena were observed. We also need to bring up the more apparent case of epidemics, especially plague, which seem to have had at least as great an impact as violence on the abandonment of towns and villages. It is appropriate then to end this section by emphasising the fact that each one of these factors occurred frequently across the Empire during the seventeenth century.<sup>53</sup>

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How can we historicise in the long-range changes such observations regarding the abandonment of villages examined above based on the *avarız* registers drawn up in the years 1642-1643? The main argument of the present study is that the large-scale abandonment of villages witnessed in the records of the 1640s corresponds to a historical reality of the period, and that it marks a rupture in the history of settlement in Anatolia in general. It is beyond doubt that there is always the need for additional evidence to support this argu-

50 'The inhabitants of the aforementioned town flee to Erzurum in fear of the Celalis' ('Mahalle-i mezbure halkı Celali havfından Erzurum tarafına firar etmekle...'); 'Many flee to Kefe and Erzurum in fear of the Celalis.' ('Celâlî havfından nice kimesneler Kefe ve Erzurum taraflarına firar etmeğin...'). 'The inhabitants of [Tokad] flee to the lands of Kefe in fear of the Celalis.' ('Celali havfından [Tokad] ahalisi Kefe diyarına firar etmekle...'; BOA, MAD 15615, pp. 2-4.

51 For a limited analysis based on the example of Amasya, see Özel, 'Population Changes'; idem, *After the Storm*. See also Faroqhi, 'Anadolu İşkânı İle Terkedilmiş Köyler Sorunu', 297-298.

52 G. Parker, *Global Crisis: War, Climate Change and Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven and London 2012).

53 For an example, see Küpeli, '1604 Tarihli Manyas Kazası Avârız Defteri'.

ment. It then becomes imperative to search for new source materials that would enable us to trace the situation in the aftermath of the 1640s. It is also natural to ask how long this mid-seventeenth century picture endured. Or, whether we observe a recovery in the periods which followed. These are crucial questions for any analysis covering longer periods as far as historical continuities and ruptures are concerned.

I have already pointed to the fact that historical geography is one of the least developed aspects of Ottoman history. For historians, the main problem is the lack or scarcity of sources. Available sources are either indirect or scattered. This holds true especially for the eighteenth century. We understand from their existence in our archives that detailed *avarız* and *cizye* surveys continued and the resulting registers were drawn up on a regional basis throughout the early eighteenth century. Even though they do not exist continuously for every region,<sup>54</sup> such registers are indeed available from different dates, providing us with valuable information for respective regions of the Ottoman Empire, including the Balkans. It is an urgent task for historians to prepare a complete catalogue of the extant registers in the archives, and to analyse them systematically on a regional basis. Equally important is that, while such studies are carried out, the search for other complementary material should continue.

What other sources, then, can we think of regarding the later fate of the abandoned villages of the seventeenth century? Given our present knowledge, the sources that first come to mind are mainly nineteenth-century, and not eighteenth-century, sources, except for court registers, which are always useful with their sporadic references particularly to individual village settlements. As for the sources containing systematic and comparable numerical data, the established historiographical practice regarding the Ottoman population<sup>55</sup> is to make a very long jump from the data provided by the last *tahrir* registers of the late sixteenth century directly to the yearbooks (*salnames*) of the late nineteenth; and from there, to the early twentieth-century place-name compilations and maps. Let us note in passing that nearly all such studies are limited in scope in that they do not attempt to establish the 'missing link' between the two periods. As a rule, these studies concern themselves exclusively with aspects concerning the population history of the nineteenth-century modern world. By all means, in the absence of source material comparable to classic *tahrir* registers, it was only reasonable to think that explaining the population changes that occurred in the course of a very long period covering the 300 years following the late sixteenth century was methodologically and technically nearly impossible.

However, two recent developments have helped break this vicious circle, albeit not entirely: first, as this study has already demonstrated, seventeenth-century Ottoman de-

54 For instance, similar registers from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries for the region of Amasya do not exist.

55 I avoid using the term 'population movements' on purpose, because studies that focus on long-term population changes in the Ottoman Empire are extremely few. Machiel Kiel's monograph studies of Balkan towns constitute a significant exception to this. See M. Kiel, 'Hrazgrad-Hezargrad-Razgrad: The Vicissitudes of a Turkish Town in Bulgaria', *Turcica*, 21–23 (1991), 495–563; idem, 'Anatolia Transplanted? Patterns of Demographic, Religious and Ethnic Changes in the District of Tozluk (N.E. Bulgaria), 1479–1873', *Anatolica*, 17 (1991), 1–29.



mography and the history of settlement patterns are no longer a black hole. We are now in a position to extend the discussion from the late sixteenth century to the early eighteenth thanks to a variety of *avarız* and *cizye* registers. However, existing studies are still far from exploiting their potential. The current literature is in its infancy and it rarely allows us to make thorough comparisons. Nevertheless, now the material is there and waiting for further examination.

The second development, on the other hand, concerns the nineteenth century. When it comes to the modern Ottoman Empire, the yearbooks from the second half of the century no longer serve as our starting point. To the best of my knowledge, no attempt has yet been made to carry out an in-depth analysis of the series of *temettüat* (income) registers from the 1840s from the perspective of population and settlement patterns. In fact, these registers have great potential for historical demography and geography.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, yet more importantly, the whole series of the detailed registers from the population surveys of 1830-1831, known also as the first ‘modern’ census carried out in the Empire, have been fully opened to researchers only very recently. Even though most of them are dully descriptive and barely analytical, the first publications of these registers and the limited number of studies drawing on the data provided by these sources still suffice to show that they are indeed invaluable for the analysis of both population and settlement patterns.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, these extensive volumes are also now available, and, obviously deserving of a deeper interest.

The rich data provided by these ‘proto-modern’ census registers appear to be highly suitable for being examined systematically and in comparison with diverse material from former and later periods. Therefore, with the introduction of these sources, the above-mentioned “300-year-long gap” in Ottoman demographic and settlement history has been greatly reduced. For certain regions, this time interval has decreased to around 100 years, thanks to the availability of detailed *avarız* and *cizye* registers from the early eighteenth century, and population registers from the 1830s. The significance of this progress in historical research should certainly not be underestimated, if we take into con-

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56 In his noteworthy study on these sources, Nuri Adıyeke draws attention to the fact that *temettüat* (revenue) registers contain certain elements of the 1830-1831 censuses, including the definition in the relevant regulation (*tahrir-i nüfus ve emlâk*), but he does not enter into a more detailed evaluation concerning these sources in terms of the history of demography and rural settlements. See N. Adıyeke, ‘Temettuat Sayımları ve Bu Sayımları Düzenleyen Nizamname Örnekleri’, *OTAM*, 11 (2000), 769-825, esp. 770-772. For a small step that has been recently taken in this direction, see İ. Yiğit, ‘XIX. Yüzyıl Tarihi Coğrafya Çalışmaları İçin Önemli Bir Kaynak: Temettuat Defterleri’, *Türk Coğrafya Kurumunun 70. Kuruluş Yılı Anısına: “UKCK-2011” Bildirileri, 7-10 Eylül 2011*, İstanbul (Retrieved September 3, 2014, from *academia.edu*). For a general evaluation of these registers and the historiography, see Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu, ‘Osmanlı Sosyal ve İktisadi Tarihi Kaynaklarından Temettü Defterleri’, *Belleten*, CLIX/225 (1995), 395-412; Said Öztürk, ‘Türkiye’de Temettüat Çalışmaları’, *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi*, 1/1 (2003) 287-304.

57 This is not the place to enter into an exhaustive discussion on the potential of these registers; this would require a separate study.

sideration the huge gap that used to exist between the late sixteenth century and the late nineteenth century.

Why emphasise all this? Because, in this last section of the study I will attempt to experiment with these two series of historical sources in order to further our knowledge of the fate of the abandoned villages of the 1640s. By doing this, I will also try to extend the scholarly discussion of the changes in settlement patterns in Ottoman Anatolia up to the nineteenth century. In the absence of similar *avarız* registers for the Amasya region from the intervening period, I will try to employ the data found in the registers of the 1830s to seek an answer to the questions posed above: does the existence of numerous abandoned villages in the 1640s indicate a permanent break or shift in settlement patterns? Stated differently, can we talk of a recovery both in terms of population and settlement in rural Anatolia during the eighteenth century? That is, were the villages that appear to have been lost in the first half of the seventeenth century repopulated and re-inhabited later?

As most historians do, let us begin with twentieth-century maps and village lists, since this is apparently the easiest lead towards a possible answer. According to a village list compiled in 1928 by the Ministry of Interior Affairs, there were around 250-260 villages in the region corresponding to the sixteenth-century Amasya district,<sup>58</sup> which is very close to the number (262) provided in the *avarız* register of 1643. When we look at the maps prepared on a scale of 1:200,000 in 1946-1947 and those prepared later on a scale of 1:50,000 by the General Directorate of Mapping, we see that the number of villages in the region in question rises to approximately 275-280. What this crude comparison primarily tells us is that settlement in the region corresponding to the Amasya district was at its densest in the sixteenth century (approximately 380 villages and dozens of inhabited arable lands) throughout its known history, and it could never again attain such a density, even in the twentieth century.

When we compare the village names that come up both in village lists and on maps, we arrive at the following conclusion regarding abandoned villages: of the 140 villages which do not appear in the *avarız* register of 1643, and which we therefore assume to have been abandoned, 43 villages (approximately 30%) appear again as inhabited settlements. This means that these abandoned villages were repopulated in the course of the eighteenth century. This being the case, should we assume that the remaining 97 of the abandoned villages of the 1640s were never repopulated?

At this point, we should remember that in the 'Village Law' of 1924, a 'village' was defined as a rural settlement with a maximum population of 2,000.<sup>59</sup> It was also stated in the second article of this law that scattered rural settlements consisting of a few households were to count as 'villages' only if they boasted a school, a mosque, a pasture, or a forest. That is to say, except for inhabited *mezraas*, all the settlements, even those consisting of a few households, were recorded as villages in sixteenth and sev-

58 *Son Teşkilât-ı Mülkiye'de Köylerimizin Adları* (İstanbul 1928); *Köy Envanter Etüdü: 05 Amasya*, (Ankara, Köy İşleri Bakanlığı 1981).

59 *Düstur*, 3rd edition, vol. V, 696.

enteenth-century Ottoman registers, whereas only those that satisfied the above-mentioned criteria were included as independent settlements in the village lists compiled after 1924. Therefore, it was the common practice in the Republican period to record such small clusters of settlements as 'neighbourhoods' (*mahalle*) of the closest villages or to show them on maps as independent sites (*mevki*). Therefore, the official village list compiled in 1928 can be quite misleading for researchers. And tackling this problem requires a systematic approach to the maps and all kinds of site-neighborhood-village names mentioned in the available sources of later periods as well as research accompanied by fieldwork.

The next question is the following: would it be possible to establish a chronology for the partial recovery revealed by the above comparison based on material from the early twentieth century? The simple answer is yes, if we can find out how many of the abandoned 'village' settlements of 1643 were actually repopulated during the eighteenth century. It is exactly at this point that we turn our attention to the population registers of the 1830s, because neither the Tanzimat Edict was issued nor the reforms concerning the re-organisation of the administrative structure by new regulations were implemented in this period. In a sense, we are still in the pre-modern world of the Ottoman Empire. These registers are especially important for our study in that they include detailed information on even the smallest settlements, including farms (*çiflik*s) and even caravanserais, and the number of people inhabiting these settlements, in a way that is reminiscent of the surveys carried out in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The most striking similarity that the population registers of the 1830s bear to their earlier counterparts is that *cizye*-paying non-Muslims subjects still appear under the early modern categories of *âlâ*, *evsât*, and *ednâ*, denoting the subjects' economic well-being. Therefore, taking a closer look at these 'proto-modern' population survey registers of this period of transition can allow for a reasonable degree of comparison. In the pages which follow, I will present the preliminary results of my comparative analysis of these two sets of registers.<sup>60</sup>

Let us continue with the same sixteenth and seventeenth-century sub-districts, though some of them appear under different names in the 1830s.<sup>61</sup> Starting with Akdağ, five of the 18 villages in the Akdağ sub-district that seem to have disappeared by 1643 re-appear in the 1830s. Speaking of which, two *mezraas*, which were registered as uninhabited lands in the sixteenth century, were put down in the registers of the nineteenth century as thinly populated villages. The only village in the Aştagul district that seems abandoned in 1643 does not re-appear in the 1830s, leading us to conclude that it completely ceased to exist. With the exception of one village, none of the abandoned settlements of the Bergoma and Yavaş-ili sub-districts re-appears in the records kept in the 1830s. This exception is a village called Oğlanlar Obası, which was abandoned by 1643, and which re-emerged under a different name (*Tatar*) in the register of 1831. The same holds true for the Ge-

60 The registers used in this study are the following: BOA, NFS.d. 02134, 02136-02147, 02149.

61 For the sake of consistency with sixteenth century settlements, I have gone through all of the districts of the province of Amasya village by village to find out whether some of the old settlements were recorded under newly-created districts with new names.

likiras sub-district. None of its abandoned villages seems to have been re-populated by the 1830s. Likewise, only one *mezraa* (Turgut), uninhabited in the sixteenth century, was re-populated by 1845/46 with only three households recorded as its inhabitants.<sup>62</sup> As for the Argoma sub-district, which lost a large number of villages, only six of its abandoned villages (three of them being *etrakiye* villages) were re-populated in the early nineteenth century. One of these abandoned villages was Kabaklu, which was very thinly populated in 1576 (an adult male population of four), and which appears to have re-emerged as a settlement, now inhabited by the *Yürüks* of Zile.

Similarly, Akviran (today's Akören), which was recorded as an *Etrakiye* village in the tax registers beginning with the late fifteenth century, and which was a quite densely populated settlement in 1576 (with an adult male population of 250) was one of the many villages that were abandoned in the 1640s. The relevant registers reveal that Akviran was repopulated in the 1830s by the *Yürüks* of Zile. We understand from this information that former *Etrakiye* villages which were deserted at some point were repopulated principally by nomadic or semi-nomadic groups at the earliest opportunity, probably because of their favourable locations. The same went for the other *Etrakiye* villages in this sub-district, i.e., Hacıbayramlı and Karacaviran, as well. We have observed that the former village, which relocated and avoided disintegrating completely in the 1640s by merging together with a nearby village called Laçın (*maa* Laçın), re-appeared in its former location and under its former name in the register of 1831. Perhaps these *etrakiye* villages were among the villages that were resettled during the not-so-successful attempt of the Ottoman government to settle nomadic tribes from the 1690s on.<sup>63</sup> The example of the Kabaklu village, on the other hand, shows that nomadic groups re-populated not only *etrakiye* villages but also other empty and ruined former settlements which they deemed favourable for settlement. It is probable that the same was the case for the districts of two Haymanas of Ankara as well.

As for Geldigelen, which was the second most devastated sub-district in the 1640s, nine of its villages appear to have been re-populated by the 1830s. One of the villages was Çavuş, an *Etrakiye* village re-populated again by the *Yürüks* of Zile. The cases of two other villages in Geldigelen are also worth mentioning: Elvan Çelebi, a central village located on the Çorum-Amasya-Tokat route, which the Ottoman army took during their military campaigns, was one of the most populated villages of the region in 1576 (with a population of 207 adult males). Elvan Çelebi boasted a dervish lodge, which bore the same name as the village, and which was frequented by dervishes descended from Aşık Pasha. However, this village did not appear in the register of 1643. If we assume

62 A significant feature of the census registers of the 1830s is that all demographic changes, such as birth-death, immigration, etc., that occurred in the years following the initial records were also noted down with a red pen for 10-15 years. This is how the above-mentioned plot of land with three households found its way into the registers of 1262 AH/1845-46 AD.

63 Regarding this subject, see C. Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Aşiretlerin İskânı* (İstanbul 1987); Y. Halaçoğlu, *XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İskân Siyaseti ve Aşiretlerin Yerleştirilmesi* (Ankara 2006).

that Elvan Çelebi, the only village in the sub-district that went unrecorded despite having such a large population, was abandoned like many other villages in this period (if there is no other explanation for the lack of relevant records in the register), it would be rather odd to think that this central village would disappear for good. In fact, we come across the name of this village in the registers of 1831, and, what is more, we see it as the administrative centre of the district (*nefs-i kazâ*) with the same name. All this means that what was only 'natural' for Elvan Çelebi eventually took place, making it a good example of the villages that managed to resist disappearing completely even during the greatest catastrophes. The second example is Musaköy, which appears to have been yet another settlement abandoned in the 1640s. This village re-emerged with the same name in the register of 1831, but with a note next to it: "It is Çaparzâde Musa Bey's farm". This example demonstrates that some lost villages were revived much later as farms either by members of the military or by members of famous *ayan* (provincial political elites) families, as in this example. If this is the case, then Musaköy must have been revived in the eighteenth century.

Another fact revealed by the population count of 1831 is that some *mezraas* which were uninhabited in the 1570s and which went unrecorded in the 1640s appear to have turned into inhabited villages by the early nineteenth century, suggesting that certain safer and more fertile *mezraas* have been resettled after the 1640s. In other words, such plots of land resurfaced as 'new' villages in the subsequent periods. If we speak in terms of settlement patterns, that is to say that safer and more fertile lands were re-populated when a favourable moment arrived.

When and under which circumstances could the village settlements that re-emerged in the registers of the 1830s have been resettled? This is a critical question which can lead us into a long discussion. Let us end this section by mentioning a couple of possibilities and leave such a discussion to another study. As noted earlier, certain villages attached to royal domains could have been re-invigorated by the government as part of the resettlement attempts. Others, like Elvan Çelebi, could have been re-populated as soon as violence subsided, right after the surveys of 1641-1642. Surely, the same goes for the other villages that were once abandoned and later re-populated as well. Lastly, some former settlements like Musaköy could have been re-populated as part of the economic and settlement policies adopted by large *ayan* families in the eighteenth century. It should be remembered that the spiral of violence continued unabated from the 1640s on throughout the Ottoman Empire in different forms and intensities. This was especially true of central provinces like Rûm. Therefore, it would be reasonable to assume that in these circumstances, some of the villages that were 'half-ruined' and thinly-populated in around 1640 could have also been abandoned and thus gone unrecorded in the later surveys.

The data which we have obtained from the population registers of 1831 show that the number of villages which were re-populated and which re-emerged in these registers under the same name is around 20. But we had identified 43 such villages in the village lists and maps of the twentieth century. How are we to explain the difference between these two numbers?

The first possibility that comes to mind is that some of the other 23 villages were new villages re-established in the place of abandoned settlements under new names.<sup>64</sup> Only field research can help determine, albeit to a certain extent, whether this possibility was the case. The other possibility is that, after the 1830s, people re-populated these villages on their own initiative or as part of the government policy of resettlement. If this proves to be the case, then we will be speaking of important methodological progress in settlement history research since we will be able to trace the changes that occurred until the 1830s using the above-mentioned census registers, and the changes that occurred in the post-Tanzimat era using *temettüat* (income) registers, yearbooks, and other miscellaneous sources. At this point, we should recall Hütteroth's opinion once again, but this time in the light of the new information presented above. According to Hütteroth, the period following the 1860s and the developments that took place during this period (such as the attempts made to settle immigrants and tribes, population movements, technological innovations concerning agriculture, and market-orientated production) actually account for the current settlement patterns in Turkey. Even though Hütteroth's observation applies primarily to the region that he studied, we can find out the extent to which this holds good for other regions as well by analysing this material systematically and in comparison with other relevant materials.

The last two possibilities that come to mind regarding the difference between the two numbers that were mentioned in the case of the Amasya district are the following: the population registers of 1831 might have their shortcomings, or we, as historians, might be lacking the experience or the knowledge to figure out how best to employ these registers in our studies. Both of these assumptions might well be true. And the only way to find this out is to carry out more studies like that of Hütteroth's or those based on the seventeenth-century *avarız* and *cizye* registers, using all kinds of material available, including the census registers of the 1830s.

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This study has provided us with a number of closely interrelated findings. First, we addressed the abandonment of villages as one of the crucial changes that occurred in the settlement patterns of rural Anatolia following the compilation of the last tax registers of the sixteenth century. As demonstrated by the case of the Amasya province, one can reasonably reach the conclusion that widespread banditry and the great Celali rebellions that made their way into almost all of the available sources of the seventeenth century, which I deem to be a century of violence, were among the primary causes, if not the only one for the abandonment of villages. We now have a better understanding of the various ways in which this phenomenon was expressed in the sources and of the rhetorical clichés and official jargon that were coined to refer to the abandonment of villages. However, the Ot-

64 Regarding the re-emergence of abandoned villages under a new name, and at times at a different location, see Kotzageorgis, *Haric ez Defter*; Faroqhi, 'Anadolu İskânı İle Terkedilmiş Köyler Sorunu', 295-296.



toman government's perception of the situation and its search for a solution to the problem is equally important, as we have more than enough evidence concerning the stance of the government regarding the abandonment of rural settlements. The excerpts that we have included in this study are sufficient to provide insight into this matter.

Second, the new evidence presented in this study through the systematic examination of the detailed *avarız* and *cizye* registers of the 1640s demonstrates that it is now possible to trace the directions of change in the period following the late sixteenth century. With their contents and characteristics, these registers are in many ways comparable with the *tahrir defter*s of the previous century. It is largely thanks to their comparable quantitative data that we now have further evidence regarding not only the population changes that took place in the first half of the seventeenth century but also the other aspects of major population movements in rural Anatolia, including the abandonment of settlements, i.e., the phenomenon termed 'the Great Flight' by Mustafa Akdağ. One of the important results of this study of the Amasya region is that approximately 34% of the rural settlements that existed in the region during the sixteenth century were abandoned by the 1640s. It is worthy of note that the majority of these settlements were small villages established on lowlands during the sixteenth-century expansion, which is in line not only with Hütteroth's observations on the Konya region, but bears comparison with many European regions which witnessed demographic pressure and climate change.<sup>65</sup> The same sources reveal that the population of hundreds of villages that continued to exist in 'semi-ruins' from this time on decreased to such an extent as to be hardly recognisable, and this was to have a direct effect on settlement patterns. In her study of the Ottoman registers of finance, Linda Darling has shown that, in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, nearly 50% of the *avarız* tax-exemption demands were made on the grounds of the dispersal of or a significant decrease in population for some reason (which obviously include epidemics and plague). By this, Darling has in a sense pointed to the fact that this problem had become chronic.<sup>66</sup> It is especially significant to note in this context that Sarı Mehmed Paşa identified the resettlement of peasants back in their former villages as an important problem even in the end of the century.<sup>67</sup>

As far as the central issue of the present study is concerned, the conclusion that Barkey and Rossem reached in their innovative study by employing the model that they de-

65 See Faroqhi, 'Anadolu İskânı ile Terkedilmiş Köyler Sorunu', 294. Cf. E. Le Roy Ladurie, *The Peasants of Languedoc*, trans. J. Day (Urbana and Chicago 1976), and Parker, *Global Crisis*.

66 L. T. Darling, 'Avârız in the Seventeenth Century: The Avârız Registers and Ottoman Population', unpublished paper presented at the First Economic History Congress (Marmara University, Istanbul, 7-8 September 2007). I would like to express my gratitude to the author for allowing me to draw upon this paper. For Mâliye Ahkâm registers and the characteristics of the records in them, see A. Açikel, 'Osmanlı İktisat Tarihi İncelemeleri İçin Temel Bir Kaynak Olarak Maliye Ahkâm Defterleri', in R. D. Özsoy *et al.* (eds.), *Birinci İktisat Tarihi Kongresi Tebliğleri* (Marmara University, Istanbul, 7-8 September 2007), Vol. 1, 31-52; R. Günalan, 'XVII. Yüzyıl Maliye Ahkâm Defterleri', in İ. Erünsal *et al.* (eds.), *Essays in Memory of Hazel E. Heughan* (Edinburgh 2007), 223-237.

67 Cited by McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, p. 65.



veloped might help shed some more light on our subject-matter as well. In their study, Barkey and Rossem argue that in the period from the 1570s to the 1650s, rural settlements played a decisive and regulatory role in the relationship between the central market, i.e., the city, and its agricultural hinterland. Some of these villages served as an intermediary between these two within the context of the web of relations between the peasants and villages in rural Western Anatolia and their reactions to the expansion of commercial markets and the state. According to Barkey and Rossem, it is particularly these intermediary settlements that were the most vulnerable to all kinds of influences.<sup>68</sup> If this is actually true and if we try to adapt this model to settlement patterns, is it then possible to interpret within this context the incidents that occurred in the particular central villages of the Amasya province (for example, the large villages of Hakala, Elvan Çelebi, and Aştagul), i.e., severe population loss and partial desolation? The nature of the web of relations described above between villages and the stratification of villagers can account for the fact that Hakala, for instance, which served as an ‘intermediary’ and created its own satellite settlements, was more severely affected by this process and suffered a bigger population loss than its satellite settlement Değirmendere, even though it managed to preserve its neighbourhood (*mahalle*) structure.

Third, seventeenth-century rural Amasya (and in certain respects, the entire Anatolian countryside) and its villages which continued their existence lost their resistance to all kinds of adverse developments and pressures, and entered a period of vulnerability, facing at all times the imminent danger of mass abandonment. It is for this very reason that the picture of the settlement patterns of the 1640s, consisting of half-empty and/or completely deserted villages, was also characterised by uncertainty: they were extremely susceptible to formation, abandonment, and re-emergence at any time because of the unusual circumstances that were to persist until the end of the century.<sup>69</sup> And this meant that some of the villages with a small population that existed and therefore were recorded only a couple of months earlier in the registers by our surveyor Mehmed Murad Efendi could already have been abandoned as the fair copies of the survey results were being made in Istanbul. Or vice versa: some abandoned villages or *mezraas* which he did not record in the register could have already begun to show signs of life, as they were inhabited by peasants or nomads who tried to survive just like the settlements themselves and who thus returned to their villages individually or in small groups, albeit hesitantly and timidly. In the case of Antakya, for instance, we can easily trace such examples which

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68 K. Barkey and R. Van Rossem, ‘Networks of Contention: Villages and Regional Structure in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire’, *American Journal of Sociology*, 102/5 (1997), 1345-1382.

69 For the similar situation in the Balkans, see Kotzageorgis, ‘*Haric ez Defter*’, 240-241. For the role of famine and drought on the abandonment of rural settlements, both villages and *mezraas*, in the nineteenth-century Ottoman countryside, see Özge Ertem, ‘Eating the Last Seed: Famine, Empire, Survival and Order in Ottoman Anatolia in the Late 19th Century’ unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, European University Institute, Florence, 2012; Zozan Pehlivan, ‘Abandoned Villages in Diyarbakir Province at the End of the “Little Ice Age” (1800-1850)’ (unpublished paper). I thank Z. Pehlivan for allowing me to read this paper.

went down more clearly into the registers. The number of ruined villages in this region was quite high: more than 100 villages were lost by the 1650s. However, some of these abandoned villages appeared as re-populated in the *avarız* registers of 1678.<sup>70</sup>

Naturally, there was no guarantee that abandoned and re-populated villages would always remain so. If we look at the other known examples, the great majority of the abandoned villages of the seventeenth century remained empty until the 1860s according to Hütteroth's observations. Similarly, Ottoman reports from 1781 pointed to the fact that only 19 of the approximately 170 villages established as a rule by semi-nomadic tribes on the Haymana plateau were inhabited and that the rest had recently been abandoned.<sup>71</sup> More interestingly, the people living in the region identified "the attacks launched by bandits consisting of unemployed brigand-soldiers (*kapusuz levendât eşkıyası tasallu-dundan*)" as the primary reason for this situation. That is to say, the Celali bandits of the seventeenth century were in a sense replaced in the following century by these unemployed *levendât* (though the ones who were employed were not any different). The acts of banditry committed in the countryside by these brigand-soldiers became more established than ever, which made it nearly impossible for rural settlements on extremely vulnerable lowlands to recover.<sup>72</sup>

Fourth, this study has explored later developments that occurred in badly ruined and highly 'vulnerable' Anatolian rural settlements during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by seeking an answer to the question of whether some of these settlements were ever re-populated or not. In the case of Amasya, the population registers of the 1830s, which are chronologically the most recent records available (at least for now), and which can be employed for the period after the 1640s, seem to have great potential in that they provide valuable clues that can help answer this question. The attempt made to this end in the last section of the present study has primarily revealed that the number of rural settlements in the province never became as high as in the late sixteenth century. However, it is equally important to note that a considerable percentage (30%) of the previously abandoned villages resurfaced in the early 1830s as inhabited villages, perhaps after being deserted a number of times. On the other hand, as the example of the Haymana districts on the Central Anatolian plateau demonstrates, in some regions, peasants continued to abandon their villages en masse even in the late eighteenth century, and a significant number

70 Çakar, '17. yüzyılın ikinci yarısında Antakya Kazâsında İskân ve Nüfus', 443-444.

71 S. Dede, 'From Nomadism to Sedentary Life in Central Anatolia: The Case of Rışvan Tribe (1830-1932)', unpublished M.A. thesis, Bilkent University, 2011, 44.

72 It seems that similar itinerant irregular/bandit/mercenary forces, consisting of men looking constantly for official posts, functioned like a perennial machine of destruction throughout the eighteenth century and until the early nineteenth century. On this subject, which deserves to be addressed in a separate study, see (for now) Ş. Korkmaz, 'Âsi ve Eşkıya: Delilbaşı Kadıkıran Mehmed Ağa, 1825-1834', *Kebikeç, İnsan Bilimleri İçin Kaynak Araştırmaları Dergisi* 33 (2012), 149-171; T. U. Esmer, 'The Precarious Intimacy of Honor in Late Ottoman Accounts of Para-militarism and Banditry', *European Journal of Turkish Studies* [online], 18 (2014), published online on 3 February 2014, visited on 1 September 2014. URL: <http://ejts.revues.org/4873>.

of these rural settlements were those established by semi-nomads. To continue with the example of Amasya, we can consider the remaining 70% of the villages that were abandoned in first half of the seventeenth century as 'lost' settlements par excellence. Again, in Hütteroth's words, these settlements must have literally turned into 'ruins' or *viran/ören*. Even in this case, one should not rule out the possibility that some of these lost villages could well have been re-populated, at times under different names, by the centralist governments of the Tanzimat period, which occasionally adopted and implemented certain re-population policies (including those regarding the resettlement of immigrants) after the 1840s. This is why some of these abandoned villages (the villages with the same name, of course) appear to be inhabited in the village lists and maps of the 1930s.

Finally, a possibility that has been occasionally entertained in the historiography of Ottoman settlement and population studies, i.e., the possibility that the eighteenth century witnessed a period of improvement and recovery, must from now on be approached with caution. The case of the Amasya province shows that we can speak only of a partial and modest recovery in terms of the abandoned villages for the period preceding the 1860s. It would perhaps be more reasonable to seek such a recovery not in the eighteenth century but in the century that followed. Indeed, it was the second half of the nineteenth century that was marked by an upward trend in rural population and settlements, a trend that ran counter to the trends of the seventeenth century, including the shift of rural settlements once more to the lowlands from the high plateaus.

# CONVERSION TO ISLAM IN OTTOMAN RURAL SOCIETIES IN THE BALKANS: THE CASES OF VALLAHADES AND POMAKS

Phokion P. KOTZAGEORGIS\*

**D**URING THE PAST DECADE RESEARCH INTO THE PHENOMENON of conversion from Christianity to Islam in the Ottoman Empire has been revisited to a great extent. This revival fostered new trends by posing new questions, by making use of new sources, and by directing the researchers' interest to issues minimally dealt with hitherto. The use of first person narrations by converts from Christianity and of petitions of new Muslims to the Sultan for the procurement of monetary assistance for clothing (*kisve bahası*); the use of all types of narrative sources in combination with the administrative evidence; and, finally, the emergence of completely unknown nineteenth-century Ottoman archival material are new contributions to the field. Recent research has shed light on the opinions and thoughts of the converts themselves or their proselytisers regarding the conversion, thus allowing for re-evaluation of researchers' views on this issue.<sup>1</sup>

When one studies this phenomenon in rural societies and in the period prior to the nineteenth century, the main difficulty one faces is the lack of qualitative sources, espe-

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1 M.D. Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Empire* (Oxford 2008); S. Deringil, "There Is No Compulsion in Religion": On Conversion and Apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire: 1839-1856', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 42/3 (2000), 547-575; Idem, *Conversion and Apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 2012); T. Krstic, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam and the Glory of the Ottoman Sultanate: Self-Narratives of Conversion to Islam in the Age of Confessionalization', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 51/1 (2009), 35-63; Eadem, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford 2011); A. Minkov, *Conversion to Islam in the Balkans: Kisve Bahası Petitions and Ottoman Social Life, 1670-1730* (Leiden 2004). To these it should be added a very good synopsis of the recent bibliography on the Islamisations: A. Zhelyazkova, 'Islamization in the Balkans as a Historiographical Problem: the Southeast-European Perspective', in F. Adanir with S. Faroqhi (eds), *The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography* (Leiden 2002), 223-266.

cially from the side of those converted. The converts of the rural regions of the Ottoman Empire were not scholars, very possibly not even literate.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, unlike the case of the nineteenth century, during the earlier centuries, no Ottoman archival sources containing the abjurers' views have been found.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, it is more difficult to approach the cause or the motive which led to the conversion. In any case, it should be noted that in rural pre-modern society the function of each individual was much less independent of the community than is the case today. Therefore, the ascertainment of trends remains a basic hermeneutic tool in the study of the conversion phenomenon in the Ottoman hinterland. This, however, does not diminish variety in this phenomenon, even among these populations. The question regarding the extent to which the particular (social, cultural, financial, political, and geographical) conditions of a region or some general patterns played the decisive role in the conversions will continue to concern the scholarship, although, because of the dearth of appropriate primary sources, it is unlikely that a conclusive answer can be reached.

As the only region of the Ottoman territory that had at the time of its incorporation into the Ottoman state the largest and most homogeneous group of non-Muslims, the Balkans *par excellence* constitute a prime field of study for the conversion phenomenon in Ottoman history. It is widely known that both Turkish and Balkan historiography has attempted to account for the rise of Islam in the Ottoman Balkans by overemphasising either the Turkish colonisation process during the first centuries of the Ottoman occupation (fourteenth-fifteenth c.) or the Islamisation of the local Christians during the later centuries (seventeenth-eighteenth c.). In addition to the latter approach, the motif of mass compulsory Islamisation in rural areas as a means for the rise of Islam in the Balkans has also been elaborated. Recently, the Bulgarian historian Anton Minkov, by analysing extant taxation records in the Balkans and applications of new Muslims to the Sultan for the provision of food and clothing, attempted a different approach to the conversion phenomenon. Borrowing Bulliet's theory on the stages of conversion to Islam, which was applied to medieval Iran, Minkov outlined the stages in the process of conversion in the Balkans. Simultaneously, he formulated views on the motives that led simple people to conversion, as well as their social profile.

Building on the aforementioned literature on the subject, the present article will attempt to approach comparatively two cases of conversion among rural populations: the 'Vallahades' and the 'Pomaks', as they became known during the era of nationalism (end of nineteenth – beginning of twentieth century). These groups shared two common characteristics. The first was that, significantly, they spoke the local language – not one of the three 'sacred languages' (*elsine-i selase*) of Islam – and the second was that they did not develop any kind of literature and consequently they did not create any written sources. The article has two goals, a broader one and a more specific one: on the one hand, it aims at investigating and demonstrating that the conversion phenomenon in the Balkans is not subject to any kind of a typology, rather it should be studied on an *ad hoc* basis; and, on

2 Cf. conversely the cases analysed by Krstic, 'Illuminated by the Light of Islam', 43-62.

3 Cf. the sources used by Deringil, "There Is No Compulsion in Religion", 559-564.

the other, it argues that the same approach should also be applied to research on the relation between language and conversion to Islam in the Ottoman period. An item ancillary to the article's primary goals will also be discussed: that the negative picture painted of these populations during the era of intense national feelings (beginning of the twentieth century) is due to their socio-economic marginalisation and does not necessarily apply to the previous period. Furthermore, these populations were mainly among the 'silent people' of history, for whom the question of their self-determined identity was crucial for their future life.

### *The Vallahades*

These were Greek-speaking Muslims who populated the province of Voion and the region of Grevena (in the western part of Greek Macedonia) until 1923. Then, because of their religion, they were deemed exchangeable and were located to Turkey, mainly in areas around Istanbul and Konya. In their former location, they lived either in unmixed Muslim villages, or in mixed ones, which were scattered over an area populated predominantly by Christians. According to local tradition, they were given their name by the Christians, because of the fact that the only Turkish-Arabic word the 'Vallahades' knew was 'wallahi' (By God!). No written documents produced by them have survived, save for some songs. On the eve of their exchange in 1923, their numbers reached 11,600 in the provinces of Grevena and Anaselitsa (i.e., Voion). Vallahades were considered to be followers of the Bektashis, while it has also been argued that their customs included Christian elements.<sup>4</sup>

Local Greek historiography has mainly tried to find evidence regarding the origins of this group, and because of the lack of any reliable data, explanations have included almost all possible theories of Islamisation in the Balkans – such as Islamisation of the Greeks, Hellenisation of the Vardariot Turks, etc. – as well as all probable timelines dur-

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4 Apart from the local Greek literature, which more or less reproduces the same information, there is no rich bibliography on this group. Below I mention the basic works: M. Hardie, 'Christian Survivals Among Certain Moslem Subjects of Greece', *The Contemporary Review*, 147/2 (1924), 225-232; K. Tsourkas-[S. Kyriakidis], 'Τραγούδια Βαλλαχάδων' [Vallahades' songs], *Μακεδονικά*, 2 (1941-1952), 461-471; M. A. Kallinderis, 'Συμβολή εις την μελέτην του θέματος των Βαλαάδων' [A contribution to the study of Vallahades' topic], *Μακεδονικά*, 17 (1977), 315-366; F. De Jong, 'The Greek Speaking Muslims of Macedonia: Reflection on Conversion and Ethnicity', in M. Vandamme (ed), *De Turcicis Aliisque Rebus: Commentarii Henry Hofman dedicati. Utrecht Turcological Series*, Vol. 3 (Utrecht 1992), 141-148; I. Glavinias, 'Οι μουσουλμανικοί πληθυσμοί στην Ελλάδα (1912-1923): Αντιλήψεις και πρακτικές της ελληνικής διοίκησης. Σχέσεις με χριστιανούς γηγενείς και πρόσφυγες' [The Muslims in Greece (1912-1923): conceptions and practices of the Greek administration. Relations with the Christians indigenous population and the refugees], unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Thessaloniki, 2009, 22, 47, 323, 383-384, 473-475. Recently, a Ph.D. dissertation has been submitted on the Vallahades: A.-M. Tsetlaka, 'Les musulmans hellénophones de Macédoine occidentale (XVIIIe-XXe siècle)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Aix-En-Provence, 2011. Unfortunately, I have had no access to this work.

ing which these processes could have happened. According to the prevailing opinion, the ‘Vallahades’ were the local Greek-speaking Christians who were Islamicised during the second half of the seventeenth century. Indeed, according to oral tradition, the Islamisation was mass but not enforced and originated from two brothers from the village of Lioufi. These brothers went to Istanbul (as *devşirme* recruits?), where they converted to Islam and afterwards returned to their villages as officials (*çavuses*) under the names of Sinan Çavuş and Hüseyin Çavuş. They preached Islam to their compatriots, which led to the conversion of a significant part of the local Christians to Islam.<sup>5</sup>

The first of the travellers to note the particularity of these populations was the French physician François Pouqueville, who visited the area in 1806. According to Pouqueville, Vardariot Turks were established in that area in the fourteenth century by the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid I, in order to make up for the loss of the local Christians who were sold into slavery.<sup>6</sup> The British officer William Leake, who preceded Pouqueville in his travels (1805), did not comment on the Greek language or the origin of the Muslims in the region.<sup>7</sup> In his *Seyahatname*, Evliya Çelebi also did not note anything on the region, except that the village of Lipçışta was inhabited by Greek-Orthodox Christians (*Urum*). Neither does Kâtib Çelebi provide any specific information on the region in his geographical works.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, until now no narrative sources on the region have been found prior to the nineteenth century. Therefore, our attempt to study the past of the Vallahadic region is based on fiscal registers, which, despite their static nature, are one of the most-used sources for the investigation of the conversion phenomenon in the Ottoman Empire.

The region under study was the area where two of the Balkan provinces (*sancak*) joined: the *sancak* of Yanya (Gk. Ioannina) and the *sancak* of Paşa. As no substantial number of fiscal registers from the *sancak* of Yanya has survived, the area belonging to the *sancak* of Paşa has been selected for our study. It can be assumed that the conversion phenomenon in the nearby villages of Girebene (Gk. Grevena) that belonged to the *sancak* of Yanya would have had similar characteristics. The region of Voion belonged administratively during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to the district (*kaza*) of Aştin-

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5 For an analysis of the theories on the origins and the Islamisation of the Vallahades see: Kallinderis, ‘Συμβολή’, 329-359. Concisely see: De Jong, ‘The Greek Speaking Muslims’, 143-147. The tradition of the role of the two brothers in the Islamisation of the Vallahades was mentioned for the first time by B. Nicolaidy, *Les Turcs et la Turquie contemporaine. Itinéraire et compte-rendu des voyages dans les provinces ottomans avec cartes détaillées* (Paris 1859), 216, who places the event 200 years before his era, namely in c. 1660.

6 F.C.H.L. Pouqueville, *Voyage dans la Grèce*, Vol. 2 (Paris 1820), 337-338. Cf. Kallinderis, ‘Συμβολή’, 331-334.

7 Leake mentions only that the region “contains upwards of 100 villages, the greater part of which are small; about one half of the number are Turkish”. (W. Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, Vol. I [London 1835], 321).

8 Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatname*, ed. O.Ş. Gökyay, Vol. VIII (Istanbul 2000), 311. Katib Çelebi mentions only that there was a fair in the village Toçil (today Tsotyli) every spring (Hadschi Chalfa, *Rumeli und Bosna geographisch beschrieben*, ed. J. von Hammer [Vienna 1812], 98).



Horpište (Gk. Argos Orestiko),<sup>9</sup> but from the beginning of the seventeenth century it separated and became the independent district of Našliç (Gk. Anaselitsa).<sup>10</sup>

Samples of extant sources for the fifteenth century are non-existent, but sources for the sixteenth century are quite rich, whereas those for the seventeenth contain gaps.<sup>11</sup> Our analysis will be conducted simultaneously on two levels: primarily the data from a sample of villages will be analysed and at the same time the results will be compared with the conclusions of recent research conducted for the whole region of Horpište.<sup>12</sup> The sampling of the specific 24 selected villages is based on various tables of villages compiled at the beginning of the twentieth century. These were suggested by various agen-

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- 9 In the reign of Süleyman the district was renamed Horpište, from the name of the capital of the district. The former name, Aştin, in all likelihood came from the name of an Albanian landowner who, apparently, had his lands in the area during the fifteenth century.
  - 10 In the travellers' sources and the bibliography, Našliç was considered the old name of the village Lipçišta (today Neapoli, Kozani), the only small town of the Voion area during the period studied. However, the word exists in the fiscal registers of the sixteenth century where it is used to denote a sub-district (*nahiye*) of the district of Horpište, albeit without consistency: in the register TT 424 (of 1530) 25 villages are recorded in this sub-district, while in TT 433 (of 1542) only five. In the other registers the sub-district does not appear. However, the name Našliç appeared as "another name" (*nam-ı diğer*) of the village Labanovo (today Simandro, Kozani). See: BOA, TT 424, 711; TT 433, 437; TT 720, 387; and A. Stojanovski, *Turski Dokumenti za istorijata na makedonskiot narod: Opširen popisnen defter za kazite Gorica, Biglišta i Hrupišta od 1568/9 godina* [Turkish documents for the history of the Macedonian people: detailed fiscal register for the districts of Görice, Bihlišta and Hrupišta from the year 1568/9], Vol. VII/I (Skopje 1997), 569-570. This village was located to the NW of Lipçišta at quite a distance. So, it is difficult to argue as to what the presence of the two Našliçes actually means. It is interesting that in this period the word 'Anaselitsa' was in the title of the local Greek-Orthodox bishop. See: Z. Melissakis, *Αρχείο Ι.Μ. Εσφιγμένου: Επιτομές μεταβυζαντινών εγγράφων* [Archive of the Holy Monastery of Esphigmenou: digests of the post-byzantine documents] (Athens 2008), 37-39 (Doc. No. 7 of 1597: Bishopric of Sisanion and Anaselitsa).
  - 11 For the fifteenth century no tax survey has been preserved. For the sixteenth century four detailed fiscal registers have been preserved, of the years: a) c. 1500 (BOA, TT 986) – which is incomplete and did not include the whole area· b) 1530 (TT 424)· c) 1542 (TT 433) and d) 1568/9 (TT 720 copy of 1022/1614 from the original, which is kept in the Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi in Ankara and is published in: Stojanovski, *Turski Dokumenti*, 373-599). In addition, a summary register of 1519 (TT 70) has been preserved. From the seventeenth century, I was able to locate two detailed *avarız* registers (BOA, KK 2640 [1667]· BOA, MAD 59 [1674]), and three detailed *cizye* registers (MAD 4374 [1691]· MAD 3421 [1694]· BOA, DCMH 26671 [1698]), all from the second half of the century. For the first half we have used some published sources of the abridged form, mainly *cizye* registers, which are kept in the National Library of Sofia. See: B. Cvetkova (ed), *Opis na Dziejie Registri zapazeni v orientalskija otdel na Narodnata Biblioteka 'Kiril I Metodii'* [A directory of *cizye* registers preserved in the Oriental Department of the 'Cyril and Methodius' National Library] (Sofia 1983).
  - 12 This is the outcome of a project on Argos Orestikon during the Ottoman period. The book, which has just been published, is the following: J.S. Koliopoulos (ed.), *Όψεις του Αργους Ορεστικού (Χρούπιστας) κατά την Τουρκοκρατία (1400-1912)* [Aspects of Argos Orestiko (Hrupišta) during the Tourkokratia (1400-1912)] (Thessaloniki 2013).

cies and scholars as the places where the Vallahades resided, but there is no true consensus on this issue.<sup>13</sup>

According to the sources, all the villages during the sixteenth century had a more or less increasing Christian population (Table 1: Villages of the Vallahades). By the middle of the century, Christians remained at roughly the same numbers, while in the survey of 1542 Muslims appeared for the first time in most of the villages of my sample. A turning-point in the process was the survey of 1568/9. In this survey, all the villages had Muslims, while Christians decreased slightly in numbers. In the villages where a considerable decrease of Christian taxpayers was observable, there was no corresponding increase in Muslim taxpayers. For example, the village of Meğali Plazomi (today Omali) had 118 Christians in 1542 and only 31 in 1568/9, while its Muslim taxpayers increased from six to 11, having only one “son of Abdullah” (i.e., convert) among them. However, half of the Muslim tax hearths (*hane*) of the village were registered as *çiftlik*s,<sup>14</sup> which doubled their numbers between 1542 and 1568.<sup>15</sup>

In the survey of 1568/9, for the first time, there appeared villages within which Muslims outnumbered Christians (e.g. Ginoş-Moloha), or were at least in equal numbers with the Christians (e.g., Renda-Diheimar).<sup>16</sup> Moreover, in some villages, where Christians experienced a sharp decrease in 1568 and the Muslims slightly increased, in the next century there was a steady decrease in Christians leading to their eventual disappearance (e.g., Çuvalar-Koiladio, Laya-Peponia, Mişologoşt-Messologos, Rezni-Anthoussa, Vaypeş-Heimerino, Vinyani-Lefkadio).

Another interesting point regarding the data from the sixteenth century is the profile of the Muslim taxpayers. The ‘sons of Abdullah’ were rare. For the first time they appear in the cadastre of 1530, in the village of Dislab-Dragasia (four), while in the next cadastre of 1542 they are registered in the villages of Dislab (three), Ginoş (one), and Lipçişt-Neapoli (one).<sup>17</sup> In the cadastre of 1568/9 there was one ‘son of Abdullah’ in each of the villages of Bobişta-Platania, Ginoş, Plazomi, and Piluri-Pilorian.<sup>18</sup> Indicatively, in the district of Horpişte in c. 1500 their percentage fluctuated at around 20% of the total Muslim population, as was the case in the town of Horpişte itself.<sup>19</sup> The interesting thing is that more than half of the converts in c. 1500 bore Christian father’s names. This means that the registration of the converts was not completed only with the name ‘son of Abdul-

13 I would like to thank Dr Athanassia Tsetlaka, who gave to me a table of villages, drawn from various sources. From this table, I have selected the more representative 24 villages with a stable Vallahadic population at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. For the problem of the identification of Vallahadic villages see Kallinderis, ‘Συμβολή’, 319-329.

14 For the meaning of the term see below.

15 BOA, TT 433, 407; TT 720, 363; Stojanovski, *Turski Dokumenti*, 528-530.

16 BOA, TT 720, 312 and 390; Stojanovski, *Turski Dokumenti*, 447-448 and 574-575.

17 BOA, TT 424, 615; TT 433, 316, 319, and 370, respectively.

18 BOA, TT 720, 299, 312, 363, and 388; Stojanovski, *Turski Dokumenti*, 429-431, 447-448, 528-530, and 570-571.

19 BOA, TT 986, 160.

lah', but with that of the Christian father's name as well. The explanation of this practice needs further research.

In contrast, a great number of the taxable Muslim *hanes* in Table 1 were eventually *çiftlik*-owners. In the registered Muslim *hanes*, the following are the percentages of the *çiftliks*: 70% in c. 1500, 67% in 1530, 61% in 1542, and 71% in 1568. Respectively, in the whole district of Horpište, the percentages of the *çiftliks* among the Muslim taxpayers are clearly lower, but showing an evident rising trend: 24% in 1500, 36% in 1530, 54% in 1542, and 51% in 1568/9. Most specifically, the c. 1500 survey showed 70 *çiftliks* in 32 villages. Eight of these villages, with 17 *çiftliks*, come from our sample. It is even more interesting that from the registered *çiftliks* in the sample villages, 11 out of 17 in c. 1500, eight out of ten in 1530, four out of five in 1542 and five out of ten in 1568/9 belonged to military officers (mainly 'men of *timar*' [*merd-i timar*], but also to *sipahis*, or sons of *sipahis*, or janissaries). The aforementioned data show a close connection between the Muslim presence in the region of Vallahades and the expansion of the *çiftliks*, especially the military ones. While in the c. 1500 survey the *çiftliks* were paying normally the *resm-i çift* tax regularly, as did every Muslim taxpayer, in the surveys of 1530 and 1542, it is noted whether a *çiftlik* has to pay the tax. Furthermore, in the last survey, of 1568/9, the *çiftliks* of the military were entirely exempted from this tax. However, in the surveys of 1530 and 1542, it does mention if the *çiftlik* has to pay the tithe.<sup>20</sup>

The villages of our sample do not differ from the general fiscal picture of the district of Horpište. The taxation of this district was based on the crop of grain and supplemented by secondary types of farming (vineyards, legumes, vegetables, fruit-trees, etc.). Despite the district's mountainous terrain, there is a discernible imaginary line at 860 m., which is the average altitude of the settlements of the district. Above this line the settlements are conventionally considered mountainous, while below this border they are considered semi-mountainous. What is interesting is that all the villages of our sample except one (Dislab) belong to the second kind, indicating a greater spread of Muslims at lower altitudes. The differentiation of the two kinds of settlements regarding produce is due to the fact that the semi-mountainous settlements were predominantly occupied with the growing of grain and vineyards, whereas they relied to a much lesser extent on supplementary crops (tree growing, 'textile' crops). Consequently, the Vallahadic region was based on grain crops and was as self-sufficient enough to survive as the rest of the district.<sup>21</sup> These findings, regarding the villages of our sample, can be depicted in numbers as follows:

20 Some examples: In c. 1500, in Točil the only *çiftlik* was possessed by the *yeniçeri* Hızır, who normally paid the tax; the same happened with the three *çiftliks* of the *merd-i timar* Ahmed, Ali, and Hamza, which were registered in the village of Siroçani (Lefki, Kozani) (BOA, TT 986, 162 and 255, respectively). In 1530 and 1542, in Vudurina (Nea Sparti) the only *çiftlik*, of Süleyman, was stated as having to pay tithe, while it was not registered to pay the *resm-i çift*; in Vinyani the three and four *çiftliks* of the men of *timar* in the surveys of 1530 and 1542, respectively, do not pay the *resm-i çift* and it is not stated whether they are counted in the tithe of the village (TT 424, 629 and 652; TT 433, 380 and 395, respectively).

21 D. Papastamatiou, 'Δημοσιονομικές επιβολές και στοιχεία της αγροτικής οικονομίας στον καζά της Χρούπιστας στον πρώτο μισό του 16<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα [Fiscal impositions and data of the rural

the average participation percentage tax on agricultural production vis-à-vis the overall taxation was 67.8% with an upward trend (the median was 73%) and the average participation in taxation on grain vis-à-vis taxation on overall production was 65.6% (median: 64.5%). These percentages must be considered to have been higher, given the fact that one of the villages of our sample, Toçil, showed very low percentages because of the fact that taxation was based on the tax on the market operation drawing on the major annual fair of the region, which took place in March.<sup>22</sup> Finally, the average and the median tax levy per household in our sample shows no difference in comparison with the respective numbers for the entire district. Thus, as far as taxation is concerned, the Vallahadic villages were no different from the general picture of the district.<sup>23</sup>

According to Bulliet's theory, which is based on the case of Iran during the Middle Ages, the Muslim names can constitute an indicator as to the stage of conversion that applies to a wide area. In this way, the era of these conversions can be generally approximated. According to him, the frequency in which specific names appear among the Muslims indicates the stage of the conversion to Islam. The five prominent names (Mehmed, Ahmed, Ali, Hasan, Hüseyin) play a central role in the whole process. Bulliet discerned four stages of conversion: in the first stage the converts give to their children pre-Islamic names. In the second, these five names start becoming popular, and in the third stage, their frequency rises sharply. In the fourth stage, only children of converts bear these names, while during the same period their frequency in the overall population decreases.<sup>24</sup>

It is very difficult for the Muslim names from the villages of our sample to fall with the above theory, as there is not a sufficient number of converts and it is not easy to follow the course of the converts and their sons. Moreover, the fact that a substantial number of Muslims were timariots who arrived during the sixteenth century and cannot be identified with certainty as converts makes this task even harder. However, it is worth mentioning that both the ordinary peasants and the *timar*-holders bore either non-Islamic names or Islamic ones other than the five mentioned above. To give an example, in the c. 1500 survey, 21 Muslim names were registered, of which only two (Ahmed and Ali) belonged to the prominent five (or 10%). The other names were either from the Judaeo-

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economy in the kaza of Hrupista during the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century], in Koliopoulos (ed.), *Οψεις του Αγίου Ορεστικού*, 120-165.

22 At any rate, even in this village, in which only 21% of the taxation was related to agricultural production, 74.6% was the taxation on grain. See: BOA, TT 986, 162; TT 70, 215; TT 424, 539; TT 433, 299; TT 720, 264; Stojanovski, *Turski Dokumenti*, 385-386.

23 More precisely, there was a slight increase of the averages in the Vallahadic villages, but this continued in the survey of 1568/9, when, as I shall argue below, a considerable part of the Christian population had been converted to Islam.

24 Analysis of R. Bulliet's theory in: Minkov, *Conversion*, 14-18. Minkov implemented Bulliet's theory in the Ottoman world (ibid., 27 and 63, with his conclusions). Recently, the validity of Bulliet's theory has been corroborated through the empirical material of the tax registers from Western Rhodope (district of Nevrekop). See: E. Radushev, 'The Spread of Islam in the Ottoman Balkans: Revisiting Bulliet's Method on Religious Conversion', *Archiv Orientalni*, 78/4 (2010), 363-384.

Christian tradition (Davud, Süleyman, İsa, Yusuf, İlyas), or from the non-Islamic tradition (Karagöz, Şahin, Hızır, Hamza, Hoşkadem). According to Bulliet's theory, the region can be placed in the first stage of the conversion process. It is interesting to note that in Horpişte, which, as the only town of the region, had the most Muslims and many converts among them, even the converts had non-Islamic names (e.g., Şahin b. Abdullah, Şirmerd b. Abdullah, İskender b. Abdullah, Evrenos b. Abdullah).<sup>25</sup> In 1568/9, of the 335 names, 75 (or 22%) belonged to the 'five', with the same characteristics in terms of the origin as those from c. 1500. These findings alone cannot fit well with any of the stages of Bulliet's theory.

Of interest are some remarks regarding the demographic concentration of the Muslim population in the Vallahadic area. The bulk of Muslim settlements were located at a low altitude (approximately between 600-800 m., when the average altitude of the villages of the whole district was 860 m.). Of these settlements, the zone of the villages with an altitude of 700-800 m., which was identified with the area Lipçišta-Točil (the Vallahadic area) showed the highest increase of the Muslim population (fourfold during the century) and the highest decrease of Christians. Although this increase of the Muslims could be interpreted by immigration waves, it is possible that this phenomenon was a result of Islamisation as well. The increase of the Muslims was observable in the third quarter of the century, as the surveys of 1542 and 1568/9 show.<sup>26</sup>

In the seventeenth century, the sources are of a different kind (*avarız* and *cizye* registers) and not of a serial form. The district of Naslıç, to which the villages of our sample belonged, had about 2,000 taxpayers who were subject to poll-tax (*cizye*).<sup>27</sup> The number was lower than the data from two *cizye* registers of the sixteenth century. In 1552 and 1571, the fiscal entity (*vilayet*) of "supplement of Horpişte" (*tetimme-i Horpişte*, i.e., Naslıç) had 3,000 and 2,800 taxpayers, respectively.<sup>28</sup> As a conclusion, the decrease of the Christians, which, as it is shown above, had started in the third quarter of the sixteenth century, continued until the beginning of the following century, and remained more or less the same until the last quarter of the seventeenth century.<sup>29</sup> It is of interest that the

25 BOA, TT 986, 160.

26 V. Gounaris, 'Δημογραφικές παρατηρήσεις' [Demographic observations], in Koliopoulos (ed.), *Όψεις του Αγρού Ορειτικού*, 65 (and Table 8, Graph 6).

27 In the abridged *cizye* registers of the seventeenth century the following data are recorded. In 1644/5 the *vilayets* of Horpişte and of its 'supplement' (*tetimme-i Horpişte*) had 3,874 *cizyehane*, but five years earlier the *vilayet* of Horpişte alone had 1,753 *cizyehane*. In 1645/6, the two *vilayets* had 3,962 *cizyehanes*, while in the second half of the seventeenth century, the district of Naslıç had the following fluctuations: in 1666/7: 2,035 *cizyehanes*, in 1674: 1,640, and in 1675: 1,905. See: Cvetkova (ed), *Opis*, Nos 218 (1639), 291 (1644/5), 300 (1645/6), 422 (1666/7), 486 (1674), and 492 (1675).

28 D. Yörük, 'XVI. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Yaşayan Gayrimüslimlerin Nüfusu', *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 17 (2007), 647.

29 The stability of the taxpayers as a whole in the *avarız* and the *cizye* registers implies that a negotiation policy was at stake, and it did not refer to real demographic fluctuation.

*avarız* registers of the seventeenth century give the same number of taxpayers.<sup>30</sup> The *cizye* registers after the reform of 1691 show a deep decline in the number of taxpayers, since they recorded only 700 individuals (*nefer*).<sup>31</sup> This dramatic decline cannot be interpreted and it does not mean that a massive wave of Islamisation took place in the last decade of the century. The reasons for these low numbers could be the emigration and/or the hiding of the people, because of the fear of the new tax assessment, especially for the first surveys after the reform edict.<sup>32</sup> In conclusion, Christians and Muslims during the seventeenth century seem to remain at the same demographic level as in the last survey of the sixteenth.<sup>33</sup>

30 The detailed registers KK 2640, 2-28 (of 1667) and MAD 59, 78b-81a (of 1673) recorded, next to the *avarızhanes*, the individuals (*nefer*). In the first, the Christians were 2,243 persons (together with the unmarried and the *derbendçiyân*), while in the second, the Christians decreased to 1,645 persons, as is also shown also the abridged *cizye* register, which is preserved in the National Library of Sofia (see fn. 27). In the next year, however, the number rose to 1,905 *cizyehane*. The ratio of *avarızhane* per person was 1:3 in both surveys. Moreover, in the abridged *avarız* register of 1642 for Rumeli, the district of Nasliç was recorded with 720 *avarızhanes*, which gives a total of a little more than 2,000 people, Christians and Muslims. See: R. Stojkov, 'La division administrative de l'eyalet de Roumélie pendant les années soixante du XVIIe siècle', *Studia Balcanica*, 1 (1970), 210. That the register published by Stojkov is not a *cizye* from 1668/9, but an *avarız* from 1642 see: Ph. Kotzageorgis, *Μικρές πόλεις της ελληνικής χερσονήσου κατά την πρώιμη νεότερη εποχή. Η περίπτωση της Ξάνθης (15ος-17ος αι.)* [Small towns of the Greek peninsula during the Early Modern Period: The case of Xanthi (15th-17th c.)] (Xanthi 2008), 67 fn. 116. The same number of *avarızhane* (exactly 730), however, was recorded in the survey of 1667.

31 In the survey of 1691 610 individuals (my count: 472) were registered as totals, two years later 660, half of whom were considered as *perakendegân* (dispersed people) and in 1694, 713 (my count: 709). See: BOA, MAD 4374, 232-240; MAD 3421, 141-155; D.CMH 26671, 30-33.

32 Cf. a similar conclusion drawn from the study of similar sources for Trikala (in Thessaly) in: S. Laiou, 'Τα Τρικάλα στα τέλη του 17<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα με βάση δύο κατάστιχα κεφαλαικού φόρου' [Trikala in the end of the 17th century according to two *cizye* registers], *Μνήμων*, 28 (2006-2007), 17. In the case of the town of Trikala, Laiou concludes that the second survey compiled after the reform constituted a supplement to the first and that the totals could not be admitted as there were, but supplementarily to those of the first register. For the various adaptations of the state just after the promulgation of the edict of poll-tax reform see: M. Sariyannis, 'Notes on the Ottoman Poll-Tax Reforms of the Late Seventeenth Century: The Case of Crete', *JESHO*, 54/1 (2011), 52-58.

33 In favour of the demographic stability of the region is Pouqueville's estimation at the beginning of the nineteenth century. He mentions that the district of Nasliç had 70 villages and 1,700 families, which gives a total of 8,440 individuals. The inhabitants were Christians, Muslims, and Roma (Pouqueville, *Voyage*, 339). Apart from the *cizyehanes*, which decreased in the registers of the tax reform, the registered villages of the district decreased as well. From slightly less than 100 in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in the surveys of the 1690s half of them were recorded. However, according to Pouqueville, the number of the villages was 70, which means very close to the numbers of registered settlements in the first three-quarters of the seventeenth century. The same number of villages is given by another source. In the codex of the Bishopric of Sisanion and Siatista there is a catalogue of the villages which belonged to the bishopric in 1797. In this, 72 villages were recorded, five small towns (*κομποπόλεις*), two



As it is shown above, in the register of 1568/9, a considerable number of *çiftliks* were recorded. According to the detailed *avarız* register of 1667, one-fifth of the Muslim population in the *avarız* register were *askeri*, while the recorded *çiftliks* accounted for almost half the number of the Muslim peasants. The villages where a small number of *çiftliks* were recorded in 1568/9, had in 1667 exclusively Muslim taxpayers.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, in the villages where in 1568/9 the *askeri çiftliks* were either all or the majority of the registered *çiftliks*, Christian taxpayers continued to be recorded during the seventeenth century. Moreover, in these villages, Muslim peasants (*reaya*) were not registered at all or in most cases.<sup>35</sup> Thus, we conclude that in the villages where a significant number of *çiftliks* and Christian peasants in the sixteenth century were recorded, Christians continued to be recorded in the next century as well. On the other hand, the villages where *çiftliks* were not registered in 1568/9 had a Muslim population in the seventeenth century. It seems that the *çiftlik*-owners tried to attract and hire as labourers for their estates Christian rather than Muslim peasants.<sup>36</sup> A possible explanation for this trend would be that Christians' lands were more easily usurped by the Muslim landowners, because the former were confronted with urgent economic problems due to heavy taxation.

This observation can be combined with and corroborated by another source. In the detailed *avarız* register of 1667, on the first page, an undated petition to the Sultan is inserted.<sup>37</sup> According to the text, the Christians of the district presented themselves in the imperial camp and submitted a petition (*arz-ı hal*) to the Sultan. They complained that the Muslims of the district did not pay taxes (obviously the *avarız*) and only the Christians bore the whole tax burden (*cemiyan vakı olan tekâlifî kefare fukarası çeküb müslümanlar "bizim üzerimizde hane yoktur" deyü vermezler*). The Christians argued that if the Muslims and those who were taking the peasants' estates and formed *çiftliks*<sup>38</sup> paid taxes, the number of the taxable *avarızhanes* would not fall below 700.<sup>39</sup> For that reason,

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'towns' (πολιτείες) and 13 abandoned villages (παλαιοχώρια). M.A. Kallinderis, *Ο κώδιξ της μητροπόλεως Σισανίου και Σιατίστης (1686-)* [The codex of the diocese of Sisanion and Siatista (1686-)] (Thessaloniki 1974), 122-125. From the village names in the catalogue it can be concluded that the boundaries of the bishopric were *grosso modo* the same as those of the district of Nasliç.

34 These are the villages of Mişlogost, Renda, and Ginoş, which had *çiftliks* of less than half of the whole of the Muslim taxpayers. Vinyani had about half of the Muslim taxpayers registered as *çiftliks*.

35 These are villages like Bobişta, Çaknohor, Siroçani, and Vudurina.

36 We are not sure why the *çiftlik*-owners preferred to have Christians on their estates. Perhaps they could alienate their lands more easily than the Muslims' lands. The interesting thing is that the Christians, instead of converting to Islam to ameliorate their economic status, preferred to emigrate.

37 BOA, KK 2640, 1.

38 This is a clear reference to a method of the *çiftlik*-formation. For the methods of *çiftlik*-formation in the Manastır (Bitola) region see: B. McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Empire: Taxation, Trade and the Struggle for Land, 1600-1800* (Cambridge 1981), 135-141.

39 The limit of 700 *hanes* was in fact a threat of the Christians to the Porte. We would point out that in 1642 there were 720 *avarızhanes* and in the survey of 1667, in which the present petition



the Christians asked for a new survey to be carried out. After the Sublime Porte had given permission for the implementation of a new survey, Karınabadlı Hüseyin Ağa came to the region with a scribe from the relevant fiscal bureau (*mevkufat kalemi*) and carried out the survey. The total number of the recorded *avarızhanes* was 730, namely 30 more than those registered in the old register. Thus, the survey reached the target of 700, which the Christians had underlined in their petition and argued for. After that, according to the same petition, the Muslims went to the imperial camp, complained to the Sultan about the taxation and argued that they did not accept the results of the survey on the pretext that they had never paid taxes before (*biz kadimden teklif veregelmedik bu tahrir kabul etmeyüb*). At the end of the petition, the petitioners asked the Porte to issue an order clearly determining the taxes that Christians and Muslims, both in Anatolia and Rumelia, had to pay according to the law and the registers (*vilayet-i Anadolu'nda ve Rumilinde olan müslümanan ve zimmiyan kanun ve defter mucebince muharrir vilayet kayd eylediği hane avarızı vergeldikleri defterlerde musarrıhdır*).

We do not know what solution the Sultan reached, although the register of 1673 shows that the taxation of the Muslims continued. In this register, however, a significant decrease in the numbers of both Muslims and Christians is observable and the taxable hearths do not reach the crucial limit of 700 *avarızhanes*. Nonetheless, the above-mentioned petition to the Porte is valuable for two reasons: first, it provides an interpretation of a temporary decrease in the Christians in the district. Namely, the heavy tax burden on the Christians, a fact that the Christians considered to be an injustice, led, we suppose, a considerable number of Christians to emigrate. Second, it gives the profile of the Muslims of the region. It is obvious that some Muslims were of a significant socio-economic and military status. They settled the area, having the opportunity of the tax-exempt status,<sup>40</sup> which seems to be unique; furthermore, they were able to possess flat and fertile land and to exert economic pressure on Christians. They lived in the nearby towns (Horpište, Lipçišta) or other villages, they were mainly sons of *timar*-holders or Janissaries, and they possessed *çiftliks* in the area. This is one of the two categories of the Muslim population in the region. The other one was the common peasants, who apparently came from other areas and of which only a small number were converts. Judging from the results of the survey of 1667, Muslim peasants comprised 60% of the whole Muslim population of the region. Hence, the situation was similar with that in 1568/9, suggesting that during a period of more than a century the nature of the Muslim population did not change. Consistently with this, the *çiftlik*-owners formed a considerable part of the Muslim community.<sup>41</sup>

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was submitted, there were 730. If, according to the Christians' reasoning, the Muslim *hanes* did not pay the *avarız*, then there would be 660 Christian *avarızhanes*. This would result a loss of money for the fisc.

40 Their estates did not pay taxes. However, it is not obvious why they did not pay *avarız*.

41 Although of a different nature, one should consult the interesting analysis of the phenomenon of 'peasant Janissaries' in the seventeenth century Balkans in: E. Radushev, "'Peasant' Janissaries?", *Journal of Social History* 42/2 (2008), 447-467, esp. pp. 455-457, where the connection between 'peasant' Janissaries and the possession of *çiftliks* is made.

In the light of the above analysis, the case of the Vallahades can be summarised as follows: in the region a first wave of conversion was observable at the beginning of the sixteenth century; the conversion reached a peak in the third quarter of the century, to judge from both the presence of 'sons of Abdullah', and of the general numbers of the Muslims. During the seventeenth century, the Muslims remained at the same level as in the last survey of the sixteenth century. An important parameter in the profile of the Muslims of the region was the relation with the *çiftlik* institution. On one hand, the presence of *çiftliks* prevented progress in conversion process, since the *çiftlik*-owners preferred the employment of Christians as a workforce on their estates; on the other hand, the *çiftlik*-holders formed a remarkable group in the region, which from then on was constantly present in Nasliç.<sup>42</sup> They were Pouqueville's *beys*, whom the French traveller met in a great number in Lipçišta and who had customs that were not similar to those of the Turks.<sup>43</sup>

### *The Pomaks*

Pomaks are the Slav-speaking indigenous inhabitants of the Rhodope Mountains, who, at least by the end of the nineteenth century, had been converted to Islam but retained their mother tongue. There is no a generally accepted etymology of the term 'Pomak'. It is even not known when this term was used for the first time to denote this population. The term is found in the written sources from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards.<sup>44</sup> The Pomaks' tragic history is in the twentieth century, when Bulgarians, Greeks, and Turks, respectively, claimed (and are still claiming) that the Pomaks belonged to their nation. As a consequence, the issue of these people's identity continues to be a subject of research.<sup>45</sup>

42 References to the *beys* of Nasliç exist in Ali Paşa of Yannina's Archive in the Gennadeios Library in Athens. See: V. Panagiotopoulos (ed.), *Αρχείο του Αλή Πασά Γενναδείου Βιβλιοθήκης* [The Archive of Ali Paşa preserved in the Gennadeios Library], Vol. II: 1809-1817 (Athens 2007), 21-22 (No. 446), 258-259 (No. 594); Vol. III: 1818-1821 (Athens 2007), 449-452 (Nos 1309-1310).

43 Pouqueville, *Voyage*, 339: "Ses beys, car elle [Anaselitza] est peuplée en grande partie de cette noblesse militaire qui rappelle nos seigneurs féodaux du quinzième siècle, ont la reputation d'être dissipateurs et amis de la table, défauts qui ne sont guère ordinaires aux Turcs".

44 By way of contrast, sufficiently etymologised is the term *Ahriyan*, which appeared in the sources to denote this population as well. According to the Turkish etymological dictionary, the term derived from the Greek *αχρείανης* (A. Tietze, *Tarih ve Etimolojik Türkiye Türkçesi Lugatı*, Vol. 1 [Istanbul-Vienna 2002], s.v. *ahriyan*). This comes from the adjective *αχρείος* ("worthless, outrageous, etc."). For the etymology of *ahriyan* from the Greek *αχρείος* see also: P. Kyranoudis, 'Οι Πομάκοι και η γλώσσα τους' [The Pomaks and their language], *Ελληνική Διαλεκτολογία*, 5 (1996-1998), 157-161. However, the term was not used for the Pomaks only, but appeared in Ottoman sources of the fifteenth century with different meanings, without it being clear what it indicated. For the use of the term in various time and place settings see: V.L. Ménage, 'On the Ottoman Word *Ariyan/Ahriyan*', *ArchOtt*, 1 (1969), 197-212.

45 From the very rich bibliography on the Pomaks' identity, I would mention the following publications in Western languages: T. Seyppel, 'Pomaks in Northeastern Greece: an Endangered

Apart from the very rich anthropological literature on the Pomaks, the bibliography on their conversion to Islam is quite rich as well. For many decades the dominant view has been that this group had been converted to Islam by force during the 1660s on the orders of the Grand Vizier Ahmed Köprülü (1661-1676).<sup>46</sup> This theory was based on some falsified local Bulgarian chronicles, which, as has been proved, were fabricated at the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>47</sup> In the last 30 years, the Rhodope region has been meticulously studied by means of the extant Ottoman sources, and scholars have attempted to specify the time and the way of the conversion to Islam of the local people. The studies of Kiel, among others, show that the conversion process in Rhodope, especially in the area of Tsepino, which the local chronicles referred to as the area of forced Islamisation, was already in a final stage in the age of Ahmed Köprülü. Furthermore, Islamisation did not stop in the second half of the seventeenth century, but continued in the period which

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Balkan Population', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 10/1 (1989), 41-49; M. Apostolov, 'The Pomaks: A Religious Minority in the Balkans', *Nationalities Papers*, 24/4 (1996), 727-742; Y. Konstantinov, 'Strategies of Sustaining a Vulnerable Identity: The Case of the Bulgarian Pomaks', in H. Poulton with S. Taji-Farouki (eds), *Muslim Identity and the Balkan State* (London 1997), 33-53; Ö. Turan, 'Pomaks, their Past and Present', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 19/1 (1999), 69-83; T. Küçükcan, 'Re-Claiming Identity: Ethnicity, Religion and Politics among Turkish-Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 19/1 (1999), 49-68; U. Brunnbauer, 'Histories and Identities: Nation-state and Minority Discourses', in: [http://www.gewi.kfunigraz.ac.at/csbsc/ulf/pomak\\_identities.htm](http://www.gewi.kfunigraz.ac.at/csbsc/ulf/pomak_identities.htm) (1998), 1-12; Idem, 'The Perception of Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece: Between the 'Self' and the 'Other'', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 21/1 (2001), 39-61; F. Tsimbiridou, *Les Pomaks dans la Thrace grecque: Discours ethniques et pratiques socioculturelles* (Paris-Montréal 2000); A. Eminov, 'Social Construction of Identities: Pomaks in Bulgaria', *Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe*, 2 (2007), 1-24; S. Katsikas, 'Millets in Nation-States: The Case of Greek and Bulgarian Muslims, 1912-1923', *Nationalities Papers*, 37/2 (2009), 177-201. From the rich Bulgarian literature on this topic, see the recent two-volume work: E. Radushev, *Pomatsite. Hristiyanstvo i islam v Zapadnite Rodopi s dolinata na Mesta, XV na 30-te godini XVIII vek*, [The Pomaks: Christianity and Islam in the Western Rhodope mountains and the valley of the Mesta River from the 15<sup>th</sup> c. to the 1730], 2 vols (Sofia 2005). We have no access on this work.

- 46 One of the interesting contributions to the topic of the Islamisation of the Pomaks based on the older bibliography is: D.P. Hupchick, 'Seventeenth-Century Bulgarian Pomaks: Forced or Voluntary Converts to Islam?', in S.B. Vardy with A.H. Vardy (eds), *Society in Change: Studies in Honor of Béla K. Király* (New York 1983), 305-314. Hupchick argues that the massive conversion of the Pomaks was a result of the abolition of the privileged tax status Pomaks enjoyed by that time.
- 47 A. Zeliakova, 'The Problem of the Authenticity of Some Domestic Sources on the Islamization of the Rhodopes, Deeply Rooted in Bulgarian Historiography', *EB*, 26/4 (1990), 105-111; M. Todorova, 'Conversion to Islam as a Trope in Bulgarian Historiography, Fiction and Film', in Eadem (ed.), *Balkan Identities: Nation and Memory* (London 2004), 132-136. One of the earliest studies on the subject in Bulgarian is: S. Dimitrov, "Demografski otnošenija i pronikvane na isljama v zapadnite Rodopi i dolinata na Mest prez XV-XVIII v." [Demographic relations and penetration of Islam in the Western Rhodope and the valley of the Mesta River during the 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> c.], *Rodopski Sbornik* 1 (1965), 63-114.

followed, albeit very slowly. Therefore, the Dutch historian concluded, the conversion to Islam among the Rhodope population was a slow process, which, in all likelihood, had started in the fifteenth century.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, Kiel underlines the dual nature of the diffusion of Islam in Rhodope, stressing the colonisation of the Yürük Turks, who came probably from the plateau of Central Bulgaria (i.e., the region of Plovdiv) southwards to the summer pastures of Rhodope.<sup>49</sup>

The southern part of the Rhodope Mountains has not attracted scholars' interest. In what follows, we try to study this area in the light of the conclusions already drawn from the northern part. The southern part of the Rhodope Mountains during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries belonged to the districts of Yenice Karasu (today Genissea, Greece) and Gümülcine (today Komotini).<sup>50</sup> The extant data for the sixteenth century, compared to those available for the Vallahades, are poor. However, they do offer some interesting findings.<sup>51</sup> The region, possibly from the second half of the fifteenth, but certainly in the

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48 M. Kiel, 'The Account of Pope Methodij Draginov on the Forced Conversion of the Bulgarians of the Rhodope to Islam and the Use and Usefulness of Archival Sources', in N. Koltuk (ed.), *Uluslararası Türk Arşivleri Sempozyumu* (Ankara 2006), 316-324; Idem, 'Ottoman Sources for the Demographic History and the Process of Islamization of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bulgaria in the Fifteenth-Seventeenth Centuries: Old Sources – New Methodology', *IJTS*, 10/1-2 (2004), 95. Recently, E. Radushev shows that whole villages in Western Rhodope had been converted to Islam in the 1460s (Radushev, 'The Spread', 366).

49 M. Kiel, 'La diffusion de l' Islam dans les campagnes bulgares à l' époque ottomane (XVe-XIXe siècles): colonisation et conversion', *RMMM*, 66/4 (1992), 40-43; Idem, 'Urban Development in Bulgaria in the Turkish Period: The Place of Turkish Architecture in the Process', *IJTS*, 4/2 (1989), 95-96.

50 For the purpose of our analysis we study 33 settlements which were undoubtedly located in the mountainous area of the aforementioned districts. The two districts cannot be studied as a whole; because of the sharp separation between lowland and highland parts, they presented a different economic and demographic profile. Furthermore, the Rhodopian district of Ahi Çelebi, which was formed at the end of the sixteenth century, and had detached territory from the district of Yenice Karasu, did not comprise all the south foothills of Rhodope. A further problem with the sources is that because the villages of the sample belonged to various (Sultanlic) pious foundations (*vakıfs*), their data are preserved in different fiscal registers from the second half of the sixteenth century, and thus we cannot compare them in exactly the same time span. Finally, the problem of the identification of the villages and the location on the map has not been satisfactorily solved yet.

51 The data for the region have been drawn mainly from the following sources: a) two abridged *timar* registers of 1519 (TT 70) and 1530 (TT 167); b) two detailed *vakıf* registers of the *vakıf* of Bayezid II in Edirne of 1557/8 (TT 306) and 1565 (TT 979), and a detailed register of the *vakıf* of Murad II in Edirne of 1557/8 (TT 311); c) two detailed registers (of *timars* and *vakıfs*) of 1569/70 and 1568/9 respectively, which have been published from the originals housed in Ankara (A. Stojanovski (ed.), *Turski Dokumenti za istorijata na Makedonija: Opširen popisen defter za Paša Sancakot (kazite Demir Hisar, Jenice Karasu, Gumulcina i Zihna) od 1569/70 godina* [Turkish documents for the history of Macedonia: detailed fiscal register for the province of Pasha (districts of Demihisar, Yenice Karasu, Gumuldjina and Zihna) from the year 1569/70], Vol. X/1 [Skopje 2004]; Idem (ed.), *Turski Dokumenti za istorijata na Makedonija: Opširen popisen defter za vakafite vo Paša Sancakot od 1568/69 godina* [Turkish documents

sixteenth, century, had a Muslim majority. As has been pointed out, the *Yürük* presence in the area can be observed even from that early period.<sup>52</sup> The prevalent type of settlements was that of a few but populous Christian villages interspersed with the smaller Muslim ones.<sup>53</sup>

Interesting items for our comparative study are the thin presence of ‘sons of Abdullah’ in the area, and the origins of the place names (Table 2). For the first, since the only complete detailed survey is of 1569/70, it is impossible to give a sufficient interpretation. In this survey, out of a total of 31 villages which can be safely located in the mountainous area to the north of Xanthi, 5.5% were ‘sons of Abdullah’ (100 out of 1,826 taxpayers) (Table 3).<sup>54</sup>

For the origin of place-names, it is worth mentioning that the majority of the settlements had names of Turkish origin, even in the first extant sources of the fifteenth century.<sup>55</sup> The Czech linguist Kostantin Jireček argued that there were three levels in the toponyms of Rhodope: a) the toponyms of Greek origin in the lowlands and the valleys; b) the toponyms of Slavic origin on the slopes and higher in the valleys; and c) of Turkish origin for the mountains and the summer pastures, which suggests the presence of the *Yürüks*.<sup>56</sup> This view is not confirmed in the area studied, since the Turkish names were not limited to the places Jireček argued that they were. The existence of some stable and long-lasting settlements which had as second part in their name the word *ören-viran* (Yassı Viran, Os-

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for the history of Macedonia: detailed fiscal register for the pious foundations in the province of Pasha from the year 1568/69], Vol. XI/1 [Skopje 2008]); d) three detailed *cizye* registers of 1690/1 (MAD 4374), 1692/3 (MAD 7625), 1693/4 (DCMH 26676); e) two detailed *avarız* registers of the district of Yenice Karasu of 1676 (KK 2676) and of 1710 (KK 2830). The abridged *timar* register of the Atatürk Kitaplığı, Muallim Cevdet Collection No. O.89 of c. 1455 does not contain villages of the region. The beginning of the surviving part of the register is missing and it starts with villages of Dimetoka (Gk. Didymoteicho), and continues with the district of Gümülcine (Gk. Komotini) – in which we cannot identify any village of the mountainous area – that of Ferecik (Gk. Feres), Ipsala, etc. As a result, M. Kiel’s conclusion (‘Urban Development’, 95) that in c. 1455, 22% of the Muslims of the area were *Yürüks* refers only to the lowlands, which, as it is known, was the first area of the Balkans so densely colonised from the second half of the fourteenth century on. Likewise, he mistakenly matches the first villages of the register with villages of Yenice Karasu, and he draws conclusions for the latter district. However, this observation has little meaning, since the complete data from the years 1519 and 1530 corroborate Kiel’s opinion.

52 Kiel, ‘Ottoman Sources’, 95. Although Kiel gives numerical data from the summary cadastre of c. 1455 for the whole district of Gümülcine and not only for the highlands, the presence of 22% *Yürüks* is very important for the profile of the Muslims of the area.

53 Ibid. The same results are reached in another study, in which we analyse the data of the district of Yenice Karasu (Kotzageorgis, *Μικρές πόλεις*, 52, 59, 77).

54 In nine villages in 1557/8 (TT 311 and TT 306) and in other five in 1565 (TT 979) the percentages are higher, but the sample is very small and the risk of mistake high.

55 The example of the village of Yassı Ören (today Oraio) is typical; from the beginning of the sixteenth century it can be found in the sources under the same name, although it was inhabited mainly by Christians. The first reference to the village is in the register TT 70, 42.

56 As quoted in: Kiel, ‘Ottoman Sources’.

man Viran, Uğurlu Viran) and of many others with ‘another name’ of Slavic origin (Güvenç nam-ı diğer Moskofça, Kafır Deresi n.d. Borova, Kozluca n.d. Büyük Zevinçani, Yassı Ören n.d. Küçük Zevinçani, Ramazan Beyi n.d. Bela Reka, Sarıkaya n.d. İsmilan) leads to the hypothesis that a devastating (and temporary?) depopulation of the area occurred during the fourteenth century for various reasons and that the area had been colonised by *Yürüks*, and other immigrants either of Slavic or of Turkish origin from the southern and northern plateaus of the rest of the Rhodope region.<sup>57</sup>

The study of the tax status of the region could lead to similar conclusions. According to the extant sources, from the beginning of the sixteenth century onwards the region belonged: a) to the *vakıf* of Murad II of Edirne (the eastern part of the area, which administratively belonged to the district of Gümülcine), b) to the *vakıf* of Bayezid II of Edirne (the southern part, which administratively belonged to the district of Yenice Karasu), and c) to the *mülk* (and later *vakıf*) of Ahı Çelebi, physician of Sultan Selim I (the northern part of which is now in Bulgaria).<sup>58</sup> The role of the *vakıfs* and *mülks* as ‘colonisers’ has already been pointed out by scholars.<sup>59</sup> This role can be related to the interpretation of the toponyms given above. The gradual but significant increase in the number of settlements during the sixteenth century leads, in our view, to the same interpretation. It is not a coincidence that in 1519 there appeared two “newly recorded” (*harıç ez defter*) villages in Ahı Çelebi’s *mülk*, in 1530 the villages increased to 12, and in 1569/70 to 16. What we suggest is that the Ottoman state donated to Ahı Çelebi the area north of Xanthi as part of a policy for the revival of a vacant and/or less populated area. The same policy was applied in the fifteenth century by giving other parts of the area to two Sultanic *vakıfs*. The immigration of the Turkish population explains the absence of the ‘sons of Abdullah’ in an area, which was purely Christian before the Ottoman conquest. This remark, however, does not mean that there was no Islamisation. The style of conversion during the period for which the archival material survives (the end of the fifteenth till the eighteenth century) appears to be gradual and individual rather than en masse and forced.<sup>60</sup>

The only known narrative source for the area from the sixteenth century is a small passage in a *Homily* (Speech) of the Greek monk Pachomios Roussanos, who visited the region around 1540.<sup>61</sup> The passage gives the only information known so far on a mass

57 It has been argued that the *viran* as a second part of the names of Anatolian villages indicated places which were initially *mezraas*, and were later transformed into villages: H. İnalcık, ‘Settlements’, in H. İnalcık with D. Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914* (Cambridge 1994), 163.

58 The very few villages which belonged to the sultanic *hasses* (Yeniköy, Hüseyin Obası, Gabrovo, Marğarit, and Mehmedli) were located in the west of today’s Prefecture of Xanthi, which means in the extreme SW of Rhodope.

59 Ö.L. Barkan, ‘Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda bir iskân ve kolonizasyon metodu olarak Vakıflar ve Temlikler’, *İD*, 2 (1942), 279-386. B. Cvetkova, ‘Early Ottoman Tahrir Defters as a Source for Studies on the History of Bulgaria and the Balkans’, *ArchOtt*, 8 (1983) 169-172 and 188.

60 For this view, which is today prevalent among Ottomanists, see: Minkov, *Conversion to Islam*, 77-82.

61 For the date of the visit of Roussanos to Thrace see: K. Chryssohoidis, ‘Ο Παχώμιος Ρουσόνογ



conversion to Islam in nine villages<sup>62</sup> in the mountainous area of Xanthi. It states that the peasants, led by their priests, converted to Islam because of taxation (*δια τα τέλη*). If we compare this information with the data above, we can conclude that this source is the only one that refers to mass conversion, albeit not forced, and the only source that gives a clear reason for the conversion. Therefore, the slow conversion process in the mountainous area does not mean that there were no cases of mass conversions, at least at a micro-level.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, one of the motives of conversion proposed by the literature seems to be confirmed by the evidence of this Greek Orthodox monk: taxation.<sup>64</sup> The poverty of the area could have played a crucial role in this decision, even in an epoch in which the poll-tax, a later burdensome tax for Christians, had not been increased much yet.

In sum, scholars' research in the northern part of the Rhodope Mountains is corroborated for the south slopes of Central Rhodope by our analysis. The local Slav-speaking population converted to Islam through a slow process. Although Christian villages continued to exist in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (albeit as isolated villages), the great bulk of conversion had been completed by the middle of the sixteenth century. Furthermore, a considerable part of the Muslims of Rhodope were Yürüks, who, at least individually, had settled in the area at an early stage (by the beginning of the sixteenth century). The incorporation of the area into the Sultanate *vakıfs* and later into the *mülk-vakıf* of Ahı Çelebi contributed to the population enhancement, as can be concluded from a general, roughly sketched map of settlements. The lack of towns and *tekkes*, the mountainous and poor soil, and the ability to communicate (in terms of financial transactions) with the north via the Plovdiv plateau and with the south via the Xanthi plateau constitute factors for the interpretation of the method and of the degree of the spread of Islam in the area.

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στον Άθω [Pachomios Roussanos on Mount Athos]', in: *Proceedings of the International Symposium 'Pachomios Roussanos. 450 years from his death †1553'* (Athens 2005), 215. The text is to be found in two autograph codices of Roussanos, today housed in the Marciana Biblioteca of Venice (Gr. II, 103 olim Nanius 125, ff. 1-4; Gr. XI, 26 olim Nanius 305, ff. 197v-201v). The text consists of some lines from the *Homily Προς τους αγροίκους την θείαν γραφήν διασύροντας* ['Against those who traduce the Holy Bible']. Edition of the passage in: S. Lambros, 'Εκ των ομιλιών του Παχωμίου Ρουσάνου' [From the Homilies of Pachomios Roussanos], *Νέος Ελληνογνημύων*, 13 (1916), 57. Commentary of the passage in: Ph. Kotzageorgis, 'A Greek Source Regarding the Islamization of the Population of the Mountainous Region of Xanthi (Mid 16th C.)', *Περί Θράκης*, 2 (2002), 293-297.

62 Obviously we cannot identify the nine villages because of the lack of evidence.

63 Another such massive wave of conversion, which, however, could not be located in our area, Baer assumes that it occurred in 1679-1680, because a lot of local Christians had submitted petitions to the Sultan for getting *kısve bahası* as were new converts to Islam (Baer, *Honored*, 201; cf. Minkov, *Conversion to Islam*, 149). Bulgarian edition of the document in: M. Kalicin, A. Velkov and E. Radušev (eds), *Osmanski Izvori za isljamizacijnnite procesi na bălkanite (XVI-XIX v.)* [Ottoman sources concerning the process of the Islamization in the Balkans] (Sofia 1990), 103-111.

64 For the motives for the Islamisations see for example: Minkov, *Conversion to Islam*, 92-108. Minkov's remark that the rural population had experienced a wide range of conversions during the seventeenth century has not been confirmed in the case of south Rhodope.



### *Language and conversion*

The relationship between language and religion as a double-set of criteria for the determination of identities has been studied in the context of the emergence of nationalism in the West. The search for the 'nation' in European countries turned to the search for a common religion and/or language, in order to form a national community.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, scholars in the age of nationalism viewed various people according to this interrelated double-set connection. Therefore, every people in the process of the determination of its national identity tried to find a 'convenient' religion and language to adopt. Those who did not conform to this rule were seen as strange cases and, thus, worthy of being studied by scholars. In particular, according to this theory, a Muslim in the Ottoman Empire had to speak Turkish (as a rule), Arabic and/or Persian. However, at least in the Balkans, the Muslims seem not to have been a unified case and not to have conformed to this norm; rather, every region developed its own characteristics. The Bosnians and the Albanians were two among the prominent Muslim groups who kept their language after their conversion to Islam, thus maintaining a distinct difference between themselves and other Ottoman Muslims.<sup>66</sup>

Speaking of the trope of Islamisation in Bulgarian historiography, Maria Todorova summarises the prevalent view on conversions to Islam in the Balkans. According to her, individual cases, albeit for unknown reasons, rather than mass conversions were the rule. And the Bulgarian historian continues: "It is moreover the individual and predominantly single character of these conversions which explains the fact that the integration into the new religious and social milieu was accompanied with a subsequent loss of the native tongue".<sup>67</sup> If this were the rule, then the question arises as to what led some population groups to keep their language after they experienced conversion to Islam not *en masse* but as a result of a long, slow and peaceful process. Quite a lot of population groups in the Balkans are known who followed the dual path of conversion to Islam and keeping the local language. For example, we could mention the Torbeši and the Gorani in the western Balkans together with the Bosnians, the Pomaks in the Bulgarian region, and the Turco-Cretans together with the Vallahades in the Greek region.

Quite reasonably, the interest of scholars has focused on the Bosnian case, both in terms of their keeping the Slavic language and in their way of converting to Islam. Traditional historiography has argued that the mass conversion of the Bosnians to Islam was connected with the Bogomil background of the medieval Bosnian Church.<sup>68</sup> How-

65 W. Safran, 'Language, Ethnicity, and Religion: A Complex and Persistent Linkage', *Nations and Nationalism*, 14/1 (2008), 171.

66 F. Bieber, 'Muslim Identity in the Balkans before the Establishment of Nation States', *Nationalities Papers*, 28/1 (2000), 24-25.

67 Todorova, 'Conversion', 141-142.

68 Zhelyazkova, 'Islamization', 245-247; F. Adanır, 'The Formation of a "Muslim" Nation in Bosnia-Herzegovina: A Historiographic Discussion', in F. Adanır with S. Faroqi (eds), *The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography* (Leiden 2002), 285-302, with a thorough analysis of the Bosnian and non-Bosnian historiography on this issue.

ever, recent scholarship has rejected the 'Bogomil thesis' and postulates that the conversion phenomenon in Bosnia was related to a multi-directional set of reasons. The gradual character of the conversion process and the absence of Turkish colonisation are the two important factors derived from the discussion on the Islamisations of Bosnia.<sup>69</sup> The massiveness and the speediness of the conversion, as well as the marginality of the region, were seen as the key reason for the converts' keeping of the Slavic language. Moreover, the development of a rich Bosnian *aljamiado* literature was the special characteristic of the Bosnian case.

The Turco-Cretans were another group who kept their mother-tongue despite conversion to Islam.<sup>70</sup> It is recorded that they were the third important case of mass conversion in the Ottoman history after the cases of Bithynia in the fourteenth century and Bosnia in the fifteenth.<sup>71</sup> In this case, the keeping of the local language has been seen as a result of the mass nature of conversion and the geographical remoteness from the capital, coupled with the inability of the state to implement a policy of colonisation and the very long Cretan War.<sup>72</sup> Obviously, the fact that the majority of the island population even after the completion of the Islamisation process was Christian and Greek-speaking played an important role in the phenomenon that Muslims in Crete continued to speak Greek.

Neither is the case of the Pomaks hard to interpret. The Rhodope region already had an indigenous Slav-speaking population from the medieval period onwards which was co-existent with a Greek-speaking population, mainly in the castles.<sup>73</sup> Contact between the two elements did not stop after the Ottoman conquest and can be traced in the Christian names of the area from the sixteenth century.<sup>74</sup> The reason lies in the frequent contact

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69 For a summary of the relevant literature see: N. Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History* (London 1996), 51-69; R. J. Donia and J.V. Fine, *Bosnia and Hercegovina: A Tradition Betrayed* (London 1994), 35-44.

70 For the Turco-Cretans and an edition of a text by them in Greek (*aljamiado*), see: Y. Dedes, 'Blame it on the Turko-Romniot (Turkish Rums): A Muslim Cretan song on the Abolition of the Janissaries', in E. Balta with M. Ölmez (eds), *Turkish-Speaking Christians, Jews and Greek-Speaking Muslims and Catholics in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul 2011), 325-329, with the earlier literature.

71 N. Adıyeke, 'Multi-dimensional Complications of Conversion to Islam in Ottoman Crete', in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *The Eastern Mediterranean under Ottoman Rule: Crete, 1645-1840. Halcyon Days in Crete VI, A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 13-15 January 2006* (Rethymno 2008), 203. For the conversions to Islam on the island and their relation to the army, see: M. Greene, *A Shared World: Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Princeton 2005), 95-101. See also: M. Peponakis, *Εξισλαμισμοί και επανεκχριστιανισμοί στην Κρήτη (1645-1899)* [Islamisations and re-christianisations in Crete] (Rethymno 1997).

72 Greene, *A Shared World*, 95-101.

73 The standard work on the period remains the book of C. Asdracha, *La region des Rhodopes aux XIIIe et XIVe siècles: Étude de géographie historique* (Athens 1976), esp. 50-90.

74 In the village of Paşavik (today Pachni) in 1557 among the recently-settled people, among others, the following names of Greek origin appeared: Yorğō, Mavro, Mavrud, İstemad, Manol, Kiryako, Angelo, Kirilo. In the group of fugitives (*gürihtegân*) of Yassı Viran in 1565 the following names of the same origin were recorded: Yorğō, Dimitri, Nikola, Hristo, İstemad,

of the villages of the mountain area with the important centre of Greek-speaking culture in the area, namely Xanthi, for commercial and economic reasons.<sup>75</sup> The question of the immigration of population from the north of the region (i.e., the main Bulgarian plateau) to the south (i.e., the Rhodope Mountains) during the early modern period has not been studied yet. This movement has been studied for the nineteenth century.<sup>76</sup> The documented presence of the *Yürüks*, or at least of the Turks from other areas of south Rhodope, did not have any impact on the language spoken by local converts. Although in heavily colonised eastern Rhodope there were areas of Turkish-speaking groups, central and western Rhodope seem to have kept the Slavic language. Although there were no written sources that would indicate that Turkish was not being spoken, the speaking of Turkish in Rhodope might have remained marginal. On the other hand, maybe the fact that the language of the inhabitants of mountainous Rhodope remained oral helped in the resistance against the domination of Turkish. A people without a written culture did not need the knowledge of the official language to replace its mother-tongue. The absence of urban centres and the relevant administrative authorities played a role as well, because these two factors carried out the task of the diffusion of the official culture into rural environments. The absence of important religious monuments, at least in the earlier centuries, is obviously not without meaning.<sup>77</sup> Ahî Çelebi did not build any mosque, nor did any Muslim monastery (*tekke*, *zaviye*) exist in the area in the first centuries after the Ottoman conquest.

The case of the Vallahades is similar. In contrast, however, with the other three cases, in the Voion area it is difficult to argue that there was a prevalent language. The wider area was characterised by the presence of a number of Balkan languages: Greek, Slavic,

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Mavri, Nikola, Andriko, Mavridi, Petro, Manol, Vasil (TT 306, 113 and TT 979, 103, respectively).

75 Kotzageorgis, *Μικρές πόλεις*, 156. In the passage of Pachomios Roussanos (see above fn. 61) it is mentioned that the inhabitants of the mountainous area which had been converted to Islam walked to the town of Xanthi and traded firewood and fruit (*δαδιά και όρόμηλα*), which they carried in pokes, with saffron and other necessities.

76 U. Brunnbauer, 'Κοινωνική προσαρμογή σ' ένα ορεινό περιβάλλον: Πομάκοι και Βούλγαροι στην κεντρική Ροδόπη, 1830-1930' [Social adaptation in a mountain environment: Pomaks and Bulgarians in Central Rhodope], in V. Nitsiakos with H. Kassimis (eds), *Ο ορεινός χώρος της Βαλκανικής: Συγκρότηση και Μετασηματισμοί* [The mountainous space of the Balkans: formations and changes] (Athens 2000), 53-77. In the *cizye* register, compiled immediately after the reform of 1691, in some cases, next to the village names the origin of the inhabitants is recorded. Thus, in the district of Ahî Çelebi, in four of the 11 registered villages, next to the village name there is the note: *Bulğardır*. These are the villages of Çitak, Küçük Arda, Lağuç and Dereköy (MAD 4374, 332-334). Should we wonder as to why some villages were registered as Bulgarian and what this means? Could we connect this dual character of the region with the immigrations of Bulgarians to Rhodope in the late nineteenth century? It is premature to give an answer.

77 However, in *vakıf* registers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries mosques are recorded in the villages of our sample. See: İ.H. Ayverdi, *Avrupa'da Osmanlı Mimârî Eserleri. Bulgaristan-Yunanistan-Arnavudluk*, Vol. IV (Istanbul 1982), 226 (No. 1233), 230 (Nos. 1372, 1382), 231 (No. 1411-1412), 301 (Nos. 3204-3205), 302 (Nos. 3216, 3224, 3230, 3232, 3238, 3240), 303 (Nos. 3253-3254).

Albanian, Aromounian, and Turkish, albeit to a limited extent.<sup>78</sup> The place names were mainly of Slavic origin, although a small number of names of Greek origin existed.<sup>79</sup> Indeed, scholarly literature reports the existence of some Slav-speaking Muslims among the Vallahades.<sup>80</sup> However, it cannot be argued that the area was a 'closed society'.<sup>81</sup> Although there was no strong Muslim presence in the Voion region,<sup>82</sup> there were the urban centres of Kesriye (Kastoria) and Manastır (Bitola) in which large numbers of Muslims lived. Another region with a Muslim concentration was the area to the east of Kozani (in the Ottoman *kazas* of Eğri Buçak and Cuma Pazarı), in which a good number of *Yürüks* settled in the sixteenth century. The existence of the important annual fair at Toçil gave the opportunity for economic transactions among various groups coming from distant places.<sup>83</sup> Migration was endemic to the region, because Voion was a transition area from the urban centres of Western (Kastoria, Bitola, Görice/Körçe) to those of Central Macedonia (Karaferiye/Veroia, Yenice-i Vardar/Giannitsa, Thessaloniki).<sup>84</sup> On the other hand, there were no urban settlements in the region or important Islamic monuments (mosques, *tekkes*). Furthermore, the *vakıf* institution, which promoted the diffusion of Islam in the Balkans, was completely absent. It is argued that the existence of a heterodox Christian background in an area was a factor for the diffusion of Islam in that area.<sup>85</sup> In the Voion region, besides the Greek reports from the beginning of the twentieth century as to the

78 I.S. Koliopoulos, *Η 'πέραν' Ελλάς και οι 'άλλοι' Έλληνες: Το σύγχρονο ελληνικό έθνος και οι ετερόγλωσσοι σύνοικοι χριστιανοί (1800-1912)* [Greece 'beyond' and the 'other' Greeks: the modern Greek nation and its co-inhabitant Christians of another language] (Thessaloniki 2003), 107-108.

79 To mention only place-names from our sample, Bobišta, Lipčišta, Plazomi, Vinyani. The Greek presence in the toponymic is discernible in a couple of place-names outside our sample (Kallistratin, Kaloyeriča, Panarit) and in the use by the Ottoman registrars of the adjectives 'small' (*mikri*) and 'big' (*megali*) as a first part of place names instead of the Slavic 'malo' and 'golemo'. See the article: A. Delikari, 'Σλαβικές επιδράσεις στον καζά της Χρούπιστας: Η περίπτωση των τοπωνυμίων' [Slavic influences in the kaza of Hrupista: The case of the toponyms], in Koliopoulos, *Όψεις του Άργους Ορεστικού*, 166-229.

80 Kallinderis, 'Συμβολή', 322-329.

81 This is the argument put forward by F. De Jong in order to give an interpretation of the Vallahades' language (De Jong, 'The Greek Speaking Muslims', 147).

82 It is worth mentioning concerning the small Muslim presence in the catalogue of *kazas* of the Balkans in 1667/8, the district of Našliç was placed in the lowest category, giving to the judge a daily salary of 150 *akçes*. M.K. Özergin, 'Rumeli Kadılıkları'nda 1078 Düzenlemesi', *Prof. İ.H. Uzunçarşılı'ya Armağan* (Istanbul 1976), 265.

83 For example, in Horpište, in the survey of 1691, among the immigrants, Jews of Thessaloniki were recorded (BOA, MAD 3421, 171).

84 The masons of Našliç were famous and were hired to work in distant urban centres. For such cases see: Panagiotopoulos (ed.), *Αρχείο*, Vol. I, 147-148, 184-187; Vol. II, 607-613; Vol. III, 457-459.

85 Minkov, *Conversion to Islam*, 105-108, with the discussion on the presence of Bogomils in Bosnia. For a detailed comparison of beliefs and customs between Christians and Muslim heterodoxes in the Balkans during the early Ottoman period see the interesting article: Y. Stoyanov, 'Problems in the Study of the Interrelations between Medieval Christian Heterodoxies

connection of the Vallahades with Bektashism,<sup>86</sup> there is some evidence for the existence of a heterodox Christian – and later Muslim – background. In fact, there was the village called Pavlikân (unidentified) registered in the district of Horpište during the sixteenth century. The village name derived from the main heterodox Christian population of the Balkans during the Byzantine period (*Παυλικιανοί*), who might have an impact on the Bogomil movement. Thus, this is indirect evidence for the existence of a heterodox Christian background in the region.<sup>87</sup> From the work of Hasluck we know of the existence of two Bektashi *tekkes* in the Voion region: one in the village Vudurina and the other in Odra.<sup>88</sup> Obviously, the existence of more *tekkes* in the east, in the *Yürük* area, could have facilitated the diffusion and/or the strengthening of Muslim heterodoxy in the Vallahadic area. In conclusion, one may suggest that although the region of Vallahades was not secluded, the thin presence of Turkish-speaking Muslims lead to the adoption of the local language by the Muslims.

### Conclusions

The phenomenon of the preservation of the vernacular by the converts in the Balkans was observable in rural areas, because the absence of urban centres did not favour the diffusion of an official language culture.<sup>89</sup> Therefore, the cases of the Vallahades and Pomaks are not strange as concerns the preservation of language. The comparative study of the Muslims of southern Rhodope and those of the Voion region results in some interesting conclusions. This paper has demonstrated, corroborating some of the recent scholarship, that the conversion phenomenon in the Balkans does not easily lend itself to any typology. The special socio-economic, spatial, and cultural conditions affected the time, the

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and Heterodox Islam in the Early Ottoman Balkan-Anatolian Region', *Scripta & e-Scripta* 2 (2004), 171-218.

86 Glavinas, 'Οι μουσουλμανικοί πληθυσμοί', esp. 475 and 512 fn. 109.

87 BOA, TT 986, 218; TT 70, 215; TT 424, 547; TT 433, 318; TT 720, 313; Stojanovski, *Turski Dokumenti*, 449-450. The village from the first survey onwards had a small number of Muslims (3) together with Christian taxpayers (approximately 35). In the last survey of the sixteenth century, the Christians decreased to only five and in the sources of the seventeenth century the village is not registered.

88 F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, Vol. II (Oxford 1929), 526-528. According to Hasluck, both *tekkes* were connected with the Bektashi saint Emine Baba, who was executed in Manastır in 1598/9, because he preached the ideas of Mansur El-Hallac. Therefore, the two *tekkes* must be dated as early as from the seventeenth century, in a period, during which the Muslim population in the region was stabilised. Unfortunately, I cannot find any information on Emine Baba.

89 B. Lory, 'Parler le turc dans les Balkans ottomans au XIXe siècle', in F. Georgeon with P. Dumont (eds), *Vivre dans l'empire ottoman: Sociabilités et relations intercommunautaires (XVIIIe-XXe siècles)* (Paris-Montreal 1997), 243. However, a little above in his text, the same author argues that: "Dans toutes les zones rurales de peuplement mixte, où une population turque rouméliote était présente, le bilinguisme dominant s'établissait au profit du turc" (Ibid., 241).

reason, and the manner of the conversion to Islam. Economic deficiency was a phenomenon that characterised both rural societies; however, the question is to what extent it was the case in previous centuries. The presence of *çiftlik*s – and in fact of the type of *askeri* – differentiates the Voion case from that of Rhodope. How much did the existence of such a group of official Muslim estate-owners, who lived in the area and had vested interests in it, affect the conversion of the Vallahades? How were Pouqueville's *beys* with non-Turkish customs in Lipçišta in 1806 connected with the *timar*-holders and *çiftlik*-owners of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? If they were connected (or even were the same), was there any possibility of their learning Greek and becoming Vallahades at the beginning of the twentieth century, together with the indigenous Christian converts? The existence of numerous cultures (Albanian, Slavic, Greek, Vlach, and Turkish) with strong influence on the populations in Voion cannot be compared to the case of Rhodope. Although both regions are mountainous, the Rhodope Mountains constitute a homogeneous geographical phenomenon, which is surrounded by extensive plateaus in the north and the south. The Voion region, however, is not geographically distinguishable from the surrounding area. The Muslim presence in Thrace and Western Macedonia was of a different nature: a majority in the former, a minority in the latter. The heterodox Muslims had deep roots in Thrace even from the period of the Ottoman conquest, while in Western Macedonia they did not have the same diffusion.

However, there is a common conclusion: the more we study the conversion phenomenon in the Balkans, the less we find cases of mass and enforced Islamisation in the seventeenth century. Furthermore, in the first century of the Ottoman presence in the Balkans (end of fourteenth - end of fifteenth centuries) conversions are observable to a limited extent and mainly among the members of local elites. Conversely, it seems plausible that the consolidation of Ottoman rule during the sixteenth century led to a prolonged and gradual acceptance of the new religion by the local Christians. However, while in Rhodope the Islamisation process was at a mature stage at the beginning of the sixteenth century, in Voion it had just started.

The preservation of the mother-tongue after the conversion to Islam is not a strange phenomenon for the Ottoman Balkans. The reason for that, however, has not been sufficiently elaborated. Geographical seclusion was not an exclusive factor for either case. Social diversification among the population with the existence of an elite would favour the adoption of the official language by the elite. However, while it seems that there was a local elite in both cases, it did not adopt the official language.<sup>90</sup> The argument of the absence of substantial Turkish colonisation together with the rare cases of communica-

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90 For Voion we refer to Pouqueville and to the aforementioned data on the local officials. For Rhodope, the information, which is mentioned in a French traveller's text, that the inhabitants of Rhodope region were active in the eighteenth century in the wool trade in the biggest export centre of the region, Serres/Siroz, is interesting; the Rhodopians traded some 40% of the exported wool in the late eighteenth century. See: G. Koutzakiotis, *Cavalla, une échelle égéenne au XVIIIe siècle. Négociants européens et notables ottomans* (Istanbul 2009), 123, 211. Obviously, there was a socio-economic stratification within the groups, which, however, did not affect the language spoken.



tion between colonising Turks and local Muslims cannot be applied in our cases. In our view, the notion that could satisfactorily interpret the phenomenon is that of the 'linguistic zone' or, to put it differently, of the 'locally dominating language'. At least in the Balkans, even during the pre-modern centuries, there were regions in which a language was dominant, without excluding the others, which often were more than one. It is not clear either which factor influences the preponderance of a language over others or how this preponderance was enforced. Everyday practice, discernible in the sources before the nineteenth century, which was composed of a mixture of customs, mores, and traditions and not of political or religious considerations, views a language as being the *lingua franca* of the region-zone. It is difficult to geographically delineate such a region in geographical terms. The pre-Ottoman background obviously played a role. The Rhodope region was a zone of *slavophonia* even in the Middle Ages. This phenomenon was not influenced by the existence of Greek (in the Byzantine period) or Turkish (in the Ottoman period) populations. Religion overlaid the dominant language. Voion belonged to a region where four linguistic zones converged. The choice of the adoption of the Greek and Slav languages by the Muslims showed that these languages were the dominant ones. These regions of the central Balkans – a region with various competing languages – constitute an interesting research field for the topic. The more we draw away from this area, the more the phenomenon of the vernacular of the Muslims appears regular and/or logical: the language of the Turco-Cretans and the Bosnians seems less peculiar than that of the Vallahades.



APPENDIX

Table 1: The sample of the villages of the Vallahades

OLD NAME	ALTITUDE	1500		1519		1530		1542		1570		1667		1674		1691	1693	1694
		M	CHR	M	CHR	M	CHR	M	CHR	M	CHR	M	CHR	M	CHR			
Bobışta	676	2	91	3	117	1	107	6	137	6	42	7	7	3	8	14		7
Çaknohor	670	0	0	0	108	0	74	5	92	11	60	19	31	3	23	5	4	9
Çarçışta		2	14	0	48	0	63	3	60	7	39	5	35	3	13	4	12	
Çerepyani	800	0	43	0	0	0	6		7	7	11	10	18	1	16			
Çuvalar	780	0	0	0	32	0	24	1	29	2	5	2	2	2		1		
Dislab	970	0	0	5	137	4	102	8	125	7	46	3	30			18	16	22
Ginoş	720	1	31				11	3	14	7	1	4		2				
Laya	600		51		53		41		56	4	18	33	7	8				
Labanovo	770		56	8	85	13	103	13	107	11	88		26	3	13	6		8
Lignad				2	34				44	3	15	5	18	1	14	11	1	8
Lipçışta	670		13	2	73	1	86	7	99	16	71	32	17	5	15			11
Mişologoşt	760			5	134	5	102	4	102	7	72	7		1				
Plazomi	710		122		93	3	92	6	118	11	31	23	21	3	13	10		6
Plazomişta	780	2	49	4	66	4	53	4	67	5	66	8	11	2	1			
Piluri	660	8	74	3	63		17	6	21	7	13	9		3	3			
Renda	720	0	0	0	0	7	10	12	12	11	11	17	0	0	0	5	0	0
Rezni	820		84		111		108		84	2	66	5	26	1	12		2	
Siroçani	780	1	60	1	58		49	4	61	10	23	7	40			6	5	8
Trabatosta	870		32	1	57	3	63	1	32	1	5	6	33			18	5	13
Toçil	840	1	66		53		46		104	14	112		35	3	31	21	7	29
Vaypeş	660			1	111		113		116	8	53	11	4	1	6	5		
Vinyani	850			1	43	5	42	4	66	12	34	11	5	2	1			
Vođorina	870	0	0	0	39	1	29	1	36	2	18	9	8	1	7	4	7	0
Yankova												9	5	3	4			

**Table 2:** The sample of the villages of the Pomaks

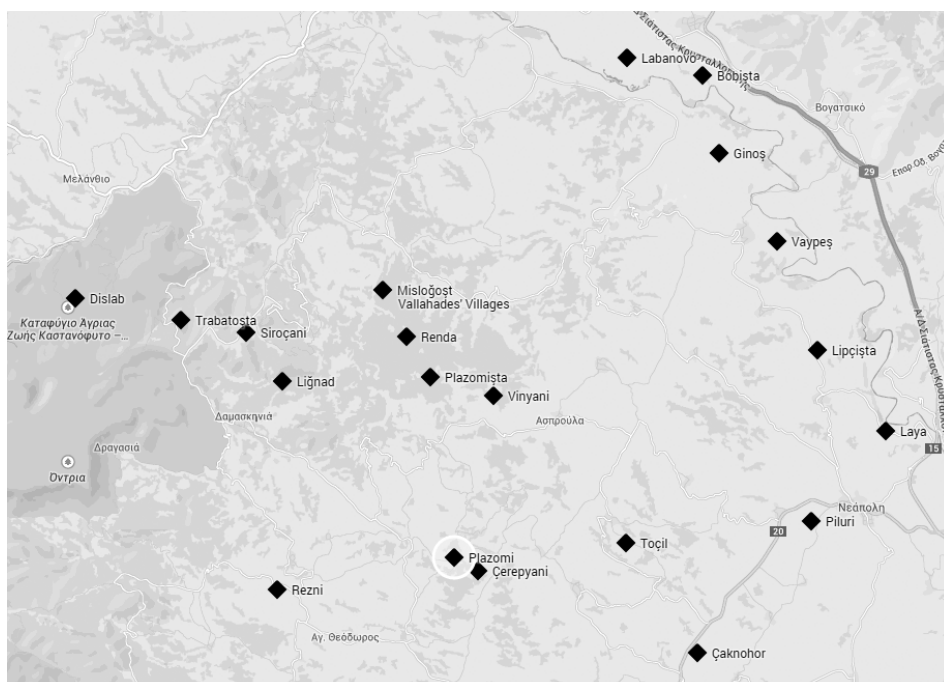
NAME	1519			1530			1557/8			1565			1569-70			1570		
	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR
Volkan				Vf Ahı Çelebi			Vf Murad II	9	6				Vf Ahı Çelebi	31	10	Vf Murad II		
Yeniköy	Has-hüm	4	123	h Kasım Paşa	16	159							Has-hüm	3	195			
Yassı Ören	Vf Bayezid II	27	134	Vf Bayezid II	12	144	Vf Bayezid II	28	178	Vf Bayezid II	39	268	Vf Ahı Çelebi	35	41			
Yorğan				Vf Bayezid II	7	16	Vf Bayezid II	7	32	Vf Bayezid II	6	41	Vf Bayezid II	3	46			
Ğabrovo	Has-hüm	20											Has-hüm		35			
Güvenç nd Moskofça				Vf Ahı Çelebi									Vf Ahı Çelebi	62				
Elmalı	Vf Murad II	68	5	Vf Murad II	68	4	Vf Murad II	117					Vf Murad II	169	6			
Zariz Deresi													Vf Ahı Çelebi	56	26			
Ketanlık				Vf Ahı Çelebi	28	2							Vf Ahı Çelebi	180				
Keçi İlyas				Vf Bayezid II	24		Vf Bayezid II	23		Vf Bayezid II	32		Vf Bayezid II	53				
Kafir Deresi nd Borova				Vf Ahı Çelebi	5	7							Vf Ahı Çelebi	141	250			

NAME	1519			1530			1557/8			1565			1569-70			1570		
	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR
		M			M			M			M			M			M	
Koyun	Vf Bayezid II	10	127	Vf Bayezid II	8	130	Vf Bayezid II	21	145	Vf Bayezid II	8	111	Vf Bayezid II	5	142			
Kozluca	Vf Ahı Çelebi	19		Vf Ahı Çelebi	47								Vf Ahı Çelebi	94				
Margarit													Has-hüm	16				
Mehmedli	Has-hüm	23		timar	28								Has-hüm	70				
Drenovo nd Oduvanlık Kozluca				Vf Ahı Çelebi	14								Vf Ahı Çelebi	218	1			
Osman Ören				Has-hüm	14	1							Has-hüm	68				
Uğurlu Vİran							Vf Murad II	3	35				Vf Murad II	4	58			
Paşavik							Vf Bayezid II		46	Vf Bayezid II			Vf Ahı Çelebi		35			
Ramazan Bükü nd Bela Reka				Vf Ahı Çelebi	5	1							Vf Ahı Çelebi	99	3			
Sakarkaya	Has-hüm	32	56	Has-hüm	29	62							Has-hüm	58	44			
Sarıyar							Vf Murad II	14					Vf Murad II	26				
Sarıkaya nd İsmilan				Vf Ahı Çelebi	7								Vf Ahı Çelebi	113				

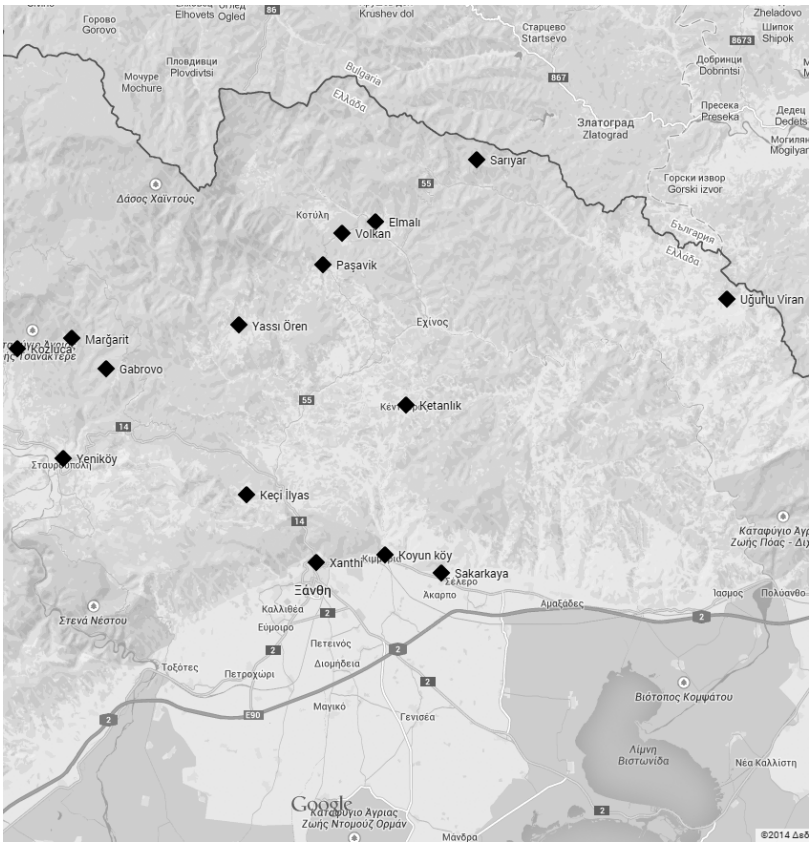
NAME	1519			1530			1557/8			1565			1569-70			1570		
	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR	STATUS	POPULAT	CHR
Şahin Obası							Vf Murad II	41					Vf Murad II	70				
Şıkar Başı nd Arda Başı				Vf Ahı Çelebi									Vf Ahı Çelebi	4	7			
Şinikova							Vf Murad II	11					Vf Murad II	28				
Sogucak													Vf Murad II	16	7			
Tekfur	-												Vf Ahı Çelebi	8				
Tirkeş	-								Vf Bayezid II	13	14		Vf Bayezid II	23	11			
Topuklu	-			Vf Ahı Çelebi	6								Vf Ahı Çelebi	66	28			
Tuzburun	-												Vf Ahı Çelebi	18				
Fındıklı				Vf Ahı Çelebi	4								Vf Ahı Çelebi	20				
Hüseyin Obası	Has-hüm	47		h Kasım Paşa	43	4							Has-hüm	104	3			
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>250</b>	<b>445</b>		<b>365</b>	<b>530</b>		<b>274</b>	<b>442</b>		<b>98</b>	<b>434</b>		<b>1861</b>	<b>948</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Table 3:** The ‘Sons of Abdullah’ in Southern Rhodope (16th c.)

NAME	1557/8			1565			1568/9-70		
	B ABDUL	MUSL	%	B ABDUL	MUSL	%	B ABDUL	MUSL	%
Volkan							2	31	6.45
Yeniköy							3	3	100.00
Yassı Ören	2	28	7.14	4	39	10.26	3	35	8.57
Yorğan	5	7	71.43	1	6	16.67	1	3	33.33
Güvenç nd Moskofça							2	62	3.23
Elmalı	5	117	4.27				9	168	5.36
Zariz Deresi							10	56	17.86
Ketanlık							2	180	1.11
Keçi İlyas	0	0		0	0		0	53	0.00
Kafir Deresi nd Borova							16	141	11.35
Kiroklu							1	20	5.00
Koyun	7	21	33.33	2	8	25.00	2	5	40.00
Kozluca							1	94	1.06
Margarit							2	16	12.50
Mehmedli							2	70	2.86
Drenova nd Oduvanlık Kozluca							4	218	1.83
Osman Ören							2	68	2.94
Uğurlu Viran	0	3	0.00				1	1	100.00
Ramazan Bükü nd Bela Reka							11	99	11.11
Sakarkaya							6	58	10.34
Sarıyar	0	14	0.00				1	26	3.85
Sarıkaya nd İsmilan							1	113	0.88
Şahin Obası	2	41	4.88				3	70	4.29
Şıkar Başı nd Arda Başı							0	4	0.00
Şinikova	0	11	0.00				1	28	3.57
Soğucak							0	16	0.00
Tekfur							0	8	0.00
Tırkeş				3	13	23.08	2	23	8.70
Topuklu							3	66	4.55
Tuzburun							2	18	11.11
Hüseyin Obası							9	104	8.65
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>8.68</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>15.15</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1826</b>	<b>5.48</b>



**Map 1:** The Vallahades villages of the sample



Map 2: The Pomak villages of the sample



# MONASTERIES IN RURAL SOCIETIES



# MONASTERIES IN THE RURAL SOCIETY AND ECONOMY OF THE GREEK LANDS UNDER THE OTTOMANS: A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL APPRAISAL

Elias KOLOVOS\*

THE AIM OF THIS PAPER IS TO REVIEW THE MOSTLY Greek historiography of recent decades on the Orthodox Greek monasteries and their function in the rural society and economy of the Greek lands under the Ottomans. Monasteries have been described by Professor John Alexander as “stable and largely productive Orthodox Christian social and economic units in the Greek countryside”.<sup>1</sup> As such, apart from their cultural impact, Orthodox Greek monasteries should be treated as objects of Ottoman social and economic history.

Historiography so far has aimed mostly at exploiting the rich Ottoman archives preserved in the monasteries of the Greek lands. As a result, monastic archives from Mount Athos,<sup>2</sup> Thessaly,<sup>3</sup> the Morea, and the islands of the Archipelago,<sup>4</sup> have already been

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- 1 J.C. Alexander (Alexandropoulos), ‘The Lord Giveth and the Lord Taketh Away: Athos and the Confiscation Affair of 1568-1569’, *Ο Άθως στους 14<sup>ο</sup>-16<sup>ο</sup> αιώνες* [Mount Athos in the fourteenth-sixteenth centuries] (Athens 1997), 149-200.
- 2 E. A. Zachariadou, ‘Ottoman Documents from the Archives of Dionysiou (Mount Athos) 1495-1520’, *SF*, 30 (1971), 1-35; G. Salakides, *Sultansurkunden des Athos-Klosters Vatopedi aus der Zeit Bayezid II. Und Selim I.* (Thessaloniki 1995); A. Fotić, *Sveta Gora i Hilandar u osmanskom Carstvu, XV-XVII vek* [Mount Athos and Chilandar in the Ottoman Empire, 15th-17th c.] (Belgrade 2000); P.K. Kotzageorgis, *Η αθωνική μονή Αγίου Παύλου κατά την οθωμανική περίοδο* [The Athonite Monastery of St Paul during the Ottoman period] (Thessaloniki 2002); E. Kolovos, ‘Χωρικοί και μοναχοί στην οθωμανική Χαλκιδική, 15<sup>ο</sup>-16<sup>ο</sup> αι.’ [Peasants and monks in Ottoman Halkidiki, fifteenth-sixteenth centuries], unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2000.
- 3 J.C. Alexander, ‘The Monasteries of Meteora during the First Two Centuries of Ottoman Rule’, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 32/3 (1983), 95-103; M. Kiel, ‘Επίσημες τουρκικές πηγές για τη μοναστηριακή ζωή και τα μοναστήρια της Ανατολικής Θεσσαλίας κατά τον 16<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα’ [Official Turkish sources concerning the monastic life and the monasteries of Eastern Thessaly during the sixteenth century], *Βυζαντινός Δόμος*, 13 (2002-2003), 69-101; S. Laiou, *Τα οθωμανικά έγγραφα της μονής Βαρλαάμ Μετεώρων, 16<sup>ο</sup>-19<sup>ο</sup> αι.* [Ottoman documents of the Monastery of Varlaam at Meteora, sixteenth-nineteenth centuries] (Athens 2011).
- 4 E.A. Zachariadou, ‘Συμβολή στην ιστορία του Νοτιοανατολικού Αιγαίου (με αφορμή τα πα-

studied, making possible an effort to reach more general conclusions as far as the Greek lands are concerned. The publication of the Ottoman archive of St John's Monastery on Patmos,<sup>5</sup> presented in this volume in the subsequent papers of Elizabeth Zachariadou (who was the first scholar to highlight the value of the monastic archives for Ottoman history), Nicolas Vatin and Michael Ursinus, is the latest achievement in these efforts devoted to exploiting the Ottoman archives of the monasteries of the Greek lands. Apart from Ottoman documents, the monasteries of the Greek lands have rich archives of documents in Greek as well, from the Ottoman centuries, which are also necessary for the study of the monastic histories. Some of these archives have been published in recent decades,<sup>6</sup> and in some happy cases the scholar can make use of both Ottoman and Greek documents from the same monastery.

The study of the monastic institutions is also part of a broader historiographical interest, which goes beyond Ottoman history. In this vein, a collective volume has been published in Greek on *Monasteries, Economy and Politics from the Medieval to Modern Times*.<sup>7</sup> The volume attempts a comparative approach to the monastic institutions, beginning from the medieval West and the Byzantine Empire. This approach contextualises historically the continuity of these institutions from medieval to modern times and suggests that it has to be explained on the basis of their continued relation with economic activity and political protection.

Historiography so far has aimed at defining the relations of the Greek Orthodox monasteries with the Ottoman state, focusing especially on the status of the monasteries and their properties in the Ottoman context. Despite the fact that they had to live under Islamic rule, the Greek Orthodox monks asked for (and in many cases obtained) protection, prerogatives, and special status from the Ottoman sultans. Especially during the transitional period from Byzantine to Ottoman rule, certain monasteries apparently managed to retain particularly privileged statuses.

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τμιακά φερμάνια των ετών 1454-1522) [A contribution to the history of the south-eastern Aegean (based on the Patmos firmans of the years 1454-1522)], *Σύμμεικτα* 1 (1966), 184-230; S.N. Laiou, *Η Σάμος κατά την οθωμανική περίοδο* [Samos during the Ottoman period] (Thessaloniki 2002); E. Kolovos, *Η νησιωτική κοινωνία της Άνδρου στο οθωμανικό πλαίσιο* [The island society of Andros in the Ottoman context] (Andros 2006); N. Vatin, 'Les patmiotes, contribuables ottomans (XVe-XVIIe siècles)', *Turcica*, 38 (2006), 123-153; See also, for Cyprus, I. Theocharides, *Οθωμανικά Εγγραφα 1572-1839* [Ottoman Documents 1572-1839], Archives of the Holy Monastery of Kykkos I (Nicosia 1993), Vols. I-V.

- 5 N. Vatin, G. Veinstein and E. Zachariadou, *Catalogue du fonds ottoman des archives du monastère de Saint-Jean à Patmos. Les vingt-deux premiers dossiers* (Athens 2011).
- 6 In the case of the monasteries of Mount Athos, the Greek documents of the Ottoman centuries have been under publication in the series *Αθωνικά Σύμμεικτα* of the Institute for Byzantine Studies of the Greek National Research Foundation (under the direction of Kriton Chrysochoides). See also, among many other publications: S. Papadopoulos-D.C. Florentis, *Νεοελληνικό αρχείο της Ι. Μονής Ιωάννου Θεολόγου Πάτμου* [Greek archive of the Monastery of St John of Patmos] (Athens 1990); E. Skouvaras, *Ολυμπιώτισσα* [The Monastery of Olympiotissa] (Athens 1967).
- 7 E. Kolovos (ed.), *Μοναστήρια, οικονομία και πολιτική: από τους μεσαιωνικούς στους νεώτερους χρόνους* [Monasteries, economy and politics from medieval to modern times] (Herakleio 2011).

The Monastery of the Prodomos near Serres, for example, during the reign of Me-hmed the Conqueror, preserved its lands and dependent peasants as a *timar* holder.<sup>8</sup> Other monastic communities, which paid taxes, claimed their payment at a fixed rate (*ber vech-i mukataa/maktu*), in order to retain full control of their properties, avoiding visits by and disputes with Ottoman tax collectors.<sup>9</sup> The monasteries of Mount Athos, for example, paid collectively a tax at a fixed rate and often succeeded in paying fixed rates for many of their properties as well.<sup>10</sup>

Under the Ottomans, monastic properties, like ecclesiastical properties more generally, were legally recognised as ecclesiastical/monastic endowments (*kilise vakfı/manastır vakfı*). The earliest reference so far known to monastic properties recognised as endowments by the Ottomans is that to the properties of the Monastery of the Prodomos near Serres. According to a surviving Greek translation of an original Ottoman document of 1373, the Sultan acknowledged the properties of the monks, their villages, estates (Gk. *κτήματα*: apparently *mülks*, or *emlâk*), vineyards, fields, and their endowments (Gk. *βακούφια*: *vakıfs*).<sup>11</sup> An edict issued in 1430, a few days after the last Ottoman conquest of Salonica, by Sultan Murad II (1421-1451), in favour of the monasteries of Mount Athos,<sup>12</sup> contains another early Ottoman reference to monastic properties as both endowments and full properties which the monks had inherited from their fathers (*mezkurîn keşişlerin vakflarından ve atalarından kalmış mülkeri*). The edict of Murad II ratifies earlier documents of his father, Sultan Mehmed I (1413-1421), who apparently had recognised *vakıfs* and full properties of the monks in the neighbouring area of Serres, and earlier documents as well. By his order in 1430, Murad II also forbade any individual to enter the *vakıfs* that were dependent from Mount Athos without permission from himself or the monks (*Ayanoros taallukatından ne kadar vakıfları var ise benim destürsüz ve bunların destürsüz kimesne girmeye*).

8 See N. Beldiceanu, 'Margarid: Un timar monastique', *Revue des Etudes Byzantines*, 33 (1975), 227-255. For another, earlier, case of a monastic *timar* see V. Boškov, 'Ein Nišan des Prinzen Orhan, Sohn Süleymân Çelebis, aus dem Jahre 1412 im Athoskloster Sankt Paulus', *WZKM*, 71 (1979), 127-152.

9 See Alexander, 'The Monasteries of Meteora'.

10 E. Kolovos, 'Negotiating for State Protection: *Çiftlik*-Holding by the Athonite Monasteries (Xeropotamou Monastery, Fifteenth-Sixteenth C.)', in C. Imber, K. Kiyotaki, and R. Murphey (eds), *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies: State, Province, and the West* (London 2005), 197-209.

11 E.A. Zachariadou, 'Early Ottoman Documents of the Prodomos Monastery (Serres)', *SF*, 28 (1969), 1-12.

12 On this document see E. Kolovos, 'The Monks and the Sultan Outside the Newly Conquered Ottoman Salonica in 1430', *JTS*, 40 (2013) [= *Defterology, Festschrift in Honor of Heath Lowry*], 271-279; P.P. Kotzageorgis, 'Το Άγιον Όρος μέσα από τα οθωμανικά έγγραφα του 15<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα' [Mount Athos through the Ottoman documents of the fifteenth century], *Το Άγιον Όρος στον 15<sup>ο</sup> και 16<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα* [Mount Athos in the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries], *Conference Proceedings* (Thessaloniki 2012), 75; V. Demetriades, 'Athonite Documents and the Ottoman Occupation', *Ο Άθως στους 14<sup>ο</sup>-16<sup>ο</sup> αιώνες* [Mount Athos in the fourteenth-sixteenth centuries] (Athens 1997), 47, 56.

The Ottoman state, in accordance with the socio-political contract of the *dhimma* and following a pragmatic policy, did not attempt, in principle, to meddle in ecclesiastical and monastic property. One exception verifies this rule: the attempt, during the reign of Selim II, to confiscate ecclesiastical and monastic property.<sup>13</sup> The confiscation of the monasteries in 1568/69 might be compared to the slightly earlier Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII in England; however, the Ottomans finally permitted the monks to redeem their properties. And Şeyhülislam Ebussuud Efendi, who had provided the legal argumentation for the confiscation, finally permitted the re-establishment of *vakıfs* by the monks. And even if their landed properties were not recognised officially as *vakıfs* by Ebussuud Efendi, the monks were able in many cases in the years which followed to circumvent the letter of the law.<sup>14</sup>

How can the historiography of monasteries in the Greek lands contribute to research into Ottoman rural societies and economies? Orthodox monasteries, usually fortified, were dispersed throughout the countryside of the Greek lands. In some cases, monasteries were concentrated in monastic territories (as in the case of Mount Athos, or Meteora), assembling large numbers of monks. At the beginning of the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, the 19 then monasteries on Mount Athos numbered almost 1.500 monks.<sup>15</sup> The monastery of Hagia on the island of Andros, in the Archipelago, had 45 monks in 1670. Of course, much smaller monasteries existed as well: the monastery of Pantocrator, again on the island of Andros, had in 1670 only six monks.<sup>16</sup>

Big monasteries in the Greek lands, in order to sustain their monks, apparently had important landed assets in the countryside. As Kostis Smyrliis has recently argued, the Byzantine monasteries of Mount Athos lost a large part of their properties in the area of Thessaloniki during its first Ottoman conquest.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, we know that the Athonite monasteries of St Paul and Xeropotamou, respectively, retained a substantial part of their Byzantine properties, which they expanded especially during the sixteenth

13 On the 'confiscation crisis', see A. Fotić, 'The Official Explanations for the Confiscation and Sale of Monasteries (Churches) and their Estates at the Time of Selim II', *Turcica*, 26 (1994), 33-54; Alexander, 'The Lord Giveth and the Lord Taketh Away'; E. Kermeli, 'The Confiscation and Repossession of Monastic Properties in Mount Athos and Patmos Monasteries, 1568-1570', *Bulgarian Historical Review*, 28/3-4 (2000), 39-53.

14 See J.C. Alexander (Alexandropoulos), 'Χριστιανικές προσηλώσεις και ισλαμικά αφιερώματα: οι γκρίζες ζώνες της ορθόδοξης μοναστηριακής ιδιοκτησίας' [Christian donations and Muslim waqfs: the 'grey' areas of Orthodox monasteries' landholding], in Kolovos (ed.), *Μοναστήρια*, 225-233; S. Laiou, 'Diverging realities of a Christian *vakıf*, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries', *THR* 3 (2012), 1-18.

15 H.W.Lowry, 'A Note on the Population and Status of the Athonite Monasteries under Ottoman Rule (ca. 1520)', *WZKM*, 73 (1981), 114-135.

16 Kolovos, *Η νησιωτική κοινωνία της Άνδρου στο οθωμανικό πλαίσιο*, 105-106.

17 K. Smyrliis, 'The First Ottoman Occupation of Macedonia (ca. 1383-ca. 1403): Some Remarks on Land Ownership, Property Transactions and Justice', in A.D. Beihammer, M.G. Parani and C.D. Schabel (eds), *Diplomatics in the Eastern Mediterranean 1000-1500: Aspects of Cross-Cultural Communication* (Leiden, Boston 2008), 327-348.

and the eighteenth century.<sup>18</sup> Even monasteries which were founded during the Ottoman centuries, such as the Varlaam Monastery, at Meterora/Thessaly, studied by Sophia Laiou, acquired substantial landed assets under Ottoman rule.<sup>19</sup> As Phokion Kotzageorgis has shown, the properties of the Orthodox monasteries during the Ottoman centuries were much smaller in comparison with the properties of the Muslim *ayans* of the eighteenth century.<sup>20</sup> However, their properties were still significant. On the island of Andros, for example, monasteries, according to the register of 1670, were big landowners; the monastery of Hagia had the biggest properties and paid the highest taxes on the island.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, historiography shows that the monasteries and their properties were an important feature of the rural economy and society in the Greek lands under the Ottomans. It is, however, an open question to investigate how they had contributed to the development of the rural landscape, the expansion and the improvement of cultivation.

How did the monasteries manage their properties in the rural countryside? The exploitation of the monastic lands was made through contracts between the monasteries and peasants and/or using wage labour. In an Ottoman document from the sixteenth century we encounter a wage labourer (*ücretle ırgat*) on a property of the Athonite Monastery of Xeropotamou; another document of the eighteenth century from the same monastery mentions day-labourers on the monastic estates (*yanaşma*).<sup>22</sup> In Greek documents of the eighteenth century, according to the research of Sophia Laiou,<sup>23</sup> we find “κολλήγους”, “τσιφτισήδες” (*çiftçi*), “ορτακσήδες” (*ortakçi*), and “περακεντέδες” (*perakende*), that is, peasants working under contracts, wage labourers, or a combination of both. The shepherds of the monastic herds also worked under special contracts.

In some cases, the monasteries had developed the possibility of providing housing for their peasants; in addition, sometimes they paid their taxes as well. The Athonite Monastery of Xeropotamou, for example, had four-five houses for its peasants (*çiftçi odaları*) on two of its properties during the eighteenth century. In 1774, the Athonite monastery of Chilandar provided 100 *guruş* for the poll tax of the peasants on one of its properties.<sup>24</sup>

18 See, respectively, Kotzageorgis, *Η αθωνική μονή Αγίου Παύλου*, and Kolonos, ‘Χωρικοί και μοναχοί στην οθωμανική Χαλκιδική, 15<sup>ος</sup>-16<sup>ος</sup> αι.’.

19 Laiou, *Τα οθωμανικά έγγραφα της μονής Βαρλαάμ Μετεώρων*.

20 P. Kotzageorgis, ‘Τα μοναστήρια ως οθωμανικές τοπικές ελίτ’ [Monasteries as Ottoman local elites], in Kolonos (ed.), *Μοναστήρια, οικονομία και πολιτική*, 163-190.

21 E. Kolonos, ‘Insularity and island society in the Ottoman context: The case of the Aegean island of Andros (sixteenth to eighteenth Centuries)’, *Turcica* 39 (2007), 76.

22 Kolonos, ‘Χωρικοί και μοναχοί στην οθωμανική Χαλκιδική, 15<sup>ος</sup>-16<sup>ος</sup> αι.’, Vol. III, nos 94 (1565) and 464 (1769), respectively.

23 S. Laiou, ‘Σχέσεις μοναχών και χριστιανών λαϊκών κατά την οθωμανική περίοδο’ [Relations between monks and Christian laymen during the Ottoman period], in Kolonos (ed.), *Μοναστήρια*, 210.

24 See *Αρχείο της Ι.Μ. Εσφιγμένου* [Archive of the H.M. of Esphigmenou], ed. Z. Melissakis (Αθωνικά Σύμμεικτα 11) (Athens 2008), 106-108. Reference by Laiou, ‘Σχέσεις μοναχών και λαϊκών’, 210 fn. 4.



More generally, historiography has noted that the monasteries developed a variety of economic activities, agriculture, stock-breeding, fishing, woodcutting, in order to secure their autarchy in case of crises. Some monasteries also made investments in ship-building, aiming at the commercialisation of their surpluses. In relation to that, historiography has also described the monasteries as 'enterprises'. This point of view was inspired by an attempt by economists to analyse the economic function of the medieval Catholic Church as an enterprise. According to this analysis, monasteries were franchise-holders of the multidivisional enterprise of the Church.<sup>25</sup>

In the same vein, we can ask how monasteries accumulated properties. First of all, the monks who came to live in the monasteries, an important career opportunity for the Christian Orthodox under the Ottomans,<sup>26</sup> donated their properties to them. Moreover, monasteries attracted donations from the faithful. The monks prayed for the salvation of the souls of the donors, and in some cases organised litanies taking holy relics from village to village in the countryside. At the same time, the monasteries functioned as mechanisms of social welfare for the Orthodox Christians. Donations to the monasteries were often made in exchange for providing annual subventions in foodstuffs to the donors and the payment of their taxes. In 1521, for example, a Christian woman donated to the Athonite Monastery of Xeropotamou, as a *vakıf*, in front of the *kadı*, all of her property, a house in her village, a vineyard, four fields, and some clothing, on the agreement that the monastery would pay her poll tax and provide her support until her death.<sup>27</sup>

The monasteries also invested in buying land from peasants and peasant communities. In this way, they invested in the rural economy, establishing new estates, or expanding the older ones. In the same vein, through the accumulation of land in the countryside, the monasteries functioned as factors for stability in the rural economy.

Historiography has also shown that the monasteries were involved in the rural economy as moneylenders, thus contributing to monetarisation and facilitating the payment of taxes by peasants and peasant communities. It has been also noted that, in addition, the monasteries functioned like banks as well, providing security deposit for property assets and money. In this context, the monasteries often exploited the tax debts of the peasants and the peasant communities.

For peasants and peasant communities, on the other hand, the sources show that the monastic properties were in some cases a target for exploitation. In 1534, for example, the monks of the Varlaam Monastery at Meteora, Thessaly, complained to the Imperial Council that the fields and vineyards they had bought were being illegally held by their sellers.<sup>28</sup> On the island of Andros, in 1621, the monks of the Hagia Monastery and the

25 See R. Ekelund *et alii*, *Sacred Trust: The Medieval Church as an Economic Firm* (Oxford 1996).

26 See S. Petmezas, 'L'organisation ecclésiastique sous les Ottomans', in P. Odorico (ed.), *Conseils et mémoires de Synadinos prêtre de Serrès en Macédoine XVI<sup>e</sup> s.* (Paris 1996), 487-569.

27 Kolovos, 'Χωρικοί και μοναχοί στην οθωμανική Χαλκιδική, 15<sup>ος</sup>-16<sup>ος</sup> αι.', Vol. III, No. 27.

28 Laiou, *Τα οθωμανικά έγγραφα της μονής Βαρλαάμ Μετεώρων*, No. 4.

peasants of a nearby village disputed in front of the *kadı* over the use of a pasture.<sup>29</sup> In 1781, in another example, the Patriarch of Constantinople threatened to reprimand the Christians who had trespassed on fields and a forest of the Athonite Monastery of Pantokrator.<sup>30</sup>

Peasant communities and monasteries, according to the published sources, disputed also over the latter's contribution to the tax burdens. In 1595, for example, the *hegoumenos* of the Monastery of Hagia complained in front of the *kadı* of Andros that the villagers of Amolochos claimed that the monks should pay poll tax, since the latter owned fields and vineyards in their village. He asked the *kadı*, who accepted his petition, to intervene and suppress their claim.<sup>31</sup> In 1598, in another example, the villagers of Kopraina and the monks of Varlaam Monastery of Meteora disputed in front of the *kadı* of Tırhala (mod. Trikala) over a monastic *çiftlik*, which the peasants held illegally, and asked the monks to help them in the payment of their poll tax. The monks claimed successfully that their fields were not *reaya* fields and that they did not have to pay the poll tax.<sup>32</sup>

However, we can assume that the relations between peasant communities and monasteries would have regularly been complementary, since monasteries, being comparatively big and stable institutions, could provide help to their neighbours as well. According to a claim of the monks of the Monastery of Hagia (Andros), in an *arzuhal* dated 1624, "in the event of famine and high prices, many *reaya* find help from the monastery" (*kaht ve gala vaki oldukça niçe reaya taifesi sebeblediğine ıstibah yoktur*).<sup>33</sup>

In conclusion, the study of the monasteries of the Greek lands shows that Ottoman rural economies and societies were complex structures. Monks were not only religious figures in the countryside, but also an active social and economic group. I have suggested elsewhere that dervishes and their *tekkes* also had carried out similar activities in the Ottoman rural economy and society.<sup>34</sup>

29 Kolonos, *H νησιωτική κοινωνία της Άνδρου στο οθωμανικό πλαίσιο*, No. 82.

30 *Αρχείο της Ι.Μ. Παντοκράτορος* [Archive of the H.M. of Pantokrator], ed. A. Pardos (Αθωνικά Σύμμεικτα 5) (Athens 1998), 180-181.

31 Kolonos, *H νησιωτική κοινωνία της Άνδρου στο οθωμανικό πλαίσιο*, No. 32.

32 Laiou, *Τα οθωμανικά έγγραφα της μονής Βαρλαάμ Μετεώρων*, No. 115.

33 Kolonos, *H νησιωτική κοινωνία της Άνδρου στο οθωμανικό πλαίσιο*, No. 97.

34 E. Kolonos, 'Ορθόδοξα μοναστήρια και δερβίςικοι τεκέδες: προς μια συγκριτική προσέγγιση του οικονομικού και πολιτικού τους ρόλου στην οθωμανική κοινωνία' [Orthodox monasteries and dervish tekkes: towards a comparative approach to their economic and political role in Ottoman society], in idem (ed.), *Μοναστήρια*, 235-251.



# LE MONASTÈRE DE SAINT-JEAN À PATMOS ET SON ENVIRONNEMENT RURAL

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AVEC SON PORT ACTIF ET SES RICHES MARCHANDS et armateurs, Chora, à Patmos, constituait dès la fin du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle une modeste agglomération urbaine. Le monastère de Saint-Jean, qui dominait la petite cité, participait pleinement à ses activités. Bien entendu, les moines n'étaient pas pour autant coupés du monde rural. C'est à leurs relations avec celui-ci qu'est consacrée la présente contribution, à partir de l'analyse des nombreux documents ottomans conservés dans les archives du couvent, entre la fin du XV<sup>e</sup> et le milieu du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle<sup>1</sup>.

La nature et le contenu de cette documentation ont déterminé les principaux thèmes de notre communication : l'activité rurale du Monastère dans le monde rural, l'ère géographique qu'elle occupe et la chronologie de son expansion ; les modalités de son acquisition de biens fonciers ; enfin les différends que ces activités pouvaient entraîner avec les insulaires.

Patmos étant un îlot rocheux à peu près stérile, l'approvisionnement du monastère (et plus généralement de la population insulaire) a toujours constitué un problème fonda-

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1 Ce choix, que justifient les fortes évolutions que connut la Méditerranée à la suite de la Guerre de Crète, a également une raison plus conjoncturelle. En effet, notre travail est fondé sur les vingt deux premiers dossiers du fonds ottoman des archives de Patmos, qui correspondent à peu près à la période que nous avons définie. Gilles Veinstein et nous-mêmes avons publié le catalogue détaillé de cet ensemble : cf. N. Vatin, G. Veinstein et E. Zachariadou, *Catalogue du fonds ottoman des archives du Monastère de Saint-Jean à Patmos. Les vingt deux premiers dossiers* (Athènes 2011). Le lecteur y trouvera le résumé de chacun des documents que nous citons ici. La seconde partie du fonds est en cours de traitement par Michael Ursinus. Il aurait été absurde de prétendre analyser les documents des XVII<sup>e</sup>-XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle que nous connaissons déjà (sur Samos, notamment) sans pouvoir encore les compléter par l'exploitation du reste de la documentation. Au demeurant, la communication de Michael Ursinus, dans ce même volume, est précisément fondée sur ce second lot de documents.

mental. Aussi les empereurs byzantins avaient-ils concédé des domaines agricoles extérieurs constitués en *metochia* par les moines : les plus importants étaient ceux de Stylos près de la Canée en Crète, de la vallée du Méandre et des îles de Kalymnos et Léros<sup>2</sup>. Au début du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle, ces régions étaient passées sous le contrôle respectif de Venise, de l'Émirat de Menteşe<sup>3</sup> et de l'Ordre de Saint-Jean-de-Jérusalem<sup>4</sup>. Les moines réussirent néanmoins, par la diplomatie et peut-être contre des offres de service, à conserver en tout ou partie le contrôle de leurs *metochia* : un accord sur celui de Stylos fut conclu avec les Vénitiens dès 1267<sup>5</sup>. Un terrain d'entente fut également trouvé avec les Hospitaliers de Saint-Jean, dont témoigne un firman ottoman de décembre 1523<sup>6</sup> concernant la taxation des biens du Monastère à Léros et Kalymnos. Cos n'étant pas citée, on en déduit que les moines avaient perdu au cours du temps leurs *metochia* sur cette île ; en revanche la mention de Léros implique qu'ils exploitaient toujours leur *metochion* de Parthenion. La documentation byzantine ne faisant pas état d'un *metochion* du Monastère de Patmos à Kalymnos, c'est apparemment sous les Hospitaliers, et avec leur accord, que les moines avaient acquis sur cette île des terrains et des moulins à huile<sup>7</sup>. En revanche, aucune source ne permet de conclure que les moines conservèrent des droits sur leurs domaines de la vallée du Méandre. Le seul souvenir qui reste d'un de leurs *metochia* dans cette région est le toponyme Patiniotikon, près du fleuve<sup>8</sup>. Quant à Patmos même, le Monastère y avait aussi quelques biens, notamment des vignes<sup>9</sup>.

2 Sur les donations impériales au Monastère et ses propriétés, cf. E. Vranoussi, *Βυζαντινά Έγγραφα της Μονής Πάτμου, Α' Αυτοκρατορικά* (Athènes 1980), pp. 33-39, 59-109.

3 Cf. E. Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade: Venetian Crete and the Emirates of Menteşe and Aydin (1300-1415)* (Venise 1983), pp. 105-106.

4 Cf. A. Luttrell, « The Genoese at Rhodes: 1306-1312 », in Laura Balletto (éd.), *Oriente e Occidente tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna: Studi in onore di GEO PISTARINO* (Acqui Terme 1997), pp. 737-761.

5 Cf. G. Saint-Guillain, « L'Apocalypse et le sens des affaires : les moines de Saint-Jean de Patmos, leurs activités économiques et leurs relations avec les Latins (XIII<sup>e</sup> et XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles) », *Chemins d'outre-mer: Études sur la Méditerranée médiévale offertes à Michel Balard*, t. II (Paris 2004), p. 774, ainsi que l'étude détaillée de L. F. Kallivretakis, « Το μετόχι της Πάτμου στο Στύλο Αποκορώνου και η αυτοκρατορική λύσις του 1196 », *Πληθυσμοί και οικισμοί του Ελληνικού χώρου* (Athènes 2003), pp. 93-132.

6 APO Ibis-1.

7 Cf. Elizabeth Zachariadou, « Η Κως και η Μονή της Πάτμου με την έναρξη της Τουρκοκρατίας », in G. Kokorou-Alevra, A. A. Laimou et E. Somantoni-Bournia (éds), *Ιστορία, Τέχνη, Αρχαιολογία της Κω* (Athènes 2001), pp. 467-468.

8 Cf. A. Philippson, « Das südlichen Jonien » bearbeitet von Karl Lyncker, in Th. Wiegand, *Milet*, III Heft 5 (Berlin - Leipzig 1936), p. 8.

9 On en trouve la trace dans les procédures faisant suite à la confiscation des biens monastiques par Selīm II en 1569, rassemblés dans le dossier 4. Quatre des vignes récupérées alors par les moines étaient situées dans la zone du port de Skala (APO 4-16, 29, 32, 41) et deux dans ses environs, plus précisément à Pernera et Netia (APO 4-26, 27). Trois autres étaient à Karnava et Kipi (APO 4-13, 34, 35), lieux dont la localisation est incertaine. On ignore les dimensions de ces neuf vignes. Cependant les prix payés – 120, 240, mais aussi 520 et 600 aspres – montrent qu'elles avaient une certaine importance, ne fût-ce que pour la consommation locale.

Au moment de l'entrée de Patmos dans l'orbite ottomane, l'approvisionnement de l'île et du monastère avait donc une longue histoire et demeurait, quoique dans un cadre juridique différent, un problème toujours d'actualité. Il n'est donc pas étonnant qu'il constitue – avec les questions fiscales et la piraterie – un des principaux sujets de la plus ancienne documentation ottomane concernant l'île : quatre firmans (sur dix documents) en traitent entre 1499 et 1522<sup>10</sup>. À cette époque, bien entendu, il s'agit pour les moines de la possibilité de faire sortir librement des grains d'Anatolie. Ce sont encore ces régions qui sont évoquées dans des documents sur le même sujet jusqu'à la fin du règne de Soliman. Puis nos sources se consacrent de façon de plus en plus exclusive à des approvisionnements en provenance d'îles. Cela ne doit pas surprendre, du reste, car si on peut s'interroger sur le silence des sources concernant les anciennes dépendances du monastère dans la région du Méandre – il n'en demeure que des traces ou des indices<sup>11</sup> –, on conçoit que les îles apparaissent dans la documentation ottomane au fur et à mesure de leur entrée dans les possessions des sultans. Ainsi qu'on l'a vu, cela ne signifie pas nécessairement que les moines n'y avaient pas dès auparavant des intérêts ou des biens. Mais outre que tel pourrait en effet être le cas à l'occasion, il paraît clair que leurs actions et leurs investissements étaient liés à l'histoire de l'Empire lui-même.

C'est ainsi que Léros et Kalymnos, les îles du Dodécanèse les plus proches de Patmos et où, nous le verrons, le monastère a de gros intérêts, apparaissent aussitôt après la conquête ottomane. Un firman du 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1523 fait suite à la requête d'un homme envoyé à Istanbul par « les moines installés à Léros et Kalymnos », qui se plaignent d'être empêchés de jouir de leurs champs, vignes et moulins à huile. Ordre est donc donné de les laisser en jouissance dès lors que celle-ci est ancienne et qu'ils paient la dîme<sup>12</sup>. À l'évidence, il s'agit dans ce cas de préserver, dans le cadre nouveau de la législation foncière et fiscale ottomane, des droits et propriétés détenus antérieurement à la conquête. On verra de même – mais nous sortons ici du cadre chronologique que nous

10 APO, Z-3, Z-5, Z-7, Z-10.

11 Cf. E. Zachariadou, « Historical Memory in an Aegean Monastery : St John of Patmos and the Emirate of Menteshe », in K. Borchardt, N. Jaspert et H. J. Nicholson (éds), *The Hospitallers, the Mediterranean and Europe: Festschrift for Anthony Luttrell* (Ashgate 2007), pp. 131-137. Des notes en grec au verso des documents 5-1 (1508), 5-5 (1563) et 5-6 (1566) montrent qu'en mars 1889 les moines firent des recherches dans leurs archives pour se renseigner sur leur ancien *metochion* connu sous le nom de « Πατινιότικον ». Ces notes, toutes d'une même main et de même date, révèlent que l'on s'intéressait aux propriétés du monastère et à leurs dimensions (της κυριαρχίας της Μονής, τα οροθέσια του πατινιότικου). D'après l'histoire inédite de Patmos de G. Smyrnakis (ms. 1008 de la bibliothèque du monastère, p. 1641), le patriarchat œcuménique, encouragé par l'esprit des Tanzimat, fit en 1862 quelques recherches dans la *Defterhane* pour retrouver ses anciennes possessions « près d'Éphèse », mais sans succès. Smyrnakis nous apprend encore qu'on essaya en 1885 de calculer la superficie du « Πατινιότικον ». On peut supposer qu'il faut lier à ces tentatives les notes portées au verso des trois documents cités ci-dessus, mais on n'en sait pas plus.

12 APO, 1b-1. Cf. E. Zachariadou, « Η Κως και η μονή της Πάτμου με την έναρξη της Τουρκοκρατίας », *Ιστορία – Τέχνη – Αρχαιολογία της Κω, First International Conference, Cos, 4-2 May 1977* (Athènes 2001), pp. 465-468.

nous sommes fixé – les moines régler des questions concernant leur *metochion* de Stylos en Crète après l'arrivée du pouvoir ottoman<sup>13</sup>.

Le cas de Samos est un peu particulier<sup>14</sup>. On sait que cette île, ottomane depuis Mehmed II, avait été laissée à peu près à l'abandon à partir du règne de Bayezid II, avant que le *kapudan paşa* Kılıç Ali Paşa ne s'y intéressât. Il la détint en *hass* dans les années 1570, avant d'en obtenir la pleine propriété en 1584, puis de fonder celle-ci en *vakıf* avant sa mort en 1587. À l'évidence cette reprise en mains par les autorités et la politique de mise en valeur instituée par le pacha suscitèrent l'intérêt des moines de Patmos, puisque c'est précisément du 30 janvier 1574 que date le premier document ottoman dont nous disposons concernant leur activité à Samos. Il s'agit d'un ordre (*mektub*<sup>15</sup>) de Kılıç Ali Paşa, en tant que *kapudan paşa* : les Patmistes s'étant plaints de ce qu'on les empêchait de ramener à Patmos ce qu'ils cultivaient à Samos, il enjoignait au cadı de leur laisser emporter ces produits<sup>16</sup>. Comme on le voit, à cette date les moines géraient depuis quelques temps déjà des exploitations agricoles dans l'île. Mais on peut supposer, attendu qu'il s'agit du plus ancien document que nous possédions, qu'il s'agissait d'investissements relativement récents, qui mettaient à profit la politique de mise en valeur inaugurée par Kılıç Ali Paşa.

Dans d'autres cas, en revanche, on constate un certain décalage entre l'occupation ottomane de certaines îles et l'apparition de celles-ci dans notre documentation. On est alors amené à supposer que les investissements patmistes y furent plus tardifs. Ainsi un firman adressé en juin 1546 au cadı de Lemnos nous apprend que les moines de Patmos, qui avaient dû renoncer à se rendre sur place par peur des pirates, mais avaient continué à payer les taxes, étaient maintenant rassurés et entendaient reprendre possession de biens fonciers, d'ailleurs mal définis, qu'ils possédaient en *vakıf* (*vakıfyerleri*)<sup>17</sup>. On sait que le monastère avait possédé deux *metochia* à Lemnos à l'époque byzantine<sup>18</sup>. Mais H. Lowry n'en trouve plus trace dans la documentation ottomane sur l'île. Alors que les monastères athonites, également absents en 1490, réapparaissent dans le registre de 1519, tel ne paraît pas être le cas du monastère de Saint-Jean<sup>19</sup>. Il semble donc que celui-ci ait attendu la fin des années 1540 – à un moment, sans doute, où il se sentait suffisamment rassuré par la *pax ottomanica* et l'expulsion des chevaliers de Rhodes, mais peut-être aussi à un mo-

13 Sur cette question, cf. E. Zachariadou, « Historical memory ».

14 Sur l'histoire de Samos ottomane, cf. S. Laiou, *Η Σάμος κατά την Οθωμανική Περίοδο* (Salonique 2002).

15 Sur l'emploi de ce mot pour designer, au XVI<sup>e</sup>-XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle ce qu'on devait couramment appeler par la suite *buyuruldu*, cf. Gilles Veinstein, « Les documents émis par le *kapûdân paşa* dans le fonds ottoman de Patmos », in N. Vatin et G. Veinstein (éds), « Les archives de l'insularité ottomane », *Documents de travail du CÉTOBAC*, 1 (janvier 2010), pp. 13-19.

16 APO, 2-20.

17 APO, 1b-18.

18 Cf. J. Haldon, « Limnos, Monastic Holdings and the Byzantine State, ca. 1261-1453 », in A. Bryer et H. Lowry (éds), *Continuity and Change in Late Byzantine and Early Ottoman Society* (Birmingham-Dumbarton Oaks 1986), pp. 161-216 (pp. 169-171, 174).

19 Cf. H. Lowry, *Fifteenth Century Ottoman Realities: Christian Peasant Life on the Aegean Island of Limnos* (Istanbul 2002), pp. 141-152.



ment où il était devenu suffisamment riche et bien en cour – pour envisager de se réinstaller dans cette île éloignée qu'il avait *de facto* abandonnée (quoiqu'il en dît, nous le verrons)<sup>20</sup>. En pratique, il s'agissait donc de nouveaux investissements rendus possibles par l'évolution de la situation politique. C'est ainsi que nous voyons les moines de Patmos obtenir en mars 1548 une lettre (*mektub*) du *kapudan paşa* (puisqu'émise à l'Arse-nal) ordonnant au voyvode de l'île de les laisser s'installer sur place en vertu de firmans qui les autorisaient à mettre en culture des terrains leur appartenant en pleine propriété et à y élever des bâtiments<sup>21</sup>. Quelles en furent les suites ? Lemnos ne réapparaît pas dans les documents ottomans conservés à Patmos et Heath Lowry, de son côté, n'a pas trouvé de trace de la présence sur cette île de notre monastère.

Autres îles relativement lointaines, Paros et Santorin ne semblent devenir des champs d'activité pour les Patmistes qu'assez tardivement, respectivement en 1586 et 1582<sup>22</sup> :

ici encore, il s'agit moins d'un développement lié à l'évolution de l'Empire ottoman que d'un élargissement de l'horizon du monastère, qui semble connaître, jusqu'au milieu du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, une ère d'expansion. Il convient d'ailleurs de noter qu'à Santorin, tous les biens dont il est question ont été concédés en *vakıf* au monastère, alors qu'on recense deux achats à Paros, ce qui pourrait impliquer un plus grand intérêt pour la seconde île (où était implanté le *metochion* de la Panayia Exochoriani).

Les biens fonciers concernés par la documentation sont principalement des champs labourables, des vignes et des arbres fruitiers. Un autre investissement de nature agricole avait manifestement une importance non négligeable pour les moines : les moulins. Moulins à vent ou à cheval destinés, on peut le supposer, à moudre le grain, mais aussi et surtout moulins à huile d'olive. Parmi les biens du monastère vendus au profit du Trésor en 1570 on ne dénombre pas moins de deux moulins à vent à Patmos<sup>23</sup>, un moulin à cheval à Léros et un autre à Kalymnos<sup>24</sup>, enfin cinq moulins à huile à Léros<sup>25</sup> et Kalymnos<sup>26</sup>. Un fir-

20 Haldon, « Limnos, Monastic Holdings », p. 171, n. 24b, signale que le monastère de Patmos avait encore un *metochion* à Lemnos en 1448 et émet l'hypothèse que ses biens purent passer au monastère de Lavra, dont les terrains étaient mitoyens des siens. Notre documentation semble invalider cette hypothèse puisqu'en 1546-48, comme nous le verrons, les moines de Patmos prétendaient avoir conservé leurs droits mais avoir souffert d'usurpation de la part de « mécréants de l'île » (*ada keferesi*, APO, 1b-18), sans plus de précision. On peut supposer que si les « coupables » avaient été les moines du *metochion* de Lavra, cela apparaîtrait plus nettement dans la documentation.

21 APO, 2-6.

22 Le plus ancien document concernant Santorin est de juin 1607 (APO, 7-8), mais une *hüccet* de la décade du 27 juillet au 5 août 1615 renvoie à une donation en *vakıf* de trente quatre ans antérieure, donc (selon le calendrier de l'Hégire) de 1582. Un firman d'août-septembre 1612 concerne un terrain à Paros acheté neuf ans auparavant, mais une *hüccet* d'août 1615 évoque une vente effectuée trente ans plus tôt, donc en 1586. Il faudrait encore citer Milos, où le monastère possède une vigne à lui donnée par Yannis fils d'Athanassios (APO, 14-13, 18-84).

23 APO, 4-22, 4-45.

24 APO, 4-20, 4-21.

25 APO, 4-9, 4-12.

26 APO, 4-19, 4-23, 4-30.

man de Soliman daté du 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 1523 nous apprend, sans surprise, que les moines de Patmos possédaient déjà des moulins à vent à Kalymnos et Léros à cette date et donc selon toute vraisemblance avant la conquête ottomane<sup>27</sup>. Un autre firman de ce même sultan, du 4 mai 1529, précise que ces moulins sont exemptés de la dîme<sup>28</sup>. On peut voir une confirmation de l'intérêt financier des moulins dans l'achat par les moines d'un nouveau moulin à huile à Kalymnos en 1607<sup>29</sup>, tout comme dans le fait qu'ils sollicitent et obtiennent l'autorisation de créer deux nouveaux moulins à Samos, en 1623 puis en 1626<sup>30</sup>, et celle, en 1606, de construire deux nouveaux moulins à huile à Kalymnos<sup>31</sup>. La valeur des moulins est manifestée, surtout, par la façon dont, dans les premières décennies du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle en particulier, les moines de Patmos tentent de préserver leur monopole en protestant contre la création par des tiers de nouveaux moulins à Léros et Kalymnos<sup>32</sup>, dont ils demandent la destruction<sup>33</sup>. Dans ces affaires, ils sont en parfaite entente avec les *mütevelli* du *vakıf* de Soliman à Rhodes, à qui ils remettent une quantité annuelle d'huile : 30 ocques en 1605<sup>34</sup>, 45 vers 1636-38<sup>35</sup>, signe que leur production a augmenté de façon non négligeable.

La documentation ottomane renseigne malheureusement beaucoup moins bien sur la réalité concrète de l'exploitation de ces biens. Dans le meilleur des cas, les documents citent le nom d'un certain nombre de moines, qui peuvent être ceux qui résident dans le *metochion* concerné, sans que cela implique nécessairement qu'ils travaillent eux-mêmes aux champs. C'est ainsi que, au détour d'une procédure judiciaire, nous découvrons sur les terrains du monastère à Samos des « fermiers en chef » « chargés de cultiver soigneusement et attentivement cette ferme », Michalis de Santorin, Yannis Kedoura et Stamatis

27 APO, 1b-1. Sur les moulins à huile à Kalymnos, cf. Ch. Koutelakis, « Τα ελαιοτριβεία της Καλύμνου και η διαμάχη της Μονής Αγίου Ιωάννου Θεολόγου Πάτμου με την Μονή του Αγίου Παντελεήμονα Τήλου », *Καλυμνιακά Χρονικά*, 2 (1981), pp. 27-37. L'auteur pense que la dispute entre Patmos et Tilos a commencé depuis 1502. Dans les documents ottomans, nous n'avons pas trouvé mention de Tilos.

28 APO, 1b-4.

29 APO, 7-9.

30 APO, 7-45. Pour être complets, citons encore un moulin à vent reçu en don à Milos, sans doute en 1627 : APO, 10-5.

31 APO, 9-3. Les deux nouveaux moulins devront livrer au *vakıf* de Rhodes huit ocques d'huile par an.

32 De fait, plusieurs documents montrent que les moines n'avaient pas le monopole des moulins à Kalymnos et Léros : Une *hüccet* de la décade du 26 février au 7 mars 1533 (APO, 3-2) enregistre la vente par le Trésor à Mehmed bin Orhan, *serbölük* dans le fort de Kalymnos, d'un moulin à huile qui avait été affecté à l'église de Bodrum du temps des Chevaliers de Rhodes ; une *mektub* du *kapudan paşa* de novembre 1599 (APO, 13-12) nous apprend que les Kalymniotes se plaignent d'être contraints par un certain Muslih Ağa de porter leurs olives à son moulin.

33 Les archives du couvent conservent sur cette question une série de firmans, *hüccet*, *arz* de cadis ou de *mütevelli*, *mektub* de *kapudan paşa* entre 1606 et 1636-38 (APO, 7-6, 9-1, 9-2, 9-9, 19-6, 3-24, 20-14, 20-34, 20-36, 20-72). Un firman émis dans la décade du 11 au 21 mai 1688 à la suite d'une plainte du *mütevelli* de Rhodes montre que la question se posait alors toujours dans les mêmes termes.

34 APO, 9-1.

35 APO, 20-34.

Emengirar, qui déclarent cultiver chaque année pour 40 *kile taliyye* de grains<sup>36</sup>. On verra encore les moines laisser à un laïc, Yioryis Koukouvios, le soin d'être leur représentant (*vekil*), autrement dit fermier, pour des biens à Kalymnos, en fait une partie du couvent de la Kyra Archontissa<sup>37</sup>. On a en tout cas le contrat consenti en décembre 1593 par le monastère de Patmos à un de ses moines, Gennadios, pour ce même bien qui lui était cédé – vignes, champs, oliviers, figuiers, moutons, etc. – pour 100 pièces d'or (*filuri*), à charge pour lui de remettre au monastère tout objet en argent ou autre trouvé dans la terre et, surtout, la moitié de sa production d'huile (nouvel indice de l'importance particulière de ce revenu). À sa mort, ces biens devaient revenir au monastère<sup>38</sup>.

Kéa constitue un cas très particulier d'implication des Patmiotes dans la vie rurale insulaire. En effet l'influent Nikolas Diakos fut nommé pour trois ans, le 26 mai 1575, *zabit* de Kéa, c'est à dire, concrètement, affermataire des impôts de l'île<sup>39</sup>. Quoique nous n'en ayons aucune certitude, on peut supposer qu'il conserva cette charge par la suite, puisqu'un autre document, de peu postérieur à sa mort le 1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1590, nous apprend que son fils Vassilis fut à son tour (et peut-être à sa suite) affermataire de Kéa<sup>40</sup>. Or dans les années 1621-1626, nous retrouvons comme sous-traitant de la ferme fiscale de Kéa un moine patmiote du nom de Papa Issaias<sup>41</sup> : il collecte la *cizye*, la dîme, les droits coutumiers, les droits de douane, les droits casuels<sup>42</sup> et outre la perception du remboursement de ses frais (*harc*) a semble-t-il un droit de préemption sur une certaine quantité de vallonnées<sup>43</sup>. On peut bien entendu estimer que cette question ne concernait pas le monastère, Papa Issaias ayant investi pour son propre compte dans la ferme de Kéa comme le faisaient auparavant les membres de la famille Diakos. Il faut pourtant noter que cette dernière était particulièrement riche et influente, tandis que nous ignorons tout de Papa Issaias et ne savons pas s'il avait les moyens financiers de cette opération. Le monastère en revanche en avait la capacité et il était naturel de passer par un homme de paille, en l'occurrence un moine traitant en son nom, mais en sous-main pour le couvent. Cette hypothèse nous paraît confirmée par une lettre du *kapudan paşa* Çigalazade Sinan Yusuf Paşa de la décade du 3 au 11 février 1603, adressée aux « anciens et à la population de l'île de Patmos » (*cezire-i Batnos kocaları ve ehali*), où l'on peut lire le passage suivant :

36 *Dikkat ve ihtimam için çiftliğe mezburûn baş çiftçileri Yani Kedura ve Mihali Sandorino ve İstamad Emengirar nâm zimmiler beher sene kırk taliyye tōhüm ziraat ederüz (...) dedüklerinden* (APO, 7-42).

37 APO, 3-44.

38 APO, 6-6.

39 APO 2-24. Sur ce personnage cf. E. Zachariadou, 'Στην Πάτμο το δέκατο έκτο αιώνα. Ο καρὰ-βούρης κι επιχειρηματίας Διάκος της Κρητικής', *Ο Εραμιστής*, t. 28 (2011), 65-94.

40 APO 20-68.

41 Cf. APO 7-37, 15-8, 15-9, 19-6, 19-7, 20-23, 20-75, 20-110.

42 APO 19-6, 19-7

43 APO 15-8, 15-9, 20-110. Cette mention de la vallonnée vient rappeler les intérêts commerciaux des Patmiotes, très actifs dans l'exportation en Occident de ce produit. Cf. B. J. Slot, *Archipelatus Turbatus : Les Cyclades entre colonisation et occupation ottomane, c. 1500-1718* (Leyde 1982), p. 115.

« Vous avez écrit : 'J'étais dans l'île de Kéa pour percevoir le solde. Le *zimmi* qui est leur *zabit* a été pris et pillé par des *firkataci* crétois alors qu'il se rendait auprès de vous avec les aspres. À l'heure qu'il est il est en Crète.' Cette excuse et ce prétexte ne sont pas acceptés. Qu'un certain nombre de vos anciens se rendent dans l'île de Kéa ; qu'il perçoivent ce qui me revient sans en abandonner un aspre ou un grain, que ces sommes soient en possession des *reaya* ou des *zabit* ; qu'ils ramènent un ou deux de leurs anciens portant les attestations de ce qu'ils ont perçu jusqu'à présent : vous les amènerez auprès de moi avec l'argent<sup>44</sup>. »

Ce texte est à dire vrai un peu confus, mais il en ressort en tout cas que pour le *kapudan paşa* les Patmiotes étaient collectivement responsables de l'impôt de Kéa. Or il paraît difficile de supposer que l'ensemble des *reaya* de Patmos avait pris à ferme cet impôt : on admettra plus volontiers qu'il y a ici, peut-être en raison de la diversité des sujets traités par le document, une petite confusion entre la communauté des Patmiotes en général, d'une part, et d'autre part le monastère et l'hégoumène qui constituent, à cette époque, l'interlocuteur naturel des autorités<sup>45</sup>. Bref, tout donne à penser que, dans ce premier quart du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, la perception des taxes de Kéa était l'affaire des Patmiotes, autrement dit du monastère normalement officiellement représenté, probablement, par un moine comme Issaïas. Ajoutons que Kéa n'apparaît plus par la suite dans la documentation et qu'il est donc possible, sinon probable, que la ferme ait cessé désormais d'être attribuée aux Patmiotes.

L'impression générale qui se dégage de ce petit tableau est donc celle d'un monastère de Patmos entreprenant, dont les intérêts et le patrimoine foncier se développaient sur un espace géographique insulaire qui allait s'élargissant, profitant apparemment au mieux de son appartenance à l'ensemble ottoman. Au demeurant, cette activité agricole était surtout concentrée dans les environs immédiats de Patmos : Léros, Kalymnos et Samos.

\* \* \*

Le statut des biens et revenus des moines varie selon les situations, impliquant des relations différentes avec les insulaires.

De premières distinctions sont issues du droit ottoman lui-même<sup>46</sup>. Le monastère tire un revenu de champs labourables, dont il ne peut normalement avoir que la jouissance

44 *Mürted Adasında bekaya tahsili için idim zabıtları olan zimmi akçe ile bu canibe gelürken Girit furkataçıları tutub soymışlardır hâlâ Giritdedür deyü yazmışsınız imdi bu özür ve bahane makbul degüldür birkaç ihtiyarlarınız Mürted Adasına varub bizüm hakkumuz reayada mıdır zabıtlarda mıdır her kimde ise bir akçe ve bir habbe baki komayub cümlesin tahsil etdürüb şimdiye dek aldıkları teslim temessükleriyle ihtiyarlarından bir iki ademlerin bilece alub akçeleriyle me'an bu canibe alub getüresiz* (APO, 13-19).

45 Sur les confusions de l'administration centrale concernant la société patmiote, cf. N. Vatin, « Le sultan et l'hégoumène de Patmos », in N. Clayer, A. Papas et B. Fliche (éds), *L'autorité religieuse et ses limites en terre d'islam : Approches historiques et anthropologiques* (Leyde, Brill, 2013), pp. 69-85.

46 Sur le statut de la terre, cf. la synthèse de H. İnalcık, « The Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300-1600 » in H. İnalcık avec D. Quataert (éds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, Vol. I : 1300-1600 (Cambridge 1994), pp. 102 sqq. Notre propos

(*tasarruf*) moyennant le versement initial d'un *resm-i tapu* ; d'arbres, de vergers, de vignes et moulins qu'il peut posséder en pleine propriété (*mülk*) ou, de ce fait, en *vakıf*. Un firman du 4 mai 1529 fait en effet soigneusement la distinction, à propos des possessions à Léros et Kalymnos des moines de Patmos :

« Qu'on perçoive une dîme de 10 % sur le produit de leurs champs, qu'on ne perçoive pas plus de 10 % ; et qu'on ne perçoive pas de dîme et de droits de douane sur [les produits de] leurs moulins à huile, leurs vignes et autres provisions (*rızk*). Et que nul de l'*ağa*, des janissaires ou de l'*emin* ne se mêle d'une manière ou d'une autre de leurs champs, de leurs entrepôts de fruits, de leurs vignes et autres provisions. Quand ils doivent prendre et emporter leurs provisions et autres ..., quelle que soit la direction, qu'ils le prennent et emportent. Que nul ne se mêle [de leurs affaires] et ne les empêche [d'agir à leur guise] pour s'opposer à ce qu'ils fassent du commerce [maritime] pour assurer leur approvisionnement<sup>47</sup>. »

Pourtant il n'est pas sûr que tout ait toujours été bien clair, ni dans les esprits, ni dans les faits <sup>48</sup>. C'est ainsi qu'à Lemnos les « biens *vakıf* du monastère » (*manastırın vakıf yerleri*)<sup>49</sup> sont accaparés comme biens de pleine propriété (*mülkiyyet üzere*) par les insulaires<sup>50</sup>, puis que deux ans plus tard le *kapudan paşa* parle, apparemment à propos des mêmes terrains, de biens de pleine propriété où les moines prévoient notamment de faire du labour<sup>51</sup>, ce qui ne devrait pas normalement être compatible avec un statut de *mülk*. Dans d'autres cas au contraire, dans le contexte de terrains samiotes et appartenant donc au *vakıf* de Kılıç Ali Paşa, l'accord du *sahibü'l-arz* est expressément mentionné à propos

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n'est pas ici d'étudier dans le détail la situation des biens du monastère de Patmos, mais de souligner un certain flou, au moins apparent, dans la pratique.

47 APO, 1b-4. Ainsi qu'on l'a dit plus haut, on a conservé une série d'ordres postérieurs autorisant l'exportation de grains depuis Léros, Kalymnos, Cos ou Samos par les Patmiotes, mais il est en général clairement précisé que ces provisions sont destinées à être portées à Patmos ; un firman de 1564 limite d'ailleurs à 40 ou 50 *kile* les quantités exportables de Cos, Léros et Kalymnos (APO, 1b-31) et une *mektub* de 1593 du *sancakbey* de Rhodes ordonne qu'on les laisse emporter la production de leur ferme (*çiftlik*) à Kalymnos, mais non sans préciser que c'est à condition que les moines ne la vendent pas à des étrangers (APO, 2-37). De même, les ventes par Hacı Yusuf Bey aux « *mütevelli* » du monastère de la Panayia Chryssoyigi distinguent bien les biens de pleine propriété (maison, aire à battre, étable avec ses six boeufs) et les champs pour lesquels il a fallu payer un *resm-i tapu* (APO, 7-7, 7-11, 7-10, 7-21, 7-23, 9-10, 13-25, 14-14, 18-1).

48 Sur la diversité possible de l'emploi du terme *vakıf*, cf. A. Fotić, « The Official Explanations for the Confiscation and Sale of Monasteries (Churches) and their Estates at the Time of Selim II », *Turcica*, 24 (1994), pp. 33-54 (p. 42-44).

49 Ainsi que nous l'avons vu, il est probable que, de toute manière, le statut ancien de ces biens était défini selon le droit byzantin, ou vénitien, mais c'est ici un point secondaire, puisque, fictivement et apparemment d'un commun accord avec les autorités, il est admis que le monastère avait des droits sur eux à l'époque ottomane.

50 APO, 1b-18.

51 APO, 2-6 : *cezire-i mezburede kendülerün mülk arazileri olup şimdiki halde zıkr olınan yerlerinde evler ve damlar bina edüb ve ziraat ve hirasat edüb çiftlik etmek murad edinüb*.

d'une cession de terrains (*yerler*)<sup>52</sup>, tandis que des terrains labourables, vignes et vergers à Léros pourront être clairement définis comme *mukataalu* et justifiant le paiement d'une rente annuelle à l'*emin* de Cos<sup>53</sup>.

Quant aux *vakıf* monastiques, une *hüccet* de 1545 concluait à la validité de ceux de Léros s'ils étaient « anciens »<sup>54</sup>, c'est à dire, vraisemblablement, antérieurs à la conquête, à en juger par un firman de 1535 qui opinait en faveur des terrains, moulins et vignes concédés en *vakıf*, dans le *kaza* de Cos, au monastère de Patmos et ordonnait au *cadi* : « Tu feras respecter ce qui se fait à ce sujet depuis les temps anciens selon la coutume absurde de ces gens-là<sup>55</sup>. » Nous verrons que les *vakıf* revendiqués à Lemnos pourraient bien avoir également été antérieurs à la conquête ottomane<sup>56</sup>. L'emploi de ce terme apparemment précis ne renvoyait donc pas nécessairement, même sous la plume de représentants du pouvoir ottoman, à une réalité juridique bien définie. On sait qu'Ebussuud s'était saisi de cette question. En 1569 le monastère de Patmos, comme bien d'autres au début du règne de Selim II, subit de lourdes confiscations et s'il put récupérer une partie de ses biens d'une manière ou d'une autre, ceux-ci furent désormais constitués en *vakıf* non pas au profit du monastère lui-même, mais « au bénéfice des moines et des pauvres, ou pour des ponts et des fontaines<sup>57</sup> ». Désormais, à partir de 1570, les documents précisèrent que les *vakıf* étaient au profit des « moines du monastère, des pauvres et des gens qui vont sur cette île et qui en repartent ». Mais on en revint bientôt à parler sans plus de précautions oratoires des « *vakıf* du monastère »<sup>58</sup> : signe du flou qui continua malgré tout à régner sur cette question<sup>59</sup>.

52 APO, 1-4.

53 APO, 1-5 : firman de 1569, renouvelé en 1595.

54 APO, 3-10. C'est d'ailleurs sur ce point que l'*emin* Yakub les avait contestés.

55 *Bu babda mezkurlarun ayin-i batilleri kadimden nice oligelmiş ise yine anun üzre mukarrer edüb* (APO, 1-3 : renouvellement en 1595 d'un firman de 1535).

56 Sur l'emploi du mot *vakıf* pour désigner une possession qui était vraisemblablement antérieure à la conquête ottomane, cf. Fotić, « The Official Explanations », p. 43.

57 Firman du 16 novembre 1569, APO, 1b-40 ; cf. M. E. Düzdağ, *Şeyhülislâm Ebussuûd Efendi Fetvaları Işığında 16. Asır Türk Hayatı* (Istanbul 1983), nos 452 et 453, p. 103. Sur cette affaire, qui est extérieure à notre sujet, cf. J. Chr. Alexander, « The Lord Giveth and the Lord Taketh Away: Athos and the Confiscation Affair of 1568-1569 », in *Mount Athos in the 14th-16th Centuries* (Athènes 1997), pp. 149-200 ; A. Fotić, « The Official Explanations » ; E. Kermeli, « The Confiscation and Repossession of Monastic Properties in Mount Athos and Patmos Monasteries », *Bulgarian Historical Review*, 3 (2000), pp. 39-53.

58 Sur ceci, cf. Vatin, « Le sultan et l'hégoûmène de Patmos » ; Fotić, « The Official Explanations », pp. 47-48.

59 Cf. par exemple cette lettre (APO, 14-2) émise à Patmos, dans la décade du 17 au 26 septembre 1612, par le *kapudan paşa* Damad Mehmed Paşa qui, alors que les moines avaient parlé de la possession (*zabt*) de champs (*tarla*) à Léros et Kalymnos, enjoint aux commandants des forts de ces deux îles de « ne pas permettre que les terrains et champs constituant des *vakıf* [du monastère] pâtissent d'immixtions de votre part ou d'autres » (*vakıf yerlerine ve tarlalarına sizün tarafunuzdan ve ahardan dahl etdürilmeyüb*). Si on suit la lettre de ce texte, les champs labourables ne constituent pas des *vakıf*, mais dans la mesure où la requête des moines ne concernait que ces champs, comment faut-il comprendre ce texte ? Sur ce flou, cf. notamment Alexander, « The Lord Giveth and the Lord Taketh Away », pp. 174-179.

On peut aussi distinguer différents modes d'acquisition : outre les biens dont on a vu les moines faire en sorte de conserver la jouissance après l'arrivée de l'administration ottomane, certains sont acquis par achat. On repère en effet dans la documentation un assez petit nombre de transactions dans notre période, neuf pour être précis, entre 1567 et 1640<sup>60</sup> : il s'agit d'un moulin à Kalymnos en 1607<sup>61</sup> ; de vignes et vergers à Léros en 1563, 1564, 1584 et à Samos en 1640<sup>62</sup> ; de « terrains » sans plus de précision (*yerler*) à Paros en 1586 et 1604<sup>63</sup> ; enfin de la cession en 1594, accompagnée du versement d'un *resm-i tapu*, du droit de jouissance de champs et d'arbres à Léros en 1594<sup>64</sup>. Les vendeurs sont pour la plupart des particuliers, parmi lesquels on relèvera la présence de l'imam du fort de Léros en 1563, mais aussi, à Léros en 1594, du *zabit* des *mukataa* de Cos. Quant aux acheteurs, ils sont désignés de diverses façons : un ou des moine(s) de Patmos dont le nom est indiqué<sup>65</sup> ; un représentant (*vekil*) ou le *mütevelli* du monastère<sup>66</sup> ; enfin les moines et/ou le monastère<sup>67</sup>. On voit bien qu'en réalité, quelle que soit la fiction juridique mise en avant, c'est toujours du monastère qu'il s'agit. Une de ces transactions constitue un cas particulier, puisqu'il s'agit d'une vigne cédée au monastère par l'évêque Kallistos de Léros en remboursement d'une dette de 50 pièces d'or<sup>68</sup>. Force est de constater – sans prétendre l'expliquer – le tout petit nombre d'opérations dont les moines conservaient l'enregistrement, de même que leur date assez tardive.

Les donations sont plus nombreuses. Des particuliers lèguent ou donnent « en *vakıf* » au monastère la jouissance ou la propriété de champs, vignes, vergers et arbres fruitiers, bétail – sans parler de bâtiments ou de biens mobiliers – à Patmos<sup>69</sup>, Léros<sup>70</sup>, Kalymnos, Santorin<sup>71</sup>, Samos<sup>72</sup>, Milos<sup>73</sup>, Cos<sup>74</sup> ou Paros<sup>75</sup>. Citons notamment l'importante donation du riche Vassilis Diakos et de sa mère Kali<sup>76</sup> et le cas particulier des biens du couvent Exochoriani : en juin 1626, les prêtres et anciens de Paros doivent reconnaître devant le

60 Nous excluons de ce décompte les achats faits à Samos en 1614-1616 pour le compte du nouveau couvent féminin de la Panayia Chrysopigi, de même que les biens non agricoles.

61 APO, 7-9.

62 Respectivement APO, 3-21, 3-25, 7-51, 18-6.

63 Respectivement APO, 7-25 et 9-7. La date des transactions est déduite du texte de ces deux documents émis en 1615 et 1612.

64 APO, 6-10.

65 APO, 3-21.

66 APO, 3-25, 7-9, 18-6 ; dans la *hüccet* APO, 6-10, de 1594, c'est le moine Papa Iossif qui agit devant le tribunal, mais il est bien précisé *manastır içün*.

67 APO, 7-25, 7-51, 9-7.

68 APO, 7-51.

69 APO, 6-11, 6-12, 6-13.

70 APO, 6-12, 7-41.

71 APO, 1-20, 7-8, 7-17, 7-32, 8-11.

72 APO, 1-4.

73 APO, 14-13.

74 APO 7-58, 8-15.

75 APO, 10-1b, 7-47.

76 APO, 1-4, 1-11a, 6-11, 6-12, 6-13.



tribunal qu'ils ont concédé en *vakıf* au monastère de Patmos le couvent Exochoriani (à Paros) avec vigne, champ et jardin<sup>77</sup> – ce qui donne à entendre (quelle qu'ait été du reste la réalité des faits, puisque la procédure ne fut pas éteinte pour autant<sup>78</sup>) que c'est la collectivité, et non un individu, qui avait fait ce don, malgré le caractère juridiquement improbable d'un tel acte. La donation pouvait se faire sous condition. Nous voyons ainsi un groupe de Kalymniotes, en avril-mai 1580, faire don de leurs biens au monastère de Patmos représenté par son hégoumène, ajoutant cette clause : « Quand nous ou nos enfants nous rendrons au monastère, que nul ne s'y oppose et qu'on nous donne le pain et le nécessaire comme aux autres moines<sup>79</sup>. » En fait, nous constaterons que ces Kalymniotes ne donnèrent pas tous leurs biens et il ne semble pas qu'ils soient allés, du moins tous et sur le champ, prendre leur retraite au couvent de Patmos. L'un d'entre eux en tout cas, Yioryis Koukouvios, demeura sur place comme fermier (ou métayer ?) des moines<sup>80</sup>. En revanche c'est bien la procédure de viager dite *adelphaton*<sup>81</sup> qui est appliquée quand Kyrana de Léros, sa sœur Marina Francesca et son époux Kostas Kouvaris viennent déclarer devant le tribunal de Cos, en janvier 1606 : « Nous avons intégralement fait don en pleine propriété et remis pour l'amour de Dieu au monastère des vignes, champs et arbres – oliviers, figuiers, caroubiers, amandiers – qui étaient des biens et propriétés en notre possession dans l'île susdite, moyennant la convention et l'assurance que tant que nous serons en vie le monastère se chargera de nous entretenir<sup>82</sup>. » Enfin les moines eux-mêmes pouvaient donner ou léguer des biens ou jouissances de biens dont, du point de vue des autorités ottomanes en tout cas, ils étaient propriétaires. Nous voyons ainsi cinq moines se présenter en août 1561 devant le tribunal de Cos pour déclarer leur intention de léguer à leur mort leurs biens au monastère<sup>83</sup> ; de même, vers 1603, le moine Simos constitue en *vakıf* au profit du monastère deux champs labourables, avec leurs arbres et une église s'y trouvant<sup>84</sup> ; enfin le dossier 4 des archives de Patmos contient une série de documents attestant le caractère valide de *vakıf* constitués par des moines au profit du monastère au lendemain des confiscations des biens monastiques et de leur revente par le Trésor. De même, à l'occasion d'un différend récurrent entre les *mütevelli* des *vakıf* de Soliman le Magnifique à Rhodes et les moines de Patmos, dans les années 1622-1638 – concernant le paiement de la dîme (sous la forme d'un *bedel* de 3 000 aspres) sur le

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77 APO, 7-47.

78 Cf. une *hüccet* de septembre-octobre 1627 (APO, 7-49).

79 *Biz ve evladlarımız mezbur manastıra varid iken kimesne mani olmayub sair kaliyorler gibi ekmeğin ve sair levazımın vereler* (APO, 3-37a).

80 APO, 3-44.

81 Sur cette institution, cf. A. P. Kazhdan *et alii* (éds), *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (New York-Oxford 1991), t. 1, p. 19 (par Paul Magdalino).

82 *Cezire-i mezburda taht-ı tasarrufumuzda olan emlakümüz ve erzâkumuz bağ ve tarla ve eşcârdan zeytûn ve incir ve harrib ve badem ağaçları min külli'l-vücûh manasdırâ rızaenlillah içün hibe ve temlik ve teslim eyledük şol ahd ü aman üzre madem ki hayatda olavuz nafakamız manasdır görüb gözedeler* (APO, 7-5).

83 APO, 3-16, 3-17, 3-18, 3-19, 3-20.

84 APO, 7-52.

revenu des biens fonciers tenus en *vakıf* par le monastère de Patmos<sup>85</sup> – nous apprenons que les insulaires avaient racheté au Trésor, en 1570, les biens des *metochia* d'Ayios Yioris à Léros et de la Panayia Archontissa à Kalymnos, et les avaient rétrocédés en *vakıf* aux moines de Patmos.

Si les donations paraissent plus fréquentes que les achats, on est néanmoins frappé de constater que la première référence n'est que de 1561 et qu'elle est donc relativement tardive. On note le même phénomène à propos des ventes. Il s'agit probablement d'un biais de la documentation : on peut à bon droit supposer que, malgré sa richesse, le fonds ottoman des archives de Patmos n'a pas conservé tous les documents passés entre les mains des moines, notamment pour le premier siècle ottoman. De fait, on est frappé de voir, en 1629, le *mütevelli* du *vakıf* de Soliman le Magnifique se plaindre des habitants de Léros et Kalymnos léguant sans autorisation leurs vignes, vergers et autres biens à des monastères<sup>86</sup>. À cette date, les moines de Patmos ne faisaient pas encore allusion à des rachats auprès du Trésor en 1570. Il n'y a pas lieu de mettre ceux-ci en doute, mais sans doute préféreraient-ils passer sous silence, de leur côté, d'autres donations, dont nous n'avons pas la trace. Elles pourraient donc avoir été beaucoup plus nombreuses qu'il n'y paraît, d'autant que nous sommes le plus souvent informés par la contestation d'ayants droit se jugeant lésés. En 1615, Papa Sophronios, moine patmiote installé dans le *metochion* de Santorin, affirmait disposer d'un *vakıfname* et réclamait l'application de la *vakfiyye*. Mais c'est à des témoignages devant le tribunal qu'il dut d'avoir gain de cause et nous ignorons ce qu'il entendait précisément par *vakıfname* et *vakfiyye*<sup>87</sup>. Nous n'avons pas retrouvé dans le fonds de documents qu'on puisse ainsi désigner en bonne diplomatie ottomane. S'agit-il alors de documents grecs, n'ayant donc de valeur juridique qu'une fois tacitement ou ouvertement avalisés par les autorités<sup>88</sup> ?

On peut même se demander si, parfois, les possessions du monastère ne relevaient pas du simple fait accompli. Nous avons vu par exemple comment, à Lemnos, les moines avaient cherché à récupérer des droits qui dataient apparemment de plus d'un siècle. L'argument qu'ils avançaient était qu'ils n'avaient pas cessé de payer l'impôt annuel<sup>89</sup>. Mais les archives du couvent ne conservent apparemment pas de reçu des services fiscaux à l'appui de cette affirmation. Si on se place dans le contexte ottoman, il s'agit donc d'une

85 APO, 20-47 (vers 1622), 10-7 (août 1629), 10-10 (février 1631), 20-16 (vers 1631), 20-46 (1629-1631), 10-11 (mars 1631), 8-16 (janvier 1636), 10-14 (janvier 1638), 10-18 (janvier 1645), 10-19 (février 1645).

86 APO, 10-7.

87 APO, 7-17.

88 Cf. l'action en justice de l'*emin* Hacı Yakub en 1545, qui contestait la valeur des *vakıf* du monastère de Saint-Jean à Léros au motif qu'ils n'étaient pas anciens, à quoi les moines avaient répondu : « Nous en avons joui depuis les temps anciens jusqu'à ce jour en vertu de la *vakfiyye* » (*kadimü 'z-zamandan ila yevminâ haza vakfiyyet üzre tasarruf edegeldük*) : APO, 3-10. Si notre hypothèse est exacte que l'« ancienneté » des *vakıf* du monastère renvoie en fait à la situation précédant l'occupation ottomane, alors la *vakfiyye* en question – qu'elle soit un mythe ou une réalité matérielle – doit avoir été un document grec.

89 *Manastır tarafından sâl be-sâl resmini hıżâne-i âmireye verürler imiş* (APO, 1b-18).

tentative pour prendre gratuitement possession de ces biens<sup>90</sup>. On peut également se poser des questions à propos de l'installation des moines à Samos. En effet le *mütevelli* du *vakıf* de Kılıç Ali Paşa se présente à deux reprises devant le tribunal de Galata, en juillet 1615, pour mettre un terme à un scandale qui n'avait que trop duré. Les terrains (*yer*) donnés à Samos par Vassilis Diakos et sa mère Kali en 1590<sup>91</sup>, n'ayant pas donné lieu au versement du *resm-i tapu*<sup>92</sup>, sont remis aux mêmes moines qui les exploitaient déjà, mais après versement d'un droit de 2 000 aspres<sup>93</sup>. S'étant désormais mis en règle, les intéressés jugèrent alors prudent de garantir leurs droits en sollicitant un firman, qui fut en effet émis en août 1615<sup>94</sup>. Bien plus, les moines de Patmos n'avaient pas non plus la moindre attestation conforme au *kanun* de leur droit de jouissance sur les terrains qu'ils exploitaient près de Dikilitaş / Kommeni Petra à Samos. Aussi le *mütevelli* transféra-t-il ce droit à cinq moines de Patmos, moyennant le paiement d'un *resm-i tapu* de 24 000 aspres<sup>95</sup>. L'affaire ne s'arrêta pas là : dix huit mois plus tard, le 9 janvier 1617, une attestation du nouveau *mütevelli* déclarait ces mêmes moines quittes d'un versement complémentaire de 36 000 aspres, le précédent versement de 24 000 aspres étant apparu nettement insuffisant. Une nouvelle alerte survint bientôt : le 10 septembre 1624, à la suite d'un recensement des attestations conservées par le monastère, le *mütevelli* du *vakıf*, Bayram Ağa, ayant « pris connaissance de la manière dont ils jouissaient de leurs biens [à Samos], des [biens] de leurs morts et du fait qu'ils ont construit un nouveau moulin près du port<sup>96</sup> », désignait Hüseyin Çelebi pour « percevoir le versement initial de l'*icare-i muaccele* qu'ils doivent et leur imposer un loyer, fournir une attestation à ceux qui n'en ont pas, et en outre recenser les autres monastères et fournir des attestations à ceux qui n'en ont pas »<sup>97</sup>. Sur place, Hüseyin jugea que le *vakıf* était volé et porta plainte devant

90 Se fondant sur le nombre de bêtes par foyers très supérieur à la moyenne apparaissant dans le registre de 1490, H. Lowry conclut (*Fifteenth Century Ottoman Realities*, pp. 146-147) qu'il s'agit en fait de troupeaux appartenant aux monastères athonites et gérés par les villageois, leurs anciens *paroikoi*. À supposer que tel ait été le cas et qu'il faille suivre le même raisonnement à propos des biens à Lemnos du monastère de Patmos, les villageois qui payaient des taxes depuis un siècle pouvaient être fondés à se considérer comme propriétaires, comme ils l'affirmaient d'ailleurs : *nice yildan berü mülkiyyet üzere tasarrufumuzdadur*.

91 APO, 1-4.

92 Cela n'avait pas empêché les moines venus présenter un placet à Istanbul d'affirmer que l'opération s'était faite avec l'accord du maître du sol (*sahib-i arz marifetiyle*), autrement dit du *mütevelli* du *vakıf* ou de son voyvode sur place à Samos (APO, 1-4). La formule donne à entendre qu'un *resm-i tapu* a été payé, mais elle ne le dit pas formellement. Peut-être faut-il en effet comprendre qu'aucun droit n'avait été payé ?

93 APO, 7-22.

94 APO, 18-2.

95 APO, 7-4.

96 Les moines avaient été autorisés à créer un moulin à Samos en août-septembre 1623 moyennant un versement de 120 aspres par an ; ils allaient être autorisés à en créer un autre, aux mêmes conditions et moyennant un *resm-i tapu* de 1 500 aspres, par une *hüccet* du 24 janvier 1626 : cf. APO, 7-45.

97 APO, 15-7.

le cadî de Samos, accusant les moines de cultiver plus que les 100 *kile taliyye* de grains qu'était censé produire le terrain enregistré dans les archives du *vakîf*. Mais nous apprenons par la *hüccet* émise dans la décade du 13 au 22 novembre 1624 par le cadî de Samos que les fermiers du monastère, Michalis de Santorin, Yannis Kedoura et Stamatis Emengirar, déclarèrent devant la commission d'inspection dépêchée à ce sujet qu'ils ne labouraient que pour une production de 40 *taliyye* et assurément pas plus de 100<sup>98</sup>. L'affaire était assez importante pour que l'hégoumène Makarios se déplaçât à Samos pour l'occasion : on peut se demander s'il ne s'agissait pas, pour lui, de faire pression sur le cadî. En effet, le *mütevelli* Bayram revint à la charge, ainsi que nous l'apprend une *hüccet* émise le 21 janvier 1626 par le cadî de Samos : Bayram avait appris que « le *resm-i tapu* que ces moines avaient versé à deux reprises au *vakîf* pour les terrains qu'ils avaient défrichés et cultivés (...) était tout à fait insuffisant, et qu'en outre ils avaient défriché d'autres terrains en plus de ceux prévus par la note qu'ils avaient entre leurs mains et les avaient cultivés sans autorisation » ; en conséquence, il avait ordonné une (nouvelle) mission à Hüseyin qui avait enquêté sur le terrain, cette fois avec le cadî Ali en personne (qui s'était contenté en 1624 de désigner une commission *ad hoc*). On était alors tombé d'accord que « ces moines cultivaient après avoir défriché une superficie supérieure à celle des champs mentionnés dans la note qu'ils avaient entre les mains », qu'ils produisaient 120 *kile* de grains (et non 100 comme prévu) et devaient donc un *resm-i tapu* total de 108 000 aspres. Aussi les moines avaient-ils dû verser un solde de 48 000 aspres, en vertu de quoi il leur avait été reconnu le droit de jouir des champs qu'ils avaient défrichés<sup>99</sup>.

Le résumé de cette procédure, qui s'étale sur plus de dix ans, est édifiant. Car si certaines des acquisitions du monastère, que ce soit par achat ou par donation, pouvaient être la conséquence de pratiques normales, on a bien l'impression que dans d'autres contextes, à Samos en tout cas et peut-être à Lemnos, les moines de Patmos eurent une politique extrêmement entreprenante et peu regardante à l'égard du droit.

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Étant donné ce qui vient d'être exposé, il n'est pas étonnant que le monastère ait parfois été en conflit avec les insulaires.

La fréquence des donations ne pouvait pas ne pas entraîner, parfois, des plaintes d'héritiers frustrés. Les archives conservent du reste une *fetva* caractéristique. Zeyd, y est-il supposé, a constitué en *vakîf* des biens hérités de son père et les a remis au *mütevelli*, mais est mort avant un acte de cadî enregistrant le caractère obligatoire de la fondation, en laissant pour héritiers sa mère, son épouse et ses oncles [mais pas d'enfants] : si ceux-ci acceptent la *vakfiyye* et qu'un acte de cadî valide le caractère obligatoire de celle-ci, peuvent-ils revenir sur leur décision et annuler la *vakfiyye* ? La réponse est qu'ils ne le peuvent pas, et si l'oncle du fondateur meurt, son fils [et cousin du fondateur] ne le peut

98 APO, 7-42.

99 APO, 18-4.

pas non plus<sup>100</sup>. Cette consultation juridique, sur un cas un peu particulier, avait été obtenue vers 1597 et s'appliquait vraisemblablement à une part de bateau donnée en *vakıf* au monastère par Vassilis Diakos, déjà nommé<sup>101</sup>. Elle n'en est pas moins une bonne illustration des difficultés juridiques que le monastère pouvait rencontrer face aux héritiers naturels des biens qu'il tenait de particuliers. Les actions en justice que nous rencontrons peuvent n'être rien d'autre qu'un enregistrement sans réel conflit. Dans d'autres cas, l'attitude des adversaires des moines impliquait une accusation, au moins implicite, de capitation d'héritage<sup>102</sup>. Notre propos, ici, est d'évoquer les relations du monastère avec la société rurale qui l'entourait et nullement d'entrer dans ces polémiques en cherchant de quel côté était le bon droit. On peut du reste noter que ce sont souvent les moines qui portèrent plainte et eurent gain de cause. Mais le monastère était puissant et une victoire en justice est un indice de bonne foi, non une preuve absolue.

Quoi qu'il en soit, nous relevons : une action contre un exécuteur testamentaire en septembre 1564, à propos d'un verger acheté à Léros<sup>103</sup> ; une action en mars 1594 contre les héritiers de Vassilis Diakos, qui contestaient ses donations (à Patmos, Léros et autres îles)<sup>104</sup> ; une action en mai 1608 contre les héritiers de Maroula de Santorin, qui contestaient ses donations<sup>105</sup>, suivie deux ans plus tard par l'action en justice d'un héritier<sup>106</sup> ; une action au printemps 1615 contre un héritier de Yannis de Milos, donataire d'une vigne<sup>107</sup> ; une action en juillet 1615 contre Orlando Grimani, qui ne reconnaissait pas la donation d'une vigne par son épouse 39 ans auparavant<sup>108</sup> ; une action en mars-avril 1618 à la suite de la récupération par un ayant droit, « en application de la loi », de champs et vignes donnés au monastère<sup>109</sup> par Fousdouris, de Santorin, avec la demande de pouvoir prendre possession de ces biens à la mort de cet ayant droit<sup>110</sup> ; une action en septembre 1628 contre les héritiers de Papa Matthaïos, qui avait donné au monastère une vigne à Léros<sup>111</sup>. Citons enfin deux *hüccet* contradictoires concernant une vigne, un champ de figuiers, des ruches, un bœuf et un âne, biens ayant appartenu à Léros au défunt moine

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100 APO, 20-80.

101 APO, 1-6.

102 Pour des cas au début des années 1630 qui ne concernaient pas le monde agricole, cf. APO, 8-1, 8-5, 8-21, 10-9.

103 APO, 3-25.

104 APO, 6-11, 6-12, 6-13.

105 APO, 1-20. En l'occurrence il s'agit d'un firman, les moines s'étant tournés vers le sultan. Ils disposaient du reste d'une *hüccet* de juin 1607 par laquelle l'époux de Maroula reconnaissait la donation en *vakıf* (APO, 7-8).

106 APO, 7-14.

107 APO, 14-13, 18-84. Ces deux documents sont des ordres du *kapudan paşa* et *mirliva* de Rhodes, mais le second fait référence à une *hüccet* de cadi.

108 APO, 7-17.

109 *Hâlâ vakıf eylediği tarlaların ve bağların mustahhık[ı] zuhûr edüb behasbi's-şer'-i şerif elümüzden aldı.*

110 APO, 7-31.

111 APO, 7-53.

Kostatigos : la première<sup>112</sup>, datée de la décade du 14 au 23 juin 1647, affirme les droits des héritiers sur ces biens ; dans la seconde, non datée mais évidemment postérieure, ces mêmes héritiers reconnaissent la validité de la donation au monastère par Kostatigos. Il paraît clair qu'entre les deux actes, le monastère est intervenu et a su convaincre le cadî de Cos, Mustafa bin Ali, de l'invalidité de la décision précédemment prise par son *naib* Mehmed. Une *hüccet* du cadî de Samos, datée de la décade du 5 au 13 juillet 1627, présente un cas particulier, puisque c'est apparemment l'évêque de Léros, Philotheos, qui contestait la donation en *vakıf* de deux champs, avec leurs arbres et une église, par le moine défunt Simos<sup>113</sup>.

Ces différends n'avaient pas le tribunal du cadî pour seul théâtre, car à plusieurs reprises, les moines protestent contre la mainmise des héritiers sur les biens contestés : c'est le cas de trois des affaires que nous venons de passer en revue<sup>114</sup>. On rencontre d'autres cas où des individus mettaient la main sur des terrains que le monastère considérait comme lui appartenant : ainsi Angeletos de Paros s'était réapproprié un bien qu'il avait vendu vingt ans auparavant au monastère<sup>115</sup> ; toujours à Paros, les moines se plaignaient d'un prêtre venu d'ailleurs qui s'était emparé d'une église avec ses champs et vignes<sup>116</sup> ; enfin un firman daté de la décade du 25 octobre au 3 décembre 1623 cite un *arz* par lequel le cadî de Cos se faisait l'écho des plaintes des moines de Patmos : les *reaya* de Léros et Kalymnos, protestaient-ils, « leur nuisaient en mettant en toute illégalité la main sur des biens sis dans ces îles et concédés en *vakıf* au monastère en question depuis la conquête impériale jusqu'à ce jour : champs, vignes, vergers et autres<sup>117</sup>. » On a vu que c'était également, plus ou moins, le point de vue défendu par le monastère à l'égard de son ancien *metochion* de Lemnos.

Une série de documents concernant plus précisément le couvent de la Panayia Exochoriani, à Paros, permet d'illustrer les difficultés que pouvait rencontrer le monastère. Un firman du 12 mai 1626 nous apprend que des *zimmî* de Kephalos étaient venus se plaindre des moines de Patmos qui prétendaient percevoir les taxes alors que c'était du ressort du monastère local<sup>118</sup>. Émise dans la décade du 6 au 15 juin de la même année, une *hüccet* de Mehmed bin Hasan, *naib* à Paros, relate l'action de Papa Kallinikos de Tzipidou : selon lui, le couvent d'Exochoriani lui revenait en vertu d'un ordre du sul-

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112 APO, 8-28.

113 APO, 7-52.

114 Affaires des donations de Yannis de Milos (APO, 14-13, 18-84), d'Orlando Grimani de Santorin (APO, 7-17), et de Papa Matthaios de Léros (APO, 7-53).

115 APO, 7-25. L'affaire est également mentionnée dans un document synodal de juin 1612 : cf. D. Apostolopoulos et P. D. Michailaris, *H Νομική Συναγωγή του Δοσίου* (Athènes 1987), p. 364.

116 APO, 14-6, *hüccet* de septembre 1615. Comme le document cité à la note précédente est une *hüccet* d'août 1615, il semble qu'il ne s'agisse pas de la même affaire.

117 *Zıkr olunan cezireler[d]e feth-i hakaniden bu ana değe manastır-ı mezbura vakıf olan gerek tarla ve gerek bağ ve bağçe ve sairine bigayr-i vech-i şer'î vaz-ı yed edüb müdahale edüb* (APO, 10-1).

118 APO, 10-4.

tan et d'un document du patriarcat ; en conséquence, les moines de Patmos n'y avaient aucun droit. À quoi le représentant de ces derniers avait répondu qu'ils en jouissaient depuis trois à quatre ans en vertu d'un ordre du sultan et d'une *hüccet*. Après consultation des documents, les prêtres et anciens de la localité, convoqués, avaient témoigné avoir concédé en *vakıf* au monastère de Patmos le couvent de la Panayia Exochoriani avec ses biens fonciers. Kallinikos avait donc été débouté<sup>119</sup>. Ce témoignage avait-il été obtenu par la pression ? En tout cas Kallinikos ne s'avoua pas vaincu, revenant devant le cadi de Paros en septembre 1627 avec un nouvel ordre impérial l'autorisant à prendre possession du couvent<sup>120</sup>. Est-ce ce qu'il fit ? On peut le supposer à la lecture d'un firman émis dans la décade du 10 au 19 novembre suivant, qui fait état d'une requête des moines de Patmos se plaignant des interventions des gens de Paros dans leurs vignes, champs et autres biens liés au couvent de la Panayia Exochoriani, alors qu'ils disposaient d'une *hüccet* attestant leur droit de propriété<sup>121</sup>. Un an plus tard, à nouveau, une *hüccet* du cadi de Paros enregistrait la déclaration d'une série de prêtres (ou moines) et laïcs de Paros attestant que les biens de la Panayia Exochoriani appartenaient au monastère de Patmos, à qui en revenait le produit<sup>122</sup>. Pourtant dix ans plus tard, les moines de Patmos se plaignaient toujours auprès des autorités d'individus qui les empêchaient de jouir de ces biens<sup>123</sup>.

Bien entendu, il ne faut sans doute pas exagérer l'importance de ces conflits et imaginer une guerre ouverte entre le monastère de Patmos et les habitants des îles alentour. Il n'en demeure pas moins que l'accumulation de ces affaires – et on pourrait ajouter les difficultés rencontrées par le monastère féminin de la Panayia Chryssopigi dans la prise de possession des biens qu'il avait achetés à Samos – montre que l'expansion foncière des moines de Patmos n'était pas toujours vue d'un bon œil par les indigènes. Un dernier exemple est assez parlant. Nombre de documents montrent les moines de Patmos protester contre les exactions à leur égard des officiers de la garnison de Léros. Mais quand vers 1593 Mustafa et ses fils, de la garnison de Léros, « prétendent que [les Patmiotes] mènent leurs bêtes et leurs moutons dans les champs de leurs *reaya* et font ainsi tous les ans manger leurs grains à leurs bêtes<sup>124</sup> » sont-ils vraiment coupables d'« oppression », comme le disent les Patmiotes qui obtiennent une lettre en leur faveur du *kapudan paşa*, ou bien défendent-ils légitimement les intérêts des paysans de Léros ? Certes, le monastère avait assez de moyens financiers et d'entregent politique pour faire valoir ses prétentions, mais il demeurait, à Lemnos comme à Paros, Samos ou même Léros, un étranger.

Signalons au passage, au demeurant, quoique cela nous écarte un peu du caractère « rural » de notre propos, que les *zimmi* de la région auraient souhaité, sur d'autres points, une plus grande intégration dans la région de Patmos, moines et laïcs : on les voit en ef-

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119 APO, 7-47.

120 APO, 7-49.

121 APO, 10-6.

122 APO, 7-54.

123 APO, 20-3, 20-25, tous deux émis vers 1633-38.

124 *Reayamuzun tarlalarına davar ve koyunlarını salıverüb terekelerini her senede bu vechile davarlarına yedürüb* (APO, 20-11).



fet à plus d'une reprise contester leur exemption des *hizmet* (ou plutôt *bedel-i hizmet*) de rameur (*kürekçi*) ou gréeur (*alatçı*) de la flotte impériale<sup>125</sup>.

Il est vrai que les moines, de leur côté, pouvaient avoir leurs griefs. On conçoit qu'au bout de plusieurs décennies d'occupation, les paysans de Lemnos se soient sentis chez eux dans les terrains abandonnés *de facto* par le monastère de Patmos. Pour eux, possession valait droit. Mais les moines, de leur côté, s'estimaient dépossédés iniquement. L'affaire de la confiscation et de la revente par le Trésor des biens monastiques dut aussi laisser des traces amères. Certes, le monastère de Patmos put récupérer une quantité non négligeable de biens : ses archives en font foi. Mais on a des raisons de penser que des particuliers saisirent l'occasion pour faire de bonnes affaires. En tout cas, certains biens ne revinrent que longtemps après dans le capital du monastère. On a en effet l'exemple des deux champs constitués en *vakıf* au profit du monastère par Simos<sup>126</sup> : en *şevvâl* 1036 / juillet 1627, lors de la rédaction de la *hüccet* qui nous renseigne, les moines de Patmos en avaient jouissance « depuis plus de vingt-cinq ans<sup>127</sup> », donc depuis vingt-cinq ans environ, ce qui permet de dater de 1602 ou 1603 la donation par Simos et par conséquent l'acquisition par ses soins du droit de jouissance de ces terrains au prêtre ou moine Papa Yannis. Or cinquante-neuf ans auparavant, c'est à dire précisément en 1570, celui-ci s'était lui-même porté acquéreur auprès d'Ahmed Çelebi bin Derviş, représentant de l'*emin* Yakub pour la liquidation des biens monastiques à Léros<sup>128</sup>. Force est donc de constater que Papa Yannis, qui qu'il ait été, n'avait pas procédé à un rachat pour le compte du monastère de Patmos, puisqu'il conserva ces droits de jouissance plus de trente ans avant de les céder à Simos.

Cet exemple donne à penser que le monastère ne put jamais récupérer certains des biens qui lui avaient été confisqués. Il est impossible d'évaluer, même approximativement, l'importance de ces pertes. En revanche, nous disposons d'une série de documents concernant le couvent de la Kyra Archontissa, à Kalymnos, qui montrent que les moines ne renoncèrent pas aisément. L'affaire est à dire vrai passablement confuse, les déclarations des uns et des autres pouvant paraître un peu contradictoires. C'est donc une reconstruction que nous proposons. Quatre Kalymniotes – Izmalis Nomikos, Izmalis Pelekanos, Papa Pothitos et Yioryis Koukouvios/Nomikos – achètent ensemble au Trésor, dans la décade du 23 au 31 janvier 1576, le tiers du couvent de la Kyra Archontissa pour 780 aspres<sup>129</sup>. Une *hüccet* émise dans la deuxième décade de *rebî'ü-l-evvel* 1002 (5-14 décembre 1593) par Mustafa bin Mehmed, *naib* à Cos<sup>130</sup>, donne une version de la suite des opérations : d'après Papa Gennadios, représentant du monastère de Patmos, quinze ans auparavant, donc vers

125 Les archives du monastère conservent une série de firmans et de *mektub* de *kapudan paşa* sur ces questions entre 1571 et la fin du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle : APO, 1-5a, 1b-39, 1b-42, 1b-47, 2-26, 2-38, 20-19, 20-57. En 1567, les Patmiotes avaient également dû se défendre pour ne pas avoir à prendre en charge le curage des madragues de Balat : cf. APO, 1b-37a, 20-53.

126 PO, 7-52.

127 *Yigirmi beş yıldan mütecâvidür vakıf üzere zabt ve tasarruf olunagelmış iken.*

128 Cf. APO, 4-8, 4-9, 4-10, 4-11, 4-12, 4-14, 4-20, 4-24, 4-40, 4-42.

129 APO, 3-34, 335, 3-36.

130 APO, 3-44.

1579, l'hégoumène de Patmos vient revendiquer le couvent et ses champs comme son bien – revendication qui nous permet de déduire qu'il s'agissait de biens confisqués en 1570 –, mais doit évidemment le racheter, ce qu'il fait pour 70 pièces d'or (*filuri*). Les quatre Kalymniotes semblent donc avoir fait une belle plus-value, puisque, d'après le document, ils avaient acheté ce bien pour 15 pièces d'or. Chiffre douteux du reste et qui doit au mieux être pris pour une approximation, puisque nous savons que la vente s'était faite pour 780 aspres, soit 13 pièces d'or au cours officiel de 60 aspres le ducat d'or vénitien<sup>131</sup>. C'est du reste sans importance, car cette version présentée par le représentant du monastère en 1593 est mensongère. En effet une *hüccet* de la deuxième décade de *rebî'ü-l-evvel* 988 (26 avril-5 mai 1580)<sup>132</sup>, donc de quatorze ans antérieure à celle de 1002 et non quinze – mais ce chiffre était évidemment arrondi –, enregistre non pas la vente, mais la donation de leur propriété par un certain nombre d'habitants de Kalymnos, parmi lesquels on compte Izmalis Nomikos, Izmalis Pelekanos et Yioryis Nomikos (mais pas Papa Pothitos). En échange, le monastère s'engage à entretenir ces personnes lorsqu'elles viendront à Patmos avec leurs enfants. Le chiffre de 70 *filuri* correspond-il à une évaluation du coût de cette promesse ? C'est douteux, car ce serait sans doute précisé. En tout cas, contrairement à ce qui sera dit par Papa Gennadios en 1593, on verra qu'il ne s'agit que du tiers du couvent de Kyra Archontissa (dont nous savons que les donateurs le possédaient). Il semble que, entre 1580 et 1593, il n'y ait pas eu de difficulté particulière, Yioryis Nomikos demeurant sur place pour gérer au nom du monastère de Patmos les biens que celui-ci avait acquis. Mais lorsqu'il est relevé de son *vekillik*, il refuse d'admettre qu'il avait cédé ses droits en 1580 et n'y est contraint que par le témoignage de ses anciens associés<sup>133</sup>. Pourquoi cette rupture ? Il se trouve qu'au printemps 1593<sup>134</sup>, l'épouse de Yioryis avait hérité d'un quart du couvent, ce que Papa Gennadios reconnaît au nom du monastère en août 1595<sup>135</sup>, assurant ne revendiquer que le tiers cédé en 1580. Désormais propriétaire par sa femme d'un quart du couvent et gestionnaire d'un autre tiers, Yioryis se trouva-t-il en conflit d'intérêt avec le monastère de Patmos, ce qui aurait entraîné son éviction ? Ou bien les moines de Patmos furent-ils tentés par les propositions d'un des leurs, Papa Gennadios ? Nous avons vu en effet que, dans la décade qui précéda la séance qui l'opposa à Yioryis devant le tribunal de Cos au début de décembre 1593, il avait obtenu la concession à vie des parts du monastère de Patmos moyennant le versement de 100 *filuri* et de la moitié de sa production annuelle d'huile d'olives, sans compter les objets en argent et autres qu'il pourrait trouver dans les champs<sup>136</sup>. De fait, il ne tarda pas à prendre possession, demandant l'autorisation dans cette même décade d'élever le mur de la cour et exigeant – et obtenant – le départ de Yioryis de la maison qu'il occupait là<sup>137</sup>.

131 Cf. Ş. Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 2000), p. 64.

132 APO, 3-37a.

133 APO, 3-44.

134 Un an et demi avant l'émission de la *hüccet* APO, 3-47 de la deuxième décade de *zî-l-hicce* 1003 (17-26 août 1595).

135 APO, 3-47.

136 APO, 6-6.

137 APO, 6-8, 6-9.

Pour résumer les principales leçons de cette affaire, en confirmation du reste de ce que nous avons déjà avancé, on pourra souligner que les confiscations des biens monastiques furent l'occasion de bonnes affaires pour de riches paysans comme ce groupe de Kalymniotes, au détriment du monastère : 780 aspres, comparés aux 100 pièces d'or déboursées quinze ans après par Papa Gennadios, constituaient un prix avantageux<sup>138</sup>. De leur côté, les moines semblent faire tout leur possible pour recouvrer leur bien. Pour décrire les négociations de 1580, Papa Gennadios s'exprime de façon fort éclairante : « Par la suite, le grand hégoumène est venu de Patmos et a acheté pour 70 pièces d'or à ces quatre *zimmi* cette église et les champs constituant son *vakıf* en disant : 'Cela nous revient'<sup>139</sup>. » À l'évidence, il s'agissait d'impressionner les quatre Kalymniotes et de faire pression sur eux. Le prestige de l'hégoumène et sa capacité à s'assurer le soutien des autorités ottomanes durent en effet jouer, puisque nos compères acceptèrent non pas de vendre, mais de donner leur part du couvent de la Kyra Archontissa. Au demeurant, ils obtinrent, on l'a vu, quelques compensations, qui prouvent que l'hégoumène n'était pas tout puissant. En tout état de cause, en 1595, les moines de Patmos n'avaient toujours récupéré que le tiers de Kyra Archontissa.

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Avant de conclure ce tableau de l'implication du monastère de Patmos dans le monde rural qui l'entourait, il faut rappeler que sa fortune avait d'autres sources que l'agriculture, notamment la navigation et le commerce maritime.

Il n'en demeure pas moins que les moines eurent à l'évidence à cœur de se constituer un domaine agricole important, destiné en premier lieu, certainement, à leur approvisionnement sur l'îlot à peu près stérile de Patmos, mais qui devait sans doute rapporter un surplus bienvenu. On pense notamment à l'huile d'olive et à l'activité des moulins à huile, mais la prudence des autorités ottomanes vient rappeler que les grains eux-mêmes pouvaient à l'occasion être exportés, bien que ce fût en théorie illégal.

Dans le contexte ottoman, le domaine foncier du monastère apparaît strictement insulaire. Les moines le constituent ou le reconstituent en profitant de la domination ottomane et du statut qu'ils avaient au sein de ce système : non seulement ils s'assurent le maintien de leurs biens au fur et à mesure de l'expansion ottomane, mais ils profitent de la *pax ottomanica* pour élargir leur domaine et saisissent activement les occasions offertes, par exemple quand un puissant *kapudan paşa* décide de repeupler et remettre en culture l'île de Samos. Ajoutons que leur entrentent auprès des plus hautes autorités ottomanes – dont témoignent les nombreux firmans et ordres de *kapudan paşa* conservés dans leurs archives – leur permet de s'imposer plus facilement sur place en cas de difficulté, peut-être même de faire à l'occasion pression sur un *cadi* ou un *naib*.

138 Indépendamment de leurs acquisitions de 1576, nous voyons Yioryis Nomikos, Izmalis Nomi-kos, Izmalis Alypos et Papa Kostantinos fils d'Izmalis acheter en 1570 au Trésor des vignes, des oliviers, des ruches et un champ : APO, 4-38, 4-43, 4-48.

139 *Batnosdan koca gumenos gelüb zıkr olınan kelise ve vakıf tarlaları bize mansubedür deyü dört nefer zimmlerinden yetmiş sikke filuriye satun alub* (APO, 3-44).

Le monastère de Patmos est donc une puissance locale, dont les ambitions et les pressions sont parfois mal ressenties par le monde rural environnant. Nous avons vu que celui-ci pouvait à l'occasion montrer de la mauvaise humeur, voire de l'opposition à l'égard de moines jugés un peu trop conquérants. Les conflits ne manquèrent pas, dont les insulaires ne sortirent pas toujours vaincus.

Au demeurant ce serait évidemment un contresens d'imaginer une société rurale écrasée par un monastère lié au pouvoir. Certes nous avons passé en revue des cas de contestation par les héritiers de donations en sa faveur. Réaction bien humaine, qui ne prouve pas nécessairement que les moines avaient agi malhonnêtement. Il conviendrait au contraire de souligner le nombre important de ces donations au profit du « *vakıf* » du monastère, et ce d'autant plus que nos archives conservent principalement la trace des différends. Assurément, on peut voir là un signe de l'attachement et de la vénération d'une grande partie des populations pour les saints moines et leur sacré monastère.

Bref, bien intégrés au système administratif ottoman et solidement implantés dans le monde rural insulaire qui les entourait, les moines de Patmos jouaient habilement sur les deux tableaux.

# MONASTIC FIELDS ON THE ISLAND OF PATMOS

Michael URSINUS\*

THIS PAPER SETS OUT TO TACKLE ONE OF THE MOST FRUSTRATING groups of documents preserved in the Ottoman holdings of St John's Monastery (hereafter referred to as the Patmos Ottoman Archive [POA]): the apparently stereotype listings of the Monastery's possessions of *zemin*.<sup>1</sup> Preserved in several copies for a period of more than two hundred years, these inventories of monastic 'fields' (*tarla*) recorded for a number of individual locations (*der mevzi-i filan*) were generally composed in the chancery script known as *siyakat* which, being employed without any diacritical marks, makes the 'reading' of the Greek toponyms from Ottoman Patmos a particularly hazardous undertaking.<sup>2</sup> Even the latest version of the recordings of the monastic 'fields' issued by means of a *buyuruldu* dated 25 July 1876 (POA 17-22), ostensibly a copy of the *mufasssal defter-i cedid* (or 'latest' detailed register) from the Imperial *defterhane* in Istanbul, is still executed in a crisp *siyakat* ductus with no additional diacriticals which otherwise might have helped in the identification of toponyms, specifically at the level of local field appellations and locally

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- 1 A word of Persian origin denoting 1. 'the earth, the world', and 2. 'ground': *New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary* (Istanbul 1968), 1278. As a fiscal term, it often occurs as *resm-i zemin* which, like *resm-i tapu*, denotes an agrarian tax for the benefit of the landowner. Here, the term is understood to carry the meaning of 'a piece of arable'. Cf. S. Pärveva, 'Rural Agrarian and Social Structure in the Edirne Region During the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century', *Études balkaniques* 36/3 (2000), 59-61, *passim*. See also E. Kolovos, 'Beyond 'Classical' Ottoman Deferology: A Preliminary Assessment of the *Tahrir* Registers of 1670/71 concerning Crete and the Aegean Islands', in E. Kolovos, Ph. Kotzageorgis, S. Laiou, M. Sariyannis (eds), *The Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, the Greek Lands: Toward a Social and Economic History; Studies in Honor of John C. Alexander* (Istanbul 2007), 209, 219.
- 2 For the difficulties of identifying Patmian place names as they were rendered in Ottoman judicial documents from as early as 1570 (no doubt based on a *mufasssal defter* for Patmos) see N. Vatin, G. Veinstein and E. Zachariadou, *Catalogue du fonds ottoman des archives du monastère de Saint-Jean à Patmos. Les vingt-deux premiers dossiers* (Athens 2011), 153, 168: Ottoman Bertra, also readable as Brezne, is by no means a mis-rendering of the Greek toponym of Petra, but instead refers to the location of Pernera (today part of the town of Skala).

current expressions for plots of land in the ownership of the monastery.<sup>3</sup> In other words: the aim of my paper is to make a determined attempt, despite some frustrating impediments, at putting the monastic *zemin* of Patmos and their topography 'on the map'.

This will be done, in essence, by the re-interpretation of one single document, around which several others, Ottoman Turkish and Greek, will have to be consulted and evaluated as to their true nature and content. All these documents have in common that they are concerned with the possessions of the monastery in arable land.

As a landowner, holding significant possessions of arable as well as other forms of agricultural and horticultural land, the Monastery of St John 'the Theologian', like other monasteries, has figured prominently for centuries, right down to the present day.<sup>4</sup>

Ever since the times of the Komnenoi and Palaeologoi emperors of Byzantium, first and foremost Alexios Komnenos, St John's has benefited from numerous bequests. Imperial dotations of land and other forms of income, followed by further acquisitions through donation, purchase, or simply by means of inheritance, laid the foundation for the monastery's extensive possessions.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, its monks could draw on various forms of landed possessions not only on the island of Patmos itself, but across various other isles and coastlands of the southern Aegean Sea.<sup>6</sup> Its dependent monastic establishments known as *metochia* were eventually to extend from Samos in the north to Paros and Kea (Tzia) in the west, and from Santorini and Crete in the south to Leros and Kalymnos to the south-east of Patmos.<sup>7</sup> Some of them became significant holders of agricultural land in their own right.

Among these monastic possessions, of which some were administered and operated within the framework of *metochia* while others were not, the holdings of arable land or 'fields' (*agros* and *chorafi* in Greek) in the possession of St John's Monastery constituted (and still constitute) a major component of monastic real estate. According to a handwritten *ktematologion* or land register from the monastery's archive composed in Greek and dating from the late nineteenth century,<sup>8</sup> no fewer than 333 such *agroï* and *chorafia* in the possession of St John's were scattered unevenly across the islands of Agathonisi, Arkoi,

3 This document (*suret-i defter*) from the *Divan-i Hümayun kalemi* is summarized in *ibid.*, 419ff. (dated here 20 March 1876).

4 Thanks in particular to my colleague authors of the *Catalogue*, there is now an abundance of studies on various aspects of Ottoman Patmos (cf. *ibid.*, 665-670). The fiscal obligations of the island of Patmos and its inhabitants over time are analysed in detail by N. Vatin, 'Les Patmotes, contribuables ottomans (XVe-XVIIe siècles)', *Turcica*, 38 (2006), 123-53.

5 See, for instance, N. Oikonomides, 'The Monastery of Patmos and its economic functions', in *idem*, *Social and Economical Life in Byzantium* (Ashgate 2004), VII.

6 E. Zachariadou, 'The sandjak of Naxos in 1641', in C. Fragner and K. Schwarz (eds), *Festgabe an Josef Matuz: Osmanistik-Turkologie-Diplomatik* (Berlin 1992), 329-342.

7 Such is the geographical distribution of the Patmian *metochia* according to a land register of the monastery dating from the late nineteenth century which is housed in the library of St John's, from which more details are quoted below.

8 The *ktematologion* of the Monastery of St John the Theologian contains a total of 114 pages, with a 'table of contents' on its back cover. On the opening page, the date of composition is given as 26 February 1881. Individual entries bear later dates.

Dragonisi, Kalymnos, Kos, Leros, Livada, Marathi, and even Naxos, while the largest holdings were concentrated on Patmos, Samos, and Leros (in rising order), amounting to 48, 66, and 72 individual plots or *chorafia*, respectively. These tracts of arable land, with their (productive) value expressed in *koila* in the late nineteenth-century *ktematologion*, were the fields reserved for cereal production as opposed to the vineyards and gardens also in the possession of the monastery (and distinct from the tracts of pasture land). As arable land worked by, or rented out for the benefit of, the monastery and/or its dependencies, the monks kept a careful record of the relevant titles of possession, indicating in the *ktematologion* in the section entitled *titloi* under what form of grant the lands had come into the possession of St John's, sometimes by referring to the *chrysoboulla* of individual Byzantine Emperors (most prominently Alexios Komnenos) or, in a more general way, to the *firman*s of (mostly unspecified) Ottoman Sultans and, summarily, to the imperial *defterhane*.<sup>9</sup>

After the gradual integration, after 1453, of the erstwhile *harac-güzar* statelet-island of Patmos under its monastic 'head of state' into the confines and settings of a more unified Ottoman fiscal administration by the 1570s (described in a masterly way by Nicolas Vatin in his in-depth study on Patmian *fiscalité*),<sup>10</sup> Patmos in the 1670s (i.e., one hundred years later), found itself part of a model 'Province of the Islands' subjected to various experiments aimed at an ever more direct application of sharia principles in provincial administration and taxation - evidently in response to the continuing *salafi* Kadızade threat (an undertaking termed 'Laboratory of Judicial Orthodoxy' by Gilles Veinstein in his seminal analysis of the Ottoman concept of *insularité*).<sup>11</sup> Consequently, the monastery's holdings of arable lands were bound to become not only a legislative issue, but also, in particular, one of fiscal reform.

In the words of the famous jurisconsult Ebussuud Mehmed (*şeyhülislam* between 1548 and 1575), arable land in the Ottoman Empire reserved for the cultivation of grain (consequently excluding vineyards and orchards as well as building plots in towns) belongs to the category of state land (*miri*), yet all these lands, including vineyards and building plots, fall under the *rakaba* or the *dominium eminens* of the Sultan, so that if a vineyard or an orchard changed its original use, it too would become *miri*.<sup>12</sup> Arable lands reserved for the cultivation of grain are therefore the principal component of *miri* land, but other forms of lands can 'join' the category of *miri* when their original use lapses. As the principal constituent of state land, grain-producing fields are not *öğri* lands (defined as private property subject to the tithe) but are subject to *harac*, yet they are not to be

9 Cf. for instance pp. 35-40 of the *ktematologion* listing the monastic possessions on Patmos, each being recorded with a serial number, its location, the amount of seed required, any neighbouring plots, and its titles, concluded by a section 'remarks'.

10 See above, fn. 4.

11 G. Veinstein, 'Le législateur ottoman face à l'insularité : l'enseignement des *kânûnnâme*', in N. Vatin and G. Veinstein (eds), *Insularités ottomanes* (Paris 2004), 91-110.

12 H. İnalcık, 'Islamization of Ottoman Laws on Land and Land Tax', in Fragner and Schwarz (eds), *Festgabe an Josef Matuz*, 101-19, reprinted in H. İnalcık, *Essays in Ottoman History* (Istanbul 1998), 155-170; here: 156.



considered *haraci* lands recognised as freehold property of their owners, which, had this been the case, they would be able to sell and purchase, or dispose of in any kind of transaction, including establishing them as *vakıf*.

“There is a third category of land”, Halil İnalçık is quoting from Ebussuud’s introduction to the register he drew up for the district of Üsküb (Skopje) in 1568, “which is neither *öşri* nor *haraci* of the type explained above. This is called *arz-i memleket*. Originally it, too, was *haraci*, but its *dominium eminens* (*rakaba*) is retained for the public treasury (*beytülmal-i müslimin*) because, were it to be granted as private property to its possessors, it would be divided among his heirs, and since a small part would devolve on each one, it would be extremely difficult, perhaps impossible, to determine the share of *harac* tax to be paid by each in proportion to the land in his possession. Therefore, such lands are given to the peasants on a lease (*ariye*). It is ordered that they cultivate them as fields, or make them into vineyards, orchards, or vegetable gardens, and render *harac-i mukaseme* and *harac-i muvazzaf* out of the harvest. (...) They (...) render *harac-i mukaseme* under the name of tithe (*öşr*) and *harac-i muvazzaf* under the name of *çift akçesi*.”<sup>13</sup>

Claiming all lands as being acquired by force (*anwatan*), irrespective of whether every part of a region was actually conquered militarily or by agreement (*sulhan*), Ebussuud makes the *öşr* (the tithe) and the *çift resmi* (constituting the chief Ottoman land taxes) appear as two distinct methods of collecting *harac*: (1) *harac-i mukaseme* being levied on the basis of a fixed percentage of the produce; (2) *harac-i muvazzaf*, on the other hand, being collected annually as a lump-sum per unit of land.<sup>14</sup>

In a footnote, Nicolas Vatin has drawn our attention to the possibility that the totality of these tracts of arable land in the possession of St John’s, situated both on the island of Patmos itself and within a wide radius across the southern Aegean Sea, may collectively have been subjected to tax, together with other possessions and sources of income, as early as 1502. In this year, according to a letter of that date (discussed by Karlin-Hayter) of which only a Latin translation has survived, the *hegoumenos* mentions a tribute of 500 gold ducats payable by the monks and islanders of Patmos. This sum would be far in excess of the 110 gold pieces the island is known to have remitted annually as its traditional lump-sum (*maktu*) before 1539, estimated as the equivalent of its *cizye*, *ispence*, tithe, and various other obligations.<sup>15</sup> But, as Vatin and Veinstein have pointed out, this figure, together with the letter in question, cannot fully be trusted, and is not capable of verification on the basis of the available documentation. However, other explanations for the claim that Patmos was charged 500 gold ducats in 1502 (rather than 110) have so far failed to convince.

Pending this single possible exception, the monastery, for its *metochia* holding lands and other sources of revenue outside Patmos, would be charged separately, usually in the form of separate annual lump-sums (among the Ottoman holdings of Patmos there are

13 Ibid., 158. Further on this question, specifically for the Aegean districts: Kolovos, ‘Beyond “Classical” Ottoman *Defterology*’, 201-235.

14 Ibid., 163ff.

15 Vatin, ‘Les Patmiotes’, fn. 11.

occasional lists of monastic lump-sums relating to various *metochia*, complete with their annual *hasil-i hums-i gallat* obligations).<sup>16</sup> This means that the historian of the Patmian fiscal regime, particularly with regard to the monastery's possession of arable lands, is faced with a multitude of individual *maktu* arrangements, not all of which as yet fully understood. Unless and until we gain a clearer picture of the internal workings and fiscal regimes across the whole plethora of St John's *metochia* (a daunting task given the nature of the documentation), it is imperative that we confine ourselves for the remaining part of this paper to the monastery's holdings of arable land on Patmos itself and their place within the island's fiscal set-up.

The earliest actual list of St John's Patmian possessions of arable land is included in what appears to be a *tezkere*, possibly drawn up by the *kadı* of Kos, which contains the copy of a certified (*imzalı*) defter dated 1671-2 "arriving from Islambol, having been presented in the year 1082" (*Islamboldan gelen imzalı defterün suretidir ki bin seksen iki senesinde verilmiştir*).<sup>17</sup> My colleagues, in their *Catalogue du fonds ottoman*, describe it as a *tezkere* or copy of an *arazi defteri* (*sic*) originating from the new survey of the Archipelago carried out in 1082/1671-72. The date given in the document, which is signed by a certain Mehmed, corresponds to the period 23 October - 21 November 1672. Their summary of the document, rendered into English, runs as follows:

Certificate fixing at 18,500 *akçe* the amount of the annual lump-sum for the year 1082/1671-72 payable by the monastery of Patmos, including the individual *cizye* payments (*ru's cizyeleri*) of its residents as well as its obligation for holding arable land (*harac-i arazi*), which was assessed by a new survey. To this effect a copy was made of a section of the census register concerning the Monastery of St John on the island of Patmos (district of Kos) carried out in 1082 according to the new guidelines (for an *arazi defteri*) for the sub-province of the Archipelago (*liva-i Cezayir*). It mentions the arable lands, fruit trees, saltings, and mills of the monastery on the islands of Patmos, Lipsoi, and Dragonissi, equally the different products from the year past which served as a basis for calculation.<sup>18</sup>

It is by means of another document from the Patmos holdings that we learn that the new census of the monastic *harac-i arazi* together with that of the number of heads of those monks capable of paying the *cizye* (*manastır-i mezburın muceddiden tahriri ferman olınan harac-i arazileri ile amele kadir rahiblerinin başı haracları*) must have been decreed before 24 Receb 1081/7 December 1670, since a *tezkere* of that date refers to it.<sup>19</sup> This year 1670 appears to have marked a turning-point in the fiscal administration of Patmos. As Nicolas Vatin has pointed out, the monastic and lay communities of the island appear thereafter to have been taxed separately :

— the monastery being charged for the fiscal year 1671-2 with an annual *maktu* of 18,500 *akçe*, which was to include the poll-tax for 35 monks amounting to 6,650 *akçe* (at

16 POA 17-13. Cf. *Catalogue*, 413f.

17 POA 17-6.

18 *Catalogue*, 409.

19 POA 17-5 dated 7 December 1670. Cf. *Catalogue*, 408ff.

the rate of 190 *akçe* each), 74 *kile* of wheat worth 2,960 *akçe*, 37 *kile* of barley worth 740 *akçe*, 930 *akçe* for their produce from orchards (*bağ u bostan*) and a mere 60 *akçe* from their harvest of figs – to mention only the ‘agricultural’ products in the narrow sense prescribed for the monastery.<sup>20</sup>

— The lay community was granted their request to have their annual lump-sum, excluding the *cizye*, fixed at 31,000 *akçe*,<sup>21</sup> based on a total of 31,602 *akçe* for 164 *nefer* remitting 4,100 *akçe* en titre de *ispence* (i.e., 25 per head), 55 ½ *kile* of wheat worth 1,998 *akçe*, 26 ½ *kile* of barley worth 495 *akçe*, and 200 *akçe* for their ‘garden produce’ (*mahsul-i bostan*) as well as 675 *akçe* for their fruit trees, topped by a volume of 6,592 *kıyye* ‘produce from orchards’ (*mahsul-i bağat*) worth 13,184 *akçe* – again listing only the narrowly ‘agrarian’ production of what appears to be, given that only 164 tax-paying individuals are recorded under this heading, the lay taxpayers not of the whole island of Patmos, but only of its ‘capital’, Chora.

It becomes evident from this brief juxtaposition of fiscal notations that while the lay inhabitants of Chora were taxed as the principal producers of garden and orchard products, it was the monastery which was assessed as remitting, under the term ‘tithe on cereal products’ (*öşr-i galle-i hububat*), in 1082/1671-72, a total of 111 *kile* (74 *kile* wheat plus 37 *kile* barley) compared with 82 *kile* (55.5 wheat, 26.5 barley) on the part of the lay community, and this on the basis of fields (in the possession of the monastery) in 26 locations (two of them separate islands) with an aggregate of altogether 295 *kile*. Since this cannot be the monastery’s share of the ‘tithe’ on cereal products (we have just learnt that this amounted to 111 *kile*), nor the annual yield of the fields in question (even when assuming payment not of a tenth, but a ‘fifth part’ of the produce – *hums* – we would still be expecting an annual yield of well in excess of, say, 500 *kile*). The figure of 295 *kile* should therefore be interpreted as the amount of grain necessary for the cultivation (i.e., the re-sowing) of the monastic fields, broken down for each location – of which a detailed list is attached which will require our imminent attention.<sup>22</sup>

Written in a rather clumsy hand whose owner can hardly have been used to the *si-yakat* style of writing employed in the imperial *deFTERhane*, the letters, often quite disjunct and evidently avoiding certain ligatures, struggle along to imitate the lines of the original: ‘*an cezire-i Batnos der liva-i cezayir tabi kaza-i Istanköy, hasil-i zemin* (or *zeminan?*)’, but render readable enough the phrase ‘*manastır-i Aya Yani Te’oloğoz*’. A kind of pluralic ‘*an mevazi*’ (‘of the locations’, but with a spurious additional letter) is employed to introduce the first place-name on the list which can easily be read as Artikobo and identified, on the *Toponymikos Chartes Nesou Patmou* by P. G. Kretikos, with Artikopos, a sloping valley about 600 m. to the south-east of Chora. It is recorded as a field (*tarla*) with 12 *kile* of seed (required for its cultivation). Second, a passage meaning ‘in the location of Aya Nana (?)’ – with nothing of the kind recorded on Kretikos’s map. Third,

20 POA 17-18 dated 15 May 1677. Cf. *Catalogue*, 417.

21 POA 17-7 dated between 30 March and 8 April 1672. Cf. *Catalogue*, 410.

22 POA 17-6.

an entry which seems to read: *der mevzi-i mezbur Milya kile 2. – mezbur Milya* in the meaning of ‘the aforementioned Milya’ would be nonsensical as there has been no Milya in the text that would have been mentioned before; it must therefore read ‘in the aforementioned location a *milya* (which, as an appellative, means nothing to me, nor to James Redhouse – unless it refers to the Greek *myloi* in the meaning of ‘a mill’).<sup>23</sup> Most likely, therefore, our scribe misread this word in the *siyakat* register in front of him. Could this have been *haliya* from *hali* – ‘empty, vacant, unoccupied ground’ (its feminine form suggesting a *terminus technicus*) cultivated to the tune of 2 *kile* of grain seed?<sup>24</sup> The next entry, number four, makes a bold attribution to a location that can be identified on the map: Alikes is situated to the far south of the central part of Patmos overlooking the Bay of Stavros. Entry number five, on the other hand, merely reads as *der mevzi-i mezbur* – ‘in the aforementioned location’, indicating a total of 3 *kile* of grain seed for the cultivation of the additional ground. The next listing, number six, is that of a location which again is confidently spelt out as a well-known site, recorded as Di-ya-kof-ti, with 28 *kile* (necessary for its cultivation). This toponym can only denote Diakofti at the narrow southern isthmus of Patmos. Following this are Pedra/Petra (no. 7) with 12, Giriko/Groikou (no. 8) with 20, and İskele/Skala (no. 9) with 40 *kile*. As to these last four, they can easily be identified on the map, situated along the eastern coast of Patmos from south to north, with a harbour named after each of them: Limin Diakoftou, Petras, Groikou, and, finally, Skalas. It would therefore appear that some of the recording took place along a coastal or even sea-borne route – but just why the recordings begin with a desolate valley south of Chora, only to lead down to the Bay of Groikou and from there to the southernmost location on ‘mainland’ Patmos overlooking the Bay of Stavros, before leaping across the sea to Diakofti in a south-easterly direction, must, at this stage, remain unexplained. Further down the list, at entry no. 16, the toponym Pernera (part of today’s Skala in the area of Skala Hotel) can easily be identified, with 6 *kile* of grain seed; at no. 17, the location of Arovalli (five *kile*) to the north of Skala extending up the hill west of Tarsanas (still echoing the Ottoman shipyard, *tersane*, which was once operating in this innermost part of the Port of Skala) is clearly identifiable, as is Netia (no. 18) with 15 *kile* – the Etia of Kretikos, on the opposite side of the harbour from Skala east of Tarsanas. Entry no. 19, Palonia (6 *kile*) could refer to the Palonia in the Oxoskala area south of the port, yet the next entry, Aspri (no. 20) with 5 *kile*, would appear to relate to the peninsula of Aspri due east of Skala across the harbour. No. 21, to be read as Ayo Theofano, is not a toponym proper, but would appear to refer to a church of that name, to the west of Chora, as are the next two entries (no. 22 and 23), Aya (A)nargiri and ‘*mezbur*’, with four *kile* each, according to Kretikos situated in a wide triangle of arable land facing the sea. The last location on the list is recorded as the location (*mevzi*) of Bostan with 3 ½ *kile*, which may be paral-

23 There is a well-known settlement on Samos called Myloi/Değirmen, cf. *Catalogue*, Index des noms de lieu.

24 Kolovos notes some ‘uncultivated land’ being registered under the term of *haliye* for Crete and some other Aegean islands (‘Defterology’, 209).

leled with modern Kipos<sup>25</sup> (also meaning ‘garden’, this time in Greek), a location in the immediate vicinity of the Church of Hagioi Anargyroi.

As mentioned before, what purports to be a copy drawn up between 23 October and 21 November 1672 (possibly by the *kadı* of Kos) of the ‘recent’ (*cedid*) *defter-i mufasssal* dated 1082/1671-2 which had been sent from Istanbul, is only the earliest of a number of similar documents preserved in the Patmos archive. The next in line, POA 17-21, also identifies itself as a copy of the ‘recent’ sultanic detailed survey register for Patmos (*suret-i defter-i cedid-i mufasssal-i sultani*), having been copied between 28 April and 7 May 1712<sup>26</sup> by a certain Ali. But, alas, the differences between the two copies could hardly be more stark. First of all, this later copy is executed not in the struggling *neshi* of the 1672 version, but in the professional *siyakat* ductus associated with the central administration. Secondly, the locations are listed in a different order, beginning with nos 6 through to 10 of the previous document. Artikopo, the first entry in the 1672 list, corresponds to no. 6 in the present copy of 1712, but here reads Artiko. The remaining locations follow in the order of the 1672 document. But what is already apparent in the case of Artikopo vs. Artiko becomes more explicit still when we try to draw up a concordance of names between the two documents: for instance, ‘Aya Nana’ in the 1672 list of toponyms corresponds to something like ‘?Ayasna’ in the document of 1712; ‘Alikes’ in 1672 corresponds with what I read as ‘?Atanasi’ in 1712; ‘Arovalli’ in 1672 corresponds to the enigmatic ‘?Mesili Hilya/haliya’ in 1712; ‘Netia’ in 1672<sup>27</sup> corresponds to what appears like ‘?Peniska’ in 1712, while the ‘Ayo Theofano’ of 1672 takes shape as ‘?Ayo Pano/Ayo Yano’ in 1712. The fact that my renderings of the corresponding entries from the 1712 list are all preceded by a question mark is significant: whereas the 1672 readings appear to be meaningful in terms of the Patmian toponymy and topography and have, for the most part, their equivalents on the Kretikos map, the corresponding 1712 readings have not, despite being apparently the more recent ones.

How is it possible that the (apparently local) copy of the (centrally executed) survey register contains more plausible identifications of the local Patmian toponomy than the copy which in all probability was drawn up in Istanbul?

It seems that the latest document of its kind already mentioned, the *siyakat* copy that was drawn up on the demand of Lazaros Mazarinos in the *defterhane* of the *divan-i hümayun* to be authenticated and issued with a *buyuruldu* dated 25 July 1876 (POA 17-22) offers a first clue. Extending right across the width of the right half of the sheet, it lists under the heading of *mezruat-i arazi ve gayrihi* five columns of locations, each one introduced by the now familiar *der mevzi-i filan*. While the first such line begins with what looks like Diyakomli rather than Diyakofti (nevertheless starting with the same location as does the 1712 document, as in fact do all the lists in question except the one dated 1672), the second line commences with a name which corresponds to the first entry of

25 A location already recorded as Kerpo/Kipi in 1570 (cf. *Catalogue*, 153, 158ff.).

26 The date 6-14 April 1714 given in the *Catalogue*, 419, appears to be incorrect.

27 This location was recorded in 1570 as Etiya (cf. *Catalogue*, 153) or even Mirtye (cf. *Catalogue*, 168).

the 1672 list: Artiko(po). This observation would suggest that there is a simple explanation for the discrepancy in arrangement between 1672 and 1712 (which latter arrangement was continued unchanged until 1876): the (apparently local) author of the 1672 document, in his attempt to copy the *siyakat* defter sent from Istanbul, initially jumped one line, thus beginning his copy with line two of the register sent from Istanbul (which is therefore likely to have already shown the same arrangement as was still retained in the 1876 copy). When he noted his mistake, he continued copying by taking line one of the 'ur-text' to be his line two, only to proceed afterwards to lines three to six as normal. The result would be the exact sequence of place-names we noted in the 1672 *arazi* list. But what about the discrepancies noted in names?

Obviously, with his limited *siyakat* skills, our (assumedly local) official must have experienced considerable difficulty when attempting to make sense of the 'ur-text' before 'transcribing' the *siyakat* notations into his *neshi* cursive. The considerable extent to which he appears to have been successful in 'making sense' of the bare *siyakat* entries offers another clue: he seems to have been able to draw on local knowledge, either his own or, more likely perhaps, that of people in his vicinity. This fact strongly suggests that Mehmed, who signed the document of 1672, but did not put a seal beneath it, may have been an official used to dealing with Patmos and its inhabitants, which perhaps best fits the job description of the *kadı* or *naib* of Istanköy (Kos) responsible also for the island of Patmos.<sup>28</sup>

The 1672 list may therefore have resulted from a process of 'constructive interpretation' on the part of the *kadı* in charge of Patmos: expecting certain Patmian toponyms known to him to appear in the *siyakat* defter from Istanbul (even if he could not positively verify them in their *siyakat* guise), he consequently was at pains to identify them with certain entries in the Istanbul list. By doing so, he put 'meaning' into apparently 'senseless' renderings of the Patmian topography, thereby drawing up a 'meaningful' catalogue of monastic fields where the *siyakat* Istanbul index had (in his opinion) failed to make sense. Was his aim to make the end product a more 'practical' tool for fiscal purposes by establishing a closer correlation between place-names in the catalogue and actual places 'on the ground'?

Three things should have become clear by now :

- 1) The 1672 listing, contrary to its own preamble, is *not* a true copy of the relevant sections of the detailed census register drawn up in H. 1082
- 2) The copy dated 1876 is closer in arrangement and content to the original *mufassal defter-i cedit* than the 1672 document

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28 E. Zachariadou, 'Η Κως και η μονή της Πάτμου με την έναρξη της Τουρκοκρατίας' [Kos and the monastery of Patmos at the beginning of Ottoman rule], in G. Kokkorou-Alevra, A.A. Laimou and E. Simantoni-Bournia (eds), *Ιστορία-Τέχνη-Αρχαιολογία της Κω* [History - Art - Archaeology of Kos] (Athens, 2000), 465-468. Also N. Vatin, 'Iles grecques? Iles ottomanes? L'insertion des îles de l'Égée dans l'Empire ottoman à la fin du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', in N. Vatin and G. Veinstein (eds), *Insularités ottomanes* (Paris 2004), 71-89.



- 3) The earliest true copy preserved in POA is 17-21 dated between 28 April and 7 May 1712 (not 6-14 April 1714 as in the *Catalogue*)

A synopsis of POA 17-21 (the earliest true copy of the *defter-i cedit*) and the monastery's own *Ktematologion Ioannidou* of 1881 reveals further insights (see Appendix below):

Both documents record in *kile* the amount of seed required to cultivate the 'fields' in question. Both documents only list locations between Diakofti in the south and Arouvali in the north, i.e., from the isthmus of Stavros in the south to the isthmus of Merikas in the north. This circumscribes (at least in the north) the 'monastic' half of the island and the limit for agricultural property owned by the monastery according to the so-called 'partition agreement' of 1720.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, both lists start recording along the eastern sea shore of Patmos from Diakofti in the south to Skala in the north, before forking out in different directions. The area west and south of Chora is only scantily covered by the list dated 1712, yet recorded in detail by the *ktematologion* of 1881. There remains a possibility that the unidentified locations between Ayasna (the Akropolis?) and Louro (near Skala) refer to this area. The 'Alikes' of the 1672 list (instead of Atanasi as recorded in 1712) and his 'Ayo Teofano' (instead of ?Arouvali in 1712) occur in the *ktematologion* and on the Kretikos map, but not in the 1712 copy of the *mufassal defter-i cedit*, nor in any of the later copies, including the one dated 1876.

With respect to our three interim conclusions we may now add the following :

- 4) Up to ten locations mentioned in 1712 (out of 23) can be positively identified and attributed to sites 'on the ground' (marked by an asterisk). The list of 1672 allows 15 locations out of 24 to be positively attributed, a markedly higher percentage. Of the locations recorded in the *ktematologion*, nearly all of them can be found on Kretikos' map.
- 5) The distribution of the firmly identified locations mentioned in the 1712 copy of the *mufassal defter-i cedit* and all later recordings corresponds to the 'monastic part' of the island. According to the so-called 'partition agreement' dated, in Greek, 25 July 1720 and issued in the form of a *hüccet* by someone signing as Mustafa, deputy *kadı* (*muvela hilafeten*) of Badinoz (using a distinctive seal identical with that in POA 30-48),<sup>30</sup> the fields (*tarlaları*), mountains (*dağları*), villages (*karyeleri*) and sheep-pens (*mandriyeler*) in the possession of the monastery since

29 This document, composed in Greek, is dated 25 July 1720 and can be found in the second file of *Episema* of St John's Monastery, Patmos. Its left upper margin is made up of an entry in Ottoman Turkish which resembles a *kadı*'s *hüccet*, complete with (Arabic) introductory formula and seal. Style, orthography, handwriting, and seal can be linked with document in POA 30-48.

30 This is a (apocryphal?) *hüccet* issued by Mustafa, deputy *kadı* of Badinoz (Patmos), composed in the usual format but with unusually numerous and blatant orthographic errors which suggest a non-trained, possibly a non-Muslim, hand, confirming the sale of goods as witnessed by Papa Iakovos, son of Ilia; Papa Anastasios, son of Simeon; Manoli, son of Papa Kostanti; *dyako* Ioannis, son of Parthenios; Methodios Borokomanos, son of Pothitou: the *hierodiakos* Makarios, son of Bartholo, from the Apocalypse Monastery of Patmos, irrevocably sold his books, great



the year 40 (*kırk senesinden berü*, i.e., 1140/1727-28) were henceforth to be free from any outside interference, be it the (local) government (*vilayet*) or the *reaya* islanders (*reaya fukarası*).

I suggested above that the 1672 self-styled ‘copy’ of the so-called *arazi defteri* competed positively in ‘usability’ with any of the later copies because this was a form of ‘transcript’ rather than a copy – a ‘transcript’ based on insider knowledge concerning details of landholding and agricultural production on Patmos on which a *kadı* of Kos could perhaps draw more easily than others if required to do so. But here is the crucial point: why did the *kadı* of Kos, if that is what he was, feel the need to spell out in legible form complete with diacritical marks what the *siyakat* original would simply not deliver? Was he, as I proposed before, perhaps to hand over to the recipients of the *tezkere* a transcript for practical use, rather than an authenticated copy? (Let us here take note again of the fact that the 1672 document bears no seal, neither below the signature nor anywhere else, including the recto). With this question I shall come to the end.

On account of the ‘partition agreement’ of 1720, the monastic fields as enumerated in the *siyakat* lists as the *zemin* possession of the Monastery of St John had been firmly placed under the exclusive control of the monks (again), in particular against infringement by the Patmos lay community, including the management of the agricultural produce of these *zemin* possessions. It is true that only a fixed monetary amount was to be handed over to the fiscal authorities each year *for* these possessions, but *from* them the produce had to be harvested and seeds allocated for the new season. While the first requirement no longer demanded a detailed assessment of the grain harvest each year, the second did, and, moreover, required a detailed assessment of the amounts of seed to be allocated to each location. For the purpose of seed allocation across a minimum of 24 field sites spread throughout the central part of the island, a distribution key was needed together with a clear indication of the identity of the ground to be sown. This is exactly what the 1881 *ktematologion* was to indicate for a total of 48 individual plots of arable situated on Patmos and worked by the monastery during the later nineteenth century, and this is what the post-1712 lists seem to represent for an earlier period ending in 1876, based on 24 locations, albeit in summarised form and with less detail as to the precise nature of the plot, but, significantly perhaps, starting the enumeration with the same place-name as does the *ktematologion* (i.e., Diakofti), progressing in the same way along the eastern coast from south to north and similarly continuing in a roughly anti-clockwise itinerary as do the *siyakat* copies of the *mufassal defter-i cedid* (of which, as we have seen, the 1672 list is meant to be a copy). But unlike the *ktematologion*, which evidently contains fresh data, in the whole series of *siyakat* copies the figures in *kile* for the individual locations remain completely unaltered and stereotyped, and this for more than a century and a half (as perhaps one would expect if dealing with true copies of one and the same *mufassal defter-i cedid*). Only our 1672 list marks an exception, but only to the

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and small, on music as well as in Latin, Greek, and Italian, to Yerasimos, son of Vasili, for 755 piastres. The document is dated 7-16 July 1720.

extent of incorporating a reading error on the part of the ‘copyist’: Diakofti is listed here with 28 rather than 38 *kile*. It therefore appears a distinct possibility that, until at least 1876, the figures from the *mufassal defter-i cedit* remained ‘in force’ as far as the Ottoman bureaucracy was concerned, while a body of fresh data was in the process of being assembled during, or had already been recorded some time before, the later nineteenth century by the monastic authorities – thereby establishing an up-to-date basis for the administration of the monastery’s possessions of arable and other kinds of agricultural land.

In coming back to the question posed above about the true purpose of the 1672 list: was the copyist’s intention, as suggested, a form of interpretative ‘transcript’ for practical use in the management of the monastery’s possessions of arable land, rather than an authenticated copy of the *mufassal defter-i cedit*?

If it was, he seems to have failed miserably. Not only are some of the locations on his list given unsupported (possibly anachronistic) names, they are also listed in the wrong order. Worse still, in the case of one of the most important locations, he misread the correct amount of *kile*.

### *Therefore – a definite negative?*

Not yet. It is the very inclusion of ‘fresh’ toponyms which may offer a clue. New on his list are Netya (at least in its phonetic spelling), Papa Silvestro, Ayo Theofano, and Alikes (instead of ‘Atanasi’). Whereas the locations of Papa Silvestro and Ayo Theofano cannot be found on the Kretikos map, Netia is easily identified in the northernmost area of the ‘monastic part’ of the island (in the sense of the ‘partition agreement’) with a large tract of field terraces opposite the port of present-day Skala, situated between Tarsanas and Koumana. Alikes, on the other hand, marks a rather lonely location on the northern shore of the Bay of Stavros, near the Church of Hosios Christodoulos, right on the southern fringe of the island’s monastic circumference. Was it the intention of the ‘copyist’ to put these ‘new’ locations on the map in order to establish a (new, or at least renewed) monastic claim? If so, he could not have chosen more suitable instances, since instead of Netya, the majority of the copyists in Istanbul had put the name down as something like ‘Peniska’, which has no equivalent on the ground, consequently passing over this whole district opposite Skala in complete silence, while Alikes, the ‘Atanasi’ of the 1712-1876 copyists, is situated in a marginal area of the island’s southern extremity that is left a complete ‘blank’ in all *siyakat* copies, from 1712 down to 1876.

To sum everything up in another proposition: was the 1672 list – a kind of wilful interpretation of the *mufassal defter-i cedit* on the part of its author – drawn up with a very practical use at the back of his mind after all?

If we allowed ourselves to continue this line of thought any further, we would have to admit that at least two premisses of our interpretation so far would be in need of urgent re-assessment: first, the actual date, and second, the circumstances and agency of its composition.

Much of this would have to be left to speculation anyway, as we have no corroborative data, so a very brief imaginative *tour de force* must suffice: could it not be that the

copy in front of us, though ostensibly dated between 23 October and 21 November 1672, may in fact have been drawn up at a much later date, perhaps some time around, or after, 1720, the date of the 'partition agreement' between the monastery and the lay community of Patmos, when it was to fulfil a specific purpose? And does not the monastery now seem to be emerging behind it as the party interested in having it executed in the way it was – by the *kadı* of Kos or someone even closer at hand to be the willing executor of such a document suited to supporting the monastery's claims?

### Appendix: Synopsis

<b>Patmos: POA 17-21 dated 1712</b>	<b>Patmos Ktematologion (1881)</b>
<b>Diyakofti</b> tarla keyl 38	1-2 <b>Diakopti</b> (agroï koila 50, ambelia koila 20) 3-4 <b>Alikî/Touzla</b> (agros koila 5, ambelion koila 5)
<b>Petra</b> tarla keyl 12	5 <b>Pedra</b> (agroï koila 20)
<b>Giri(ti)ko</b> tarla keyl 20	6-7 <b>Agroïkou</b> (agroï koila 20, ambelia koila 10) 8 <b>Epsimia</b> (chorafia koila 10) 9 <b>Zapsila</b> (chorafia koila 5) 10 <b>Hagia Teofano</b> (chorafia koila 20)
<b>Iskele</b> tarla keyl 40	11-19 <b>Skala</b> (chorafia koila 35, ambelia koila 6, 20, 10, 6, 6, perivolion koila 5, 6) 20 <b>Panagia Zialas</b> (ambelion koila 6)
<b>Papa Sava</b> tarla keyl 3	21 <b>Kapsalos</b> (chorafia koila 5) 22-23 <b>Apokalypsis/Scholi</b> (chorafia koila 12, ambelion koila 1)
<b>Artikopo</b> tarla keyl 12	47 <b>Artikopos</b> (chorafia koila 27)
<b>Ayasna</b> tarla keyl 1	30 <b>Kastelli/Akropolis</b> (chorafia koila 20)
mezbur, ?haliya tarla keyl 2	
<b>Atanasi</b> tarla keyl 5	
mezbur, ?haliya tarla keyl 3	
<b>Papa Sinodi</b> tarla keyl 1	
<b>Papa Evthimi</b> tarla keyl 1 ½	
? <b>Agriolivadi</b> tarla keyl 1	
? <b>Harahora</b> tarla keyl 4	
<b>Louro</b> tarla keyl 3	
<b>Pernera</b> tarla keyl 6	31-32 <b>Pernera</b> (chorafia koila 10, ambelion koila 8)
? <b>Mesili</b> , ?haliya tarla keyl 5	
? <b>Peniska/Neti'a</b> tarla keyl 15	26-27 <b>Netia</b> (chorafia koila 10, ambelion koila 20)
<b>Palonia</b> , ?haliya tarla keyl	
<b>Aspri</b> tarla keyl 5	24-25 <b>Koumana</b> (chorafia koila 40, ambelion koila 5)
? <b>Arouvali</b> tarla keyl 4	28-29 <b>Arouvali</b> (chorafia koila 10, ambelion koila 25)
<b>Ayo Anargiri</b> tarla keyl 4	33 <b>Kalamodi</b> (chorafia koila 25) 34 <b>Grava</b> (chorafia koila 10) 35-35 <b>Kipoi</b> (chorafia koila 20, kipos koila 6, 6, 10) 39 <b>Kipos Hristodoulou</b> (koila 8) 40 <b>Vrasta</b> (koila 2) 41 <b>Evangelismos</b> (koila 2) 42 <b>Asomali</b> (koila 6) 43 <b>Hagia Paraskevi</b> (chorafia koila 15) 44 ??? (chorafia koila 20) 45 <b>Prophetes Elias</b> (chorafia koila 10) 46 <b>Hagios Giorgios</b> (chorafia koila 35)
mezbur, ?haliya tarla keyl 4	

LANDHOLDING AND COMMERCIALISATION  
IN THE RURAL ECONOMY



## INVESTISSEMENTS DES ‘ASKAR DANS LES CAMPAGNES EGYPTIENNES, v. 1580- v. 1630

Nicolas MICHEL\*

DANS L'ÉGYPTE OTTOMANE, COMME DANS LES PROVINCES centrales, le régime des terres arables était caractérisé par l'absence légale de propriété privée de la terre <sup>1</sup>. Les citadins ne pouvaient en conséquence se constituer de patrimoine foncier dans les campagnes, et de fait les inventaires de succession n'en mentionnent pas, alors qu'ils détaillent les autres propriétés immobilières en ville, dans leur banlieue immédiate, voire dans les villages. Le schéma, bien connu dans l'Europe de l'ouest à l'époque moderne, des élites citadines qui, pour acquérir à la fois rente et prestige, achetaient des terres et ainsi tournaient le dos à leurs origines commerciales ou industrielles, ne pouvait se développer en Égypte. Est-ce à dire que la ville se désintéressait de la campagne ? Pour mettre à l'épreuve ce postulat nous nous pencherons sur la catégorie sociale apparemment la plus éloignée du monde rural, les militaires, au moment où leur rapport avec celui-ci semble le plus marqué par la prédation, voire la violence, soit autour de 1600.

Après avoir conquis l'Égypte, les Ottomans supprimèrent promptement le régime de l'*iqṭā'* qui depuis l'époque ayyoubide assurait l'essentiel du financement des militaires <sup>2</sup>. Ils ne le remplacèrent pas par le régime du *timar* : les troupes qu'ils laissèrent

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Abréviations :

QA = Le Caire, Archives nationales (Dār al-waṭā'iq al-qawmiyya, Būlāq), série des registres de la *qisma* 'arabiyya.

QS = *ibid.*, série des registres de la *qisma* 'askariyya.

- 1 Cette position constante de l'administration et des tribunaux est théorisée à partir du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle par les juristes hanéfites : cf. B. Johansen, *The Islamic Law on Land Tax and Rent: The Peasants' Loss of Property Rights as Interpreted in the Hanafite Legal Literature of the Mamluk and Ottoman Periods* (London, New York, Sydney 1988) ; M. Mundy et R. Saumarez Smith, *Governing Property, Making the Modern State: Law, Administration and Production in Ottoman Syria* (London, New York 2007), chap. 2, « Jurisprudential Debate in the Sixteenth Century », pp. 11-20.
- 2 N. Michel, « Disparition et persistance de l'*iqṭā'* en Égypte après la conquête ottomane », *Turcica*, 41 (2009), pp. 247-290.



sur place, cavaliers comme fantassins ou artilleurs, y compris le régiment des « Circasiens » qui accueillit les anciens Mamelouks, furent désormais soldées. Les liens directs qu'avant 1517 émirs et mamelouks royaux entretenaient avec les *fallāh* (exploitants contribuables) <sup>3</sup> de leur *iqṭā'* se trouvèrent rompus. La troupe vivait la plus grande partie de l'année au Caire, dans les principaux ports, et dans quelques garnisons de l'intérieur. Les impôts fonciers, qui assuraient la majeure partie des revenus du Trésor, étaient constamment affermés, sur une base annuelle au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle. Tandis que dans les premières décennies du nouveau régime un nombre notable de fermiers de l'impôt appartenaient à la population civile <sup>4</sup>, les militaires en vinrent à accaparer les fermes rurales, et le mouvement paraît achevé avant 1580 <sup>5</sup>. Dans les années 1600 le conflit entre les régiments de cavaliers et les gouverneurs d'Égypte atteignit son paroxysme <sup>6</sup>, et les premiers furent accusés de mettre en coupe réglée les campagnes <sup>7</sup>. À l'époque même, ces déprédations ont été expliquées par des raisons à la fois politiques et économiques, les modalités de gestion propres à certains gouverneurs et *defterdar* (trésoriers) et la dégradation des soldes. Si les dévaluations monétaires ont pu jouer un rôle conjoncturel et cristalliser les passions, à plus long terme l'explication essentielle du phénomène réside dans l'accroissement mal contrôlé du nombre d'individus inscrits sur les rôles militaires <sup>8</sup>, dans un contexte de hausse des prix, alors que les recettes fiscales globales ne pouvaient augmenter que dans des proportions limitées. Une première tentative de remise en ordre

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- 3 Sur la catégorie de *fallāh* et son histoire, N. Michel, « Devoirs fiscaux et droits fonciers : la condition des fellahs égyptiens (13<sup>e</sup>-16<sup>e</sup> siècles) », *JESHO*, 43/4 (2000), pp. 521-578, notamment pp. 524-535.
  - 4 N. Hanna, « Egyptian Civil Society and Tax-Farming in the Aftermath of the Ottoman Conquest », dans B. Lellouch et N. Michel (dir.), *Conquête ottomane de l'Égypte (1517). Arrière-plan, impact, échos* (Leyde et Boston 2013), pp. 211-223.
  - 5 A. A. Muḥammad, « Al-'Uṣmāniyyūn wa-nizāmā al-iltizām wa-l-amānāt fī Miṣr fī al-qarn al-sādis 'aṣar » [Les Ottomans et les régimes de l'*iltizām* et de l'*amāna* en Égypte au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle], *Annales islamologiques*, 38 (2004) [pp. 17-56 partie arabe], pp. 28-35 sur les catégories de fermiers de l'impôt. Le dernier *qāḍī* (titre attribué aux juges et aux hauts fonctionnaires) qu'il a repéré parmi les fermiers de l'impôt foncier est attesté en 1534, le dernier Copte, en 1554.
  - 6 Sur la période 1580-1630, A. Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants du Caire au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 2 t. (Damas 1973 et 1974), pp. 4-5 ; M. Winter, « Ottoman Egypt, 1525-1609 », *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, t. 2 (Cambridge 1998) [pp. 1-33], pp. 17-20 ; J. Hathaway, « Egypt in the Seventeenth Century », *ibid.*, t. 2 [pp. 34-58], pp. 40-41. Les troubles en Égypte furent jusqu'à un certain point l'écho ou la réplique de ceux beaucoup plus graves qui agitaient Istanbul, et l'Égypte échappa à la récolte des Celāli. L'histoire des années 1609 à 1631 en Égypte reste à écrire, notamment à partir des *mühimme defterleri* et des autres archives d'Istanbul.
  - 7 Les deux principales sources sont Muḥammad Ibn Abī al-Surūr, *Kaṣf al-kurba fī raf' al-ṭulba*, éd. A. A. 'Abd al-Raḥīm, *Al-mağalla al-tārīḥiyya al-miṣriyya*, 23 (1976), pp. 291-384, et Muḥammad al-Burullusī al-Sa'dī, *Bulūğ al-arab bi-raf' al-ṭulab*, même éd., *ibid.*, 24 (1977), pp. 267-340.
  - 8 Cette explication a été avancée par les consuls vénitiens d'Alexandrie Andrea Paruta (1596-1599), Giovanni da Mosto (1599-1602), Giovanni Donà (1629-1633) : M. P. Pedani, « Reports of Venetian Consuls in Alexandria (1554-1664) », dans M. Tuchscherer et M. P. Pedani, *Alexandrie ottomane I* (Le Caire 2011) [pp. 43-182], pp. 107, 111, 139.

eut lieu sous le gouvernorat de Yavuz 'Alī Paşa (1601-1604)<sup>9</sup>. En 1609 une révolte des régiments de cavaliers fut énergiquement matée par un gouverneur à poigne, Kul Kıran Mehmed Paşa<sup>10</sup>, et pendant une vingtaine d'années le pays fut tenu par des gouverneurs énergiques avant qu'un grand officier, Riḍwān Bey, ne se saisisse vers 1631 de la réalité du pouvoir, inaugurant « l'ère du beylicat »<sup>11</sup>. Nous nous intéresserons ici au demi-siècle (v. 1580-1630) durant lequel les militaires, appuyés sur leur esprit de corps et leur monopole des fermes fiscales à la campagne, ont paru défier le pouvoir des gouverneurs.

C'est à cette époque que dans les registres de la *qisma* 'askariyya, le tribunal chargé des successions des privilégiés ('askar), on commença à recopier des inventaires de succession. Une minorité significative de ces derniers détaillent parmi les biens du défunt, non pas des terres, absentes pour les raisons exposées plus haut, mais d'autres possessions dans les campagnes : pour l'essentiel, du gros bétail, des grains, des instruments agricoles. Puisque ces possessions requéraient un entretien et un renouvellement constants, nous devons dans ce contexte regarder les biens ruraux non pas comme de simples sources de revenus assimilables à une rente, mais comme des investissements (une mise de fonds avec l'espoir raisonnable d'un gain), une manière parmi d'autres de renouveler et d'étendre son capital<sup>12</sup>. Leur seule présence renverse l'image préconçue des militaires comme une classe prédatrice. La documentation dont nous disposons introduit des biais tels que son étude préalable est indispensable. La composition des possessions rurales montre une cohérence qui autorise à en tenter l'interprétation économique :

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- 9 Sur les désordres dans les campagnes sous son prédécesseur Hızır Paşa et les mesures énergiques de 'Alī Paşa, voir l'intéressant rapport du consul vénitien Giovanni da Mosto, *ibid.*, pp. 111-112. Les dysfonctionnements de l'administration d'Égypte à l'extrême fin du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle font l'objet d'un ouvrage de Muṣṭafā 'Ālī publié par A. Tietze, *Muṣṭafā 'Ālī's Description of Cairo in 1599: Text, Transliteration, Translation, Notes* (Wien 1975) ; voir notamment pp. 45, 54-56, 80-81 sur le comportement des gouverneurs de province (*kāšif*) et de leur troupe.
  - 10 Sur son gouvernorat, J. Hathaway, « The "Mamluk Breaker" Who Was Really a Kul Breaker : A Fresh Look at Kul Kıran Mehmed Pasha, Governor of Egypt 1607-1611 », dans *eadem* (éd.), *The Arab Lands in the Ottoman Era: Essays in Honor of Professor Caesar Farah* (Minneapolis 2009), pp. 93-109.
  - 11 P.M. Holt, « The Beylicate in Ottoman Egypt During the Seventeenth Century », dans *idem*, *Studies in the History of the Near East* (London 1973), pp. 177-219.
  - 12 Dans l'étude essentielle qu'il a consacrée à la formation du capital dans l'Empire ottoman, H. İnalcık, « Capital Formation in the Ottoman Empire », *The Journal of Economic History*, 19 (1969) [pp. 97-140], reprint *idem*, *The Ottoman Empire: Conquest, Organization and Economy* (London 1978), pp. 136-137, après avoir donné des exemples significatifs de fortunes rurales chez les *asker* d'Édine, considère celles-ci (au même titre que les fiefs de service, *timar*) comme une source de revenus, ensuite investis dans des sociétés de commerce à longue distance, du crédit à intérêt, ou des *waqf*. Il assimile la gestion des exploitations agricoles à un *business* mais estime que les seuls véritables « entrepreneurs capitalistes » étaient les négociants et les prêteurs d'argent. Ma contribution n'abordera pas la question sous l'angle de la comparaison avec l'économie capitaliste, problématique au contraire centrale dans le livre récent de N. Hanna, *Artisan Entrepreneurs in Cairo and Early Modern Capitalism 1600-1800* (Le Caire 2011). La perspective adoptée ici est celle de l'économie rurale, dont ces investissements étaient une composante.

nous tâcherons de comprendre ce qu'elle révèle de l'économie agricole, puis des besoins et circuits de l'argent dans les campagnes.

### *'Askar et investissements ruraux*

Au Caire officie depuis 1522 un *qassām* qui, sous les ordres du juge suprême d'Égypte, le *qādī al-quḍāt*, est spécialement en charge des successions des *'askar*. Cependant, les plus anciens fragments parvenus jusqu'à nous des registres du tribunal de la *qisma 'askariyya* ne datent que de décembre 1553<sup>13</sup>. Est-ce à dire que les registres des trente années précédentes ont été perdus ? Dans un article pénétrant, Ḥasan Muḥammad a proposé de distinguer trois actes fondateurs : la nomination d'un *qassām*, la création d'une *qisma 'askariyya*, et celle d'un registre (*siḡill*) propre à cette dernière. Il a relevé la première mention de la *qisma 'askariyya* en 952/1545-1546, neuf ans avant le premier *siḡill* aujourd'hui conservé<sup>14</sup>. Contrairement à ce que l'on pourrait croire, la présence d'inventaires de succession (*daftar muḥallafāt*) n'est pas consubstantielle aux registres de *qisma* : pendant plus de quarante ans, au Caire, on n'en recopia pas. Le premier inventaire à ma connaissance date de novembre 1588<sup>15</sup>. Et c'est seulement une dizaine d'années plus tard que la copie des inventaires y devient commune. Curieusement, l'habitude en avait été plus précoce dans les registres de la *qisma 'arabiyya*, pourtant créée après la *qisma 'askariyya*<sup>16</sup>. Notons en passant que les affaires de personnes relevant de la catégorie des *'askar* étaient parfois traitées par le *qassām 'arabī*<sup>17</sup>.

La catégorie des *'askar* comprenait l'ensemble des militaires, mais aussi un certain nombre de civils sur lesquels on aimerait en savoir davantage. Les premiers registres de la *qisma 'askariyya* contiennent un nombre si remarquable de mariages, en majorité avec des douaires de montant si modeste, que l'on peut penser que tous les mariages de *'askar* étaient à cette époque enregistrés : aussi permettent-ils de cerner de près la composition

13 Le premier registre conservé est QS 1, du 21 *ḡumādā II* 961 / 24 mai 1554 au 16 *muḥarram* 964 / 19 novembre 1556. Des fragments du registre pour les mois précédents, du 2 *muḥarram* au 8 *ḡumādā I* 961 / 8 décembre 1553-11 avril 1554, sont conservés dans le carton 44 de la série du Dašt : Ī.M. Abū Sālim, « Muḥāfazāt al-Dašt wa-ahammīyatuhā fī takmilat al-waḍī'a al-arṣīfiyya li-maḥākīm al-Qāhira al-ʿuṡmāniyya fī al-qarn 10 h./16 m. » [Les cartons du *Dašt* et leur importance comme complément au dépôt d'archives des tribunaux ottomans du Caire au X<sup>e</sup> h. / XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle], *Ruznāme*, 2 (1425/2004) [pp. 65-116], p. 82.

14 H. H. Muḥammad, « Iḥtišāsāt maḥkamat al-qisma al-'arabiyya » [Les compétences du tribunal de la *qisma 'askariyya*], dans R. 'Abbās (éd.), *Al-'adāla bayna al-šarī'a wa-l-wāqī' fī Miṣr fī al-'aṣr al-ʿuṡmānī* [La justice en Égypte à l'époque ottomane, entre Loi religieuse et réalité] (Le Caire 2002) [pp. 141-177], pp. 143 et 166 note 5.

15 QS 16, p. 387 n° 957, 3 *muḥarram* 997 / 22 novembre 1588 ; c'est le seul inventaire recopié dans ce registre de 960 entrées.

16 Première mention de la *qisma 'arabiyya* en 962/1554-1555, premier registre conservé en 968/1560-1561 : H. H. Muḥammad, « Iḥtišāsāt », pp. 142-143.

17 Voir à ce propos H. H. Muḥammad, « Iḥtišāsāt », pp. 148-149. Dans l'échantillon étudié ici, l'inventaire de succession d'un substitut hanéfite ([2], voir Tableau 5 en Annexe) figure dans le registre QA 19, p. 245 n° 353.

de ce groupe. Parmi les 111 premiers mariages enregistrés dans le premier registre de ce tribunal <sup>18</sup>, les époux se répartissent entre 21 civils, 19 affranchis, et 71 militaires de rang : à savoir 3 *müteferrika* <sup>19</sup>, 4 *çavuş*, 6 Circassiens, 17 *gönüllü*, 16 *tüfenkçi*, 10 *yeniçeri* et 1 *müstahfizân* (deux manières différentes de nommer les Janissaires), 3 *azeb*, 7 *mütekaid* (retraités), 2 indéterminés, ainsi que deux officiers. La présence de civils parmi les 'askar est ainsi attestée très tôt : certains sont attendus (des oulémas de haut rang, des membres de lignages chérifiens ou saints, les fonctionnaires civils), d'autres moins : quelques négociants (*tāğir* ou *hawāğa*), voire de simples artisans ou boutiquiers (*mutasabbib*). Le phénomène se poursuit durant la période étudiée ici, sans prendre cependant d'ampleur avant le milieu du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle <sup>20</sup>.

J'ai procédé au relevé systématique des biens de nature agricole ou rurale qui figurent dans les inventaires de succession copiés dans trois registres de la *qisma* 'arabiyya et huit registres de la *qisma* 'askariyya, répartis entre 1579 et 1626 <sup>21</sup>. L'échantillon résultant comprend 37 inventaires : trois dans les QA et 34 dans les QS. Le nom, la qualité du défunt, la date de l'inventaire et le total de l'actif sont détaillés dans le Tableau 5 en Annexe. Les inventaires seront désormais désignés ici par le numéro entre crochets [ ] qui leur est donné dans ce Tableau. L'étude systématique des inventaires de succession conservés dans les registres de tribunaux sont une tradition dans l'historiographie de l'époque ottomane, depuis les travaux pionniers de Halil İnalçık sur Bursa à la fin du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, d'Ömer Lütfi Barkan sur Edirne aux XVI<sup>e</sup>-XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles, et d'André Raymond sur Le Caire aux XVII<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles <sup>22</sup>. Colette Establet et Jean-Paul Pascual ont analysé les investissements dans les campagnes effectués par les 'askar de Damas, à partir d'un registre de la *qisma* 'askariyya de cette ville, daté de 1680-1682 <sup>23</sup> ; leurs conclusions serviront ici de base de comparaison.

On connaît la richesse de ce type de sources, susceptibles d'une histoire quantitative analogue à celle qui s'est développée pour l'Europe moderne. On connaît aussi leurs limites : la véracité de leurs informations, leur exhaustivité, et la représentativité des inventaires recopiés dans les *sigill* ont souvent été interrogés, surtout depuis l'article déca-

18 QS 1, pp. 1 à 55, du 21 *ğumādā II* 961 / 24 mai 1554 au 29 *ramadān* / 28 août.

19 Le régiment des *müteferrika* avait été créé récemment, à une date que S. M. Es-Seyyid Mahmud, *XVI. Asırda Mısır Eyâleti* (Istanbul 1990), pp. 204-205 note 136, situe en 952/1545-1546 ou 953/1546-1547.

20 Les inscriptions de civils sur les rôles des régiments ont été étudiées par Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II, pp. 660-663. Il faut y ajouter les civils qui, comme dans l'échantillon de QS 1, étaient admis devant la *qisma* 'askariyya en tant que tels, sans être incorporés à un régiment.

21 L'échantillon comprend les registres QA 7 (1579-1580), 8 (1580-1581), 19 (1610-1611), QS 17 (1589-1590), 18 (1592-1596), 20 (1597-1599), 22 (1599-1600), 24 (1602-1603), 25 (1603-1605), 29 (1610-1611) et 38 (1625-1626).

22 H. İnalçık, « 15. Asır Türkiye İktisadi ve İctimai Tarihi Kaynakları », *İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, 15 (1953-1954), pp. 51-75 ; Ö.L. Barkan, « Edirne Askeri Kassamı'na Ait Tereke Defterleri (1545-1659) », *Belgeler*, III/5-6 (1966), pp. 1-479 ; Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*.

23 C. Establet et J.-P. Pascual, *La gent d'État dans la société ottomane damascène. Les 'askar à la fin du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Damas 2011), chap. VI à VIII, pp. 143-250.

pant de Dror Ze'evi<sup>24</sup>. Lui-même citait comme modèle méthodologique les observations faites par Colette Establet et Jean-Paul Pascual sur un échantillon de 628 inventaires de succession à Damas en 1691-1700<sup>25</sup>. Reprenons-les. Les successions ne faisaient l'objet d'un enregistrement dans l'une ou l'autre *qisma* que pour des raisons juridiques, dont le caractère obligatoire est douteux, et la proportion de celles figurant dans les registres, par rapport au total des décès, est faible mais non insignifiante<sup>26</sup>. Les individus disposaient de plusieurs moyens pour faire échapper une partie de leur fortune aux règles de l'héritage : la fondation d'un *waqf* – encore peu fréquente autour de 1600 –, les dons, les emprunts fictifs. Les inventaires (*daftar*) ne se présentent par ailleurs pas de manière homogène. Ils sont supposés suivre un modèle rigide, détaillant successivement les actifs répartis entre objets mobiliers, immeubles, créances, puis le passif : dettes, frais liés au décès ; enfin le reste, puis sa division entre les ayants droit. Cependant certains inventaires ne transcrivent que des chiffres globaux ; d'autres, seulement les biens mobiliers trouvés dans la demeure ou la boutique du défunt : est-ce à dire que ce dernier n'a pas laissé d'autres biens, ou que ceux-ci ne sont pas inclus dans la succession ? Pour prendre un exemple, les deux registres QS 25 et 38 contiennent 69 inventaires après décès (parmi lesquels sept femmes), dont 60 sont détaillés ; 25 n'incluent que des biens mobiliers citadins ; sur les 35 autres, 15 mentionnent des immeubles, en propriété ou en *huluw*<sup>27</sup>. Au total, l'échantillon étudié est trop dispersé dans le temps, limité dans l'absolu, et faible en comparaison de la population visée, pour pouvoir être soumis à une généralisation statistique. En revanche, la fréquence de certaines observations suggère des tendances générales, et la qualité des informations dans les inventaires détaillés encourage à élaborer des analyses précises.

La place occupée dans ces inventaires par les biens agricoles ou ruraux est remarquable. Reprenons les soixante inventaires détaillés de QS 25 et 38 : quinze d'entre eux incluent des grains, 17 du bétail autre que des chevaux, 12 des instruments agricoles, dix

24 D. Ze'evi, « The Use of Ottoman Sharī'a Court Records as a Source for Middle Eastern Social History: A Reappraisal », *Islamic Law and Society*, 5/1 (1998), pp. 35-56, notamment pp. 39-45, « Quantifying Court Records ».

25 C. Establet et J.-P. Pascual, *Familles et fortunes à Damas. 450 foyers damascains en 1700* (Damas 1994), chap. I, « Les sources. Les inventaires après décès : des histoires d'argent et de familles », pp. 25-41.

26 On peut estimer à environ 10 000 le nombre de *'askar* de sexe masculin au Caire autour de 1600. En 1004/1595-1596, 9691 militaires reçoivent une solde du Trésor d'Égypte : S. J. Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt 1517-1798* (Princeton, N.J. 1962), pp. 210-214 tableau XLVII. En février 1603, Giovanni da Mosto, consul vénitien à Alexandrie de 1599 à 1602, estime les fantassins (Janissaires et *azeb*) à 2 800, les autres soldats à 7 300 : Pedani, « Reports », p. 111. En supposant (de manière arbitraire) un taux de mortalité de 40 %, on aboutirait à 400 décès par an. QS 29, qui s'étend sur 469 jours entre août 1610 et novembre 1611, compte 49 inventaires de succession dont quatre femmes : 35 inventaires masculins sur une année, soit moins du dixième du total des décès supposés.

27 Sur le *huluw* au Caire, N. Hanna, *Habiter au Caire. La maison moyenne et ses habitants aux XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Le Caire 1991), pp. 31-35.

une forme ou une autre d'exploitation agricole. Aucune de ces quatre catégories n'apparaît seule. Au total, 18 inventaires (dont 17 ont un actif total chiffré) incluent des biens agricoles ou ruraux <sup>28</sup>. C'est un peu plus que les quinze mentionnant des immeubles urbains. Cinq inventaires seulement comprennent à la fois les uns et les autres : l'agriculture apparaît de ce fait comme une spécialisation, qui intéresse une fraction importante de la classe des 'askar. Elle est la forme d'investissement économique la plus fréquemment pratiquée par ceux-ci, loin devant les activités artisanales ou commerciales (dans la mesure où les inventaires permettent de les saisir) ou le crédit, dans lequel peu d'individus paraissent se spécialiser. Cette préférence agricole distingue nettement les 'askar des gens du commun, chez lesquels, comme il faut s'y attendre, les biens artisanaux ou marchands sont banals, et les investissements agricoles à la campagne, plutôt exceptionnels <sup>29</sup>. Halil İnalçık avait fait une observation similaire en comparant la composition des successions qu'il avait relevées à Bursa dans les années 1460 et 1480, avec celles d'Edirne étudiées par Ö. L. Barkan pour la période 1545-1659 : les gens du commun à Bursa, grande ville soyeuse, s'enrichissaient par le négoce et l'industrie, tandis qu'à Edirne, les possesseurs de fermes agricoles, de bétail, grains et moulins appartenaient d'ordinaire à la « classe gouvernementale » (timariotes, fonctionnaires, oulémas) <sup>30</sup>.

**Tableau 1 :** Total et moyenne des actifs dans les inventaires de deux registres de la *qisma* 'askariyya, QS 25 (1603-1605) et QS 38 (1625-1626).

	QS 25	QS 38
Nombre d'inventaires dont l'actif est chiffré (N 1)	40	27
Total des actifs (en paras)	1 7773 533	2 083 117
Moyenne des actifs par inventaire	44 338	77 152
Nombre d'inventaires contenant des biens agricoles ou ruraux (N 2)	7	10
Total des actifs de N 2	986 358	1 462 914
Moyenne des actifs de N 2	140 908	146 291

28 La proportion est très proche de celle calculée par Establet et Pascual, *La gent d'État*, p. 143 : sur 54 inventaires de 'askar à Damas en 1680-1682, 17 comprennent des revenus agricoles, et 14 des immeubles urbains : *ibid.*, pp. 143 et 121. À Edirne, entre 1545 et 1659, sur 175 inventaires étudiés par Barkan, « Edirne », tableau n° 3 pp. 460-471 et commentaire pp. 458-459, 134 incluent des biens agricoles, contre 63 des biens artisanaux et commerciaux. Cette proportion beaucoup plus élevée des inventaires avec biens agricoles dans l'ensemble des successions s'explique en partie par la fréquence de propriétés foncières (*çiflik*) dans les fortunes de ces asker.

29 Hanna, *Artisan Entrepreneurs*, pp. 74-76, analyse plusieurs exemples d'investissements d'artisans dans des domaines variés de la production rurale : un vendeur de volaille dans le traitement du lin, un vendeur d'huile dans le blanchiment du riz, un boutiquier détaillant (*mutasabbib*) et un savetier dans des ruches, etc.

30 İnalçık, « Capital Formation », pp. 108-109, 124-130.



Parmi les *'askar* du Caire, les plus grandes fortunes disposent toutes de biens ruraux, et ceux-ci sont concentrés dans les successions moyennes ou élevées. Aucune femme n'a de biens agricoles ou ruraux : l'observation est confirmée par l'ensemble de la documentation exploitée ici. Le tableau 1 met en évidence une tendance significative. Les deux plus grosses successions de QS 25, représentant à elles seules 49 % du total des actifs de ce registre (572 645 et 294 454 paras), et les trois premières fortunes de QS 38 (52 % du total des actifs) incluent des biens agricoles ou ruraux. Les plus petites successions, inférieures à 10 000 paras (douze cas en QS 25, cinq en QS 38) en sont toutes dépourvues. Comme celles-ci sont vraisemblablement sous-représentées dans les inventaires de succession, nous en déduisons que la proportion réelle des *'askar* détenant des biens ruraux était probablement inférieure à celle de l'échantillon (où elle est de 18 sur 60). Quant à la composition sociologique des détenteurs de biens à la campagne, elle ne se distingue pas de celle plus générale des *'askar* aisés ou très riches. On y relève indifféremment des *sancakbegi*, des officiers, des fonctionnaires, oulémas, négociants. Parmi les militaires dominant les régiments les plus prestigieux : *müteferrika*, *çavuş*, émirs circassiens <sup>31</sup> ; mais aussi, moins attendu, un nombre significatif d'*azeb* et, à la fin de la période, de *gönüllü* [32, 33, 35]. Le seul fait qui peut prédisposer à posséder des biens ruraux semble être d'avoir, sans surprise, entretenu des liens de carrière ou autres avec la province. C'est le cas des cinq détenteurs de biens ruraux parmi les 21 inventaires contenus dans QS 20 (mars 1597-février 1599) : on y trouve un *müteferrika* gouverneur (*kāşif*) de la Minūfiyya, un autre *müteferrika* décédé à Darāğīn, village de la même province, un *azeb* décédé à al-Manşūra, chef-lieu de la Daqahliyya, un autre possédant des biens à Bilbays (al-Şarqiyya) <sup>32</sup>.

Il est impossible de reconstituer la biographie de ces individus, de sorte que les raisons personnelles de leur intérêt pour les choses rurales nous restent, en l'absence de claire indication de carrière, inconnues. Cependant une tendance se dégage. Indépendamment des sources de revenus tirées de leur fonction militaire ou civile, l'agriculture était considérée par les *'askar* comme le principal moyen de s'enrichir, ou le meilleur investissement – surclassant l'artisanat, le négoce, la propriété d'immeubles en villes, et (sauf exceptions remarquables) l'exercice du crédit. Seule une fraction cependant s'adonnait à l'agriculture, à l'exclusion des moins aisés : ce qui suggère que se lancer dans l'agriculture exigeait une importante mise de fonds. Pour valider cette hypothèse, nous devons étudier de manière plus approfondie la composition des biens agricoles et ruraux qui apparaissent dans nos inventaires.

### *Les biens ruraux : une composition cohérente*

Comme nous l'avons déjà observé, un bien de nature agricole ou rurale n'apparaît jamais seul dans les inventaires. En particulier, la possession de grains (*ğilāl*) est toujours ac-

31 Les Beys (*sancakbegi*) ne pouvaient être nommés que parmi les *müteferrika* et les *çavuş*. L'ascension d'un militaire méritant s'effectuait par promotion d'un régiment à l'autre.

32 QS 20, p. 87, 92, 343 n° 812, 152 n° 407.



compagnée de celle de bétail (*mawāṣī*), et cette dernière est toujours liée, soit à des instruments agricoles, soit à la mention d'une *zirā'a* ou d'une exploitation agricole. Dans l'échantillon déjà spécifié de 18 possesseurs de biens ruraux dans les deux registres QS 25 et QS 38, douze inventaires détaillent à la fois des grains, du bétail et des instruments. On ne s'amuse pas à acquérir seulement une bufflesse, ou une araire, ni même une *sāqiya* beaucoup plus coûteuse.

Pour illustrer ce constat, nous prendrons deux exemples tirés d'un même registre, QS 29 : une fortune modeste, puis une grande fortune. En avril 1611 est dressé l'inventaire de Maḥmūd, fils du cheikh 'Alī al-Sanhūrī, muezzin [27]. L'actif total, modeste (7 690 paras), se décompose en 24 items, parmi lesquels une petite ânesse (200 paras), 2 bœufs (*aṭwār*) (800), ½ vache et ½ bufflesse avec le rejeton de chacune d'elles (400), une araire complètement équipée *mihrāt kāmīl al-'udda* (50). En outre, l'inventaire enregistre une *zirā'a* (culture) au village de Tilwāna, dans la Minūfiyya, consistant en six feddans cultivés en blé, fèves et trèfle (*barsīm*) : chaque feddan est évalué à 250 paras, total 1 500 paras. L'ensemble de ces biens agricoles vaut 2 950 paras, soit 39 % d'un actif qui par ailleurs ne comporte pas de bien immobilier ; notons la présence d'un unique livre, un coran (150 paras). La cohérence de l'exploitation est remarquable : une araire, une paire de bœufs d'attelage, six feddans (3,6 ha, équivalant à 8,5 feddans d'aujourd'hui)<sup>33</sup> cultivés en cultures d'hiver : céréale pour la consommation humaine (blé), animale (fèves), fourrage (trèfle, et paille de blé et de fèves). En outre, la moitié de deux bêtes laitières, seul bien ici manifestement spéculatif. Du fait de la date de l'inventaire – un 11 avril, alors que les récoltes sont en cours – l'inventaire ne mentionne pas de grains. Il ignore aussi des biens indispensables, soit que le défunt les ait seulement loués, soit qu'ils aient été estimés de trop peu de valeur pour être intégrés dans l'évaluation : les réserves de fourrage pour le bétail, le reste de l'outillage – l'absence de traîneau à disque (*nawrağ*) est, comme nous allons le voir, significative –, les enclos pour les bêtes. Ne nous y méprenons pas, l'inventaire ne décrit pas ce qui serait une exploitation auto-suffisante : le maître est muezzin et cairote, cette *zirā'a* doit être effectivement cultivée par un exploitant, certainement contractuel, probablement métayer<sup>34</sup>, peut-être par plusieurs ; les biens inventoriés représentent la part apportée par Maḥmūd b. 'Alī dans le contrat ; le produit attendu

33 Le feddan équivalait à un carré de vingt *qaṣaba-s ḥākimiyya* de côté ; la *qaṣaba*, mesure officielle, a été mesurée diversement à l'époque de l'Expédition d'Égypte : 3,85 ou 3,6575 m pour M. P. S. Girard, « Mémoire sur l'agriculture, l'industrie et le commerce de l'Égypte », *Description de l'Égypte. État moderne*, t. XVII (Paris 1824) [pp. 1-436], pp. 29-30 ; 3,99 m pour J. M. Le Père, « Mémoire sur la communication de la mer des Indes à la Méditerranée, par la mer Rouge et l'Isthme de Soueys », *ibid.*, t. XI (1822) [pp. 37-370], p. 253 note 1, avec référence à l'*Annuaire du Kaire pour l'an IX* (1801), p. 48. Ces deux estimations donnent un feddan d'environ 0,6 ha.

34 Chaque feddan est estimé 250 paras. Les autres inventaires du registre établissent le prix de l'*ardabb* de blé à 80-120 paras, les fèves à 60-80 paras. Les 250 paras par feddan correspondent donc à 2 à 4 *ardabb* par feddan, ce qui est peu : soit la récolte se présente mal, soit la part du défunt est seule estimée ici. La seconde explication est la plus probable. J'en déduis que l'exploitant effectif est contractuel et non pas salarié.

des six feddans correspond à la part qui échoit au maître de l'attelage. Il serait naïf d'établir un rapport direct entre le capital (araire + attelage = 850 paras) et le retour attendu (1500 paras) : dans le premier cas nous avons la valeur estimée de biens usagés, non leur prix d'achat jeunes (les bœufs) ou neufs ; dans le second, une estimation du produit brut avant que soient défalqués divers frais, que nous pouvons seulement imaginer : location du *nawrağ*, salaire des moissonneurs, transport de la récolte, réserve des semences de l'année suivante, etc.

Une telle fortune était-elle accessible à un paysan ordinaire ? Si nous ignorons quels étaient ses revenus, nous pouvons en revanche nous faire une idée approchée de ses besoins. Supposons un homme dans la force de l'âge, avec une famille, lui compris, de trois unités de consommation (U.C.) ; une ration annuelle généreusement fixée à 600 g de blé par jour et U.C., soit 657 kg par an : l'*ardabb* de blé pesant alors environ 130 kg<sup>35</sup>, le paysan-étalon devait trouver cinq *ardabb* ; s'il les avait achetés sur le marché, ils lui auraient coûté 200 paras en bonne année. Sans chercher à aller au-delà d'un ordre de grandeur, nous pouvons tabler qu'un homme adulte vivait au-dessus du besoin immédiat lorsqu'il gagnait plus d'un à deux paras par jour<sup>36</sup>. À cette aune, l'équipement d'exploitation que possédait le muezzin Maḥmūd al-Sanhūrī [27] était inaccessible à une large part de la population rurale. Était-il davantage à la portée d'un militaire quelconque ? En 1004/1595-1596, la moyenne journalière de la solde de l'ensemble des militaires d'Égypte, toutes catégories confondues, était de 7 paras ; de 14,5 paras et 10 paras pour les deux régiments les mieux dotés, *müteferrika* et *çavuş*<sup>37</sup>. Ces soldes permettaient de vivre correctement au Caire – au début du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, une « maison moyenne », selon la typologie de Nelly Hanna, valait à partir de 11 000 paras<sup>38</sup>, – et d'acquérir des *status symbols* ; mais se lancer dans les affaires, autrement dit risquer d'un coup plusieurs milliers de paras, requerrait soit une mise de fonds en propre ou en prêt, soit modestie et circonspection initiales.

Plaçons-nous à présent à l'autre extrémité de l'éventail des fortunes rurales. En janvier 1611 est dressé l'inventaire de biens d'un *çavuş* appelé sobrement *al-amīr* Ayyūb

35 M. Tuchscherer, « Approvisionnement des villes saintes d'Arabie en blé d'Égypte d'après des documents ottomans des années 1670 », *Anatolia Moderna*, 5 (1994) [pp. 79-99], p. 80 note 6, a montré que la valeur de l'*ardabb* n'a pas varié sensiblement durant l'époque ottomane. Plusieurs sources des XVI<sup>e</sup> et XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles donnent l'équivalence 1 *ardabb* = 2 *staia* de Venise (soit 166,6 l), ou 1 *ardabb* = 260 à 300 livres de France (soit 127 à 147 kg) : M. Aymard, *Venise, Raguse et le commerce du blé pendant la seconde moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris 1966), p. 172 ; *Voyages en Égypte des années 1634, 1635 et 1636* (Le Caire 1974), pp. 98 et 119 ; J. Coppin, *Voyages en Égypte, 1638-1639, 1643-1646* (Le Caire 1971), p. 36.

36 Cette estimation correspond aux quelques salaires d'artisans que H. Ġābir, *Al-bašar wa-l-ḥağar. Al-Qāhira fī al-qarn al-sādis 'ašar* [L'homme et la pierre. Le Caire au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle] (Le Caire 1431/2010), pp. 176-177, et 226, tableau en Annexe 10, a relevés dans les registres des tribunaux du Caire au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle.

37 Calculs effectués d'après Shaw, *Organization and Development*, pp. 210-214 tableau XLVII.

38 Hanna, *Habiter au Caire*, p. 54a : 6 000 paras constants, au taux de 180 environ, cf. *ibid.*, p. 8 tableau 1.

[24]. Il est très riche au moment de son décès : l'actif total se monte à 282 592 paras, dont 32 800 répartis en cinq grosses créances (11,6 %). Il laisse du bétail, des grains, de l'outillage ; l'inventaire n'en précise malheureusement pas la localisation. Le bétail comprend 151 bœufs (45 300 paras), 19 vaches (3 800), 31 buffles (12 400), 260 moutons et 40 autres du croît de l'année (11 000), 24 chameaux (14 400), 5 ânes (500), 7 chevaux (5 500), une mule (600), total 93 500 paras. Nous ne disposons pour les grains que de l'évaluation totale (99 992 paras) et de la ventilation en *ardabb* : 435 7/24 de blé, 198 1/4 d'orge, 554 1/3 1/4 de fèves, 170 1/4 de pois chiches, 48 de lentilles, 15 1/3 de pois des champs (*bāsillā*, *auj. bisilla*), 231 1/12 de grains de trèfle, 13 de grains de sorgho (*ḥabb durā*) ; au total, 1 666 13/24 *ardabb*. S'y ajoutent 240 *qawārīb* de coton (12 000 paras). Enfin, les outils comprennent le total faramineux de 110 araires (5 500 paras), 17 *nawrağ* (10 200), 13 *sāqiya* complètes (6 500), auxquels s'ajoutent un bateau *markab* équipé (8 000) et 10/24 d'un bateau de pêche (200), total 30 400. L'ensemble des biens ruraux représente 79 % de l'actif ; encore les créances sont-elles exclusivement en prêts de bétail et de récoltes. Nous avons donc ici le tableau d'une très grande fortune presque entièrement rurale. Elle démontre à elle seule que l'agriculture était considérée comme un investissement rentable à quelque échelle que ce fût ; et l'échelle ici se mesure en centaines de feddans : les cent dix araires permettaient probablement de labourer plus de la moitié de la superficie moyenne d'un village du Delta (autour de 700 ha) <sup>39</sup>.

L'expression de « fortune rurale » n'est pas, dans ce contexte, un artifice d'historien : elle correspond à la perception qu'en avaient les contemporains, et l'ensemble des biens investis par un individu dans la campagne faisait à l'occasion l'objet d'une transaction en bloc. En janvier 1626, *al-amīr* Yūsuf b. 'Abd Allāh, *çavuş* du Divan du Caire, affranchi de feu Keyvan, émir circassien, achète aux héritiers de son patron (à savoir la veuve et le fils de ce dernier), pour la somme de 85 285 paras, un ensemble énuméré dans l'ordre suivant : 7 chevaux, 36 bœufs, 60 moutons, 28 feddans de canne à sucre au village d'al-Farastaq (Ġarbiyya), 3 *sāqiya* en usage, 2 *lawwāṭa* complètes, 3 *nawrağ* complets, une bufflesse et son petit, 15 araires complètes, 1 *qaṣṣābiyya*, 2 mancherons *ğabānayn* <sup>40</sup>, 8 *madāris ḥabb* (petits moulins à bras ? vans ?), d'autres petits outils, ainsi que 400 *ardabb* de grains : 100 de blé, 140 de fèves, 70 d'orge, 40 de lentilles, 30 de pois des champs, 20 de graines de trèfle ; et le 1/3 d'un pressoir (*ma'şara*) à al-Farastaq. Le défunt avait par testament (*waṣiyya*) prévu de vendre ses biens pour assurer ses frais de sépulture, rembourser ses dettes et faire acheter avec le tiers disponible un bien immeuble (*'aqār*) qu'il érigeait en *waqf* charitable <sup>41</sup>.

Les inventaires du *çavuş* Ayyūb et de l'émir Keyvan présentent bien des traits caractéristiques des grandes fortunes rurales qu'éclairent les registres de la *qisma* 'askariyya. Il s'agit d'être équipé de manière complète, et non pas de se spécialiser à la manière des

39 La superficie moyenne des villages de basse Égypte, d'après les données du cadastre de 1315, a été calculée par O. Toussoun, *La géographie de l'Égypte à l'époque arabe*, II (Le Caire 1936).

40 *Ġabāna* ou *ğabīna*, pl. *ğabāyin*, mancheron d'aire, voir P. Behnstedt et M. Woidich, *Die ägyptisch-arabischen Dialekte* (Wiesbaden 1994), t. 4, p. 56.

41 QS 38, p. 316, 14 *rabī'* II 1035 / 13 janvier 1626.

négociants. Le cœur du cheptel <sup>42</sup> est formé de trois éléments : les araires, les bœufs de labour (*tawr*, pl. *aṭwār*), les animaux de bât : mules, ânes ou chameaux. Sur les 37 inventaires de notre échantillon, 34 ont des bovins, 32 au moins un animal de bât, et 19 des araires (voir Tableau 6 en Annexe). Il est impossible de savoir si les buffles, présents dans 25 inventaires, étaient utilisés seulement pour le lait ou aussi pour les labours et les manèges de *sāqiya*, comme l'attestent les sources, du moins en basse Égypte <sup>43</sup>. On s'attendrait à ce que, comme les bovins, les araires, instrument aratoire indispensable, soient présentes dans la plupart des successions ; or elles sont absentes de la moitié des inventaires. Comment l'expliquer ? Un petit nombre de successions, bien qu'elles mentionnent l'existence d'une exploitation agricole, n'y ont inventorié que du gros bétail <sup>44</sup>, peut-être seul apport du défunt dans l'exploitation. Par ailleurs, les inventaires sans araire sont pour la plupart concentrés dans les premières années étudiées ici. Parmi les douze inventaires de l'échantillon antérieurs à 1603, deux mentionnent des araires, et cinq un ou plusieurs *nawrağ* : sans doute l'exclusion des instruments agricoles des inventaires était-elle alors de règle. À l'inverse, après 1603, les omissions dans les inventaires bien pourvus (trois cas sur vingt) s'expliquent d'autant moins que ces successions disposent de quantité de bœufs et même, dans deux cas, de plusieurs *nawrağ* [23, 32]. À ces curieuses exceptions près, le nombre des bœufs est ordinairement de deux à quatre fois celui des araires, ce qui suggère que leurs maîtres sont attentifs à posséder des attelages complets ; les chameaux (présents dans 29 successions sur 37) sont deux à quatre fois moins nombreux que les araires. Les *nawrağ*, traîneaux à disques attelés de deux bœufs, employés au dépiquage de la récolte sur l'aire à battre <sup>45</sup>, signalent des fortunes rurales plus étendues (18 inventaires sur 37) et sont nettement moins nombreux que les araires : si l'on ne retient que les successions incluant les uns et les autres, on compte 333 araires pour 58,5 *nawrağ*, à peu près une proportion de cinq ou six pour un, qui ne se retrouve cependant que dans quatre cas, dont il est vrai les deux plus grosses fortunes de l'échantillon (17 *nawrağ* et 110 araires en [24] ; 16 *nawrağ* et 74 araires en [30]). La proportion est la même chez l'émir Keyvan, mentionné ci-dessus : 3 *nawrağ* et 15 araires.

Ces chiffres sont cohérents avec ce que l'on sait de la productivité de l'instrument. En raison de son caractère pénible, le *nawrağ* exigeait à l'époque de l'Expédition d'Égypte non pas une, mais deux paires de bœufs, que l'on relayait à chaque heure ; on pouvait battre la récolte d'un feddan (alors 0,6 ha) en un jour (lentilles, petits pois), deux jours (fèves), un jour et une nuit (riz, Delta), deux jours à deux jours et demi (blé, région

42 Le terme « cheptel » désigne en français l'ensemble de l'équipement d'une exploitation agricole, incluant les animaux (cheptel vif) et l'outillage (cheptel mort).

43 Girard, « Mémoire », pp. 125 et 52.

44 Trois cas : un *çavuş* [13], un juge [16] et un cheikh [20].

45 Description du *nawrağ* et de son usage, Girard, « Mémoire », pp. 27-28 et 50 ; *Voyages en Égypte des années 1634, 1635 et 1636* (Le Caire 1974), p. 214 [voyage de Neitzschitz en 1636] ; Le Mascrier, *Description de l'Égypte, comprenant plusieurs remarques curieuses...* (Paris 1740), t. 2, p. 95 [séjour en 1692-1708]. L'instrument est représenté dans la planche VIII des *Arts et métiers* de la *Description de l'Égypte, Planches, État moderne*.

d'Asyūt), trois jours (blé, Delta), mais cinq jours pour un feddan de sorgho <sup>46</sup>. Comme la saison du dépiquage pouvait durer environ trois mois à partir d'avril, on estimait vers 1900 qu'un *nawrağ* permettait de battre la récolte de 25 feddans (de 0,42 ha) <sup>47</sup>, superficie équivalant à environ 17 feddans du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. L'araire, de son côté, permettait de labourer un feddan (de 0,6 ha) en deux jours à deux jours et demi <sup>48</sup>. Comme les labours des cultures d'hiver pouvaient durer trois mois après la décrue <sup>49</sup>, un calcul naïf déduirait qu'un attelage complet avait la capacité de labourer 60 feddans de 0,6 ha. Il aurait donc dû y avoir à peu près  $60 : 17 = 3,5$  fois *plus* de *nawrağ* que d'aires dans les inventaires, alors qu'il s'en trouvait cinq fois *moins*. Comment expliquer cette contradiction ? En premier lieu, le travail de labour de se limitait pas au passage de la charrue : il était souvent précédé d'un ou plusieurs nivellements, avec des instruments parfois dévoreurs d'énergie. Au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, la *zaḥḥāfa* permettait de labourer trois feddans (de 0,42 ha) par jour, tandis que la *lawwāṭa* requérait quatre à cinq jours par feddan <sup>50</sup>. Par ailleurs, comme dans toutes les céréalicultures, les moissons constituaient pour les capacités de travail un redoutable goulet d'étranglement : il fallait moissonner vite après la maturité, et l'on préférait employer plusieurs hommes plutôt que laisser le précieux grain se gâter ou être attaqué par insectes et oiseaux. La moisson d'un feddan (0,6 ha) de blé nécessitait huit à dix journées de travail dans le Delta, quatre dans le Ša'īd pour le blé et l'orge, mais dix pour le sorgho, neuf à dix pour les lentilles <sup>51</sup>. Un cultivateur trop pauvre même pour embaucher un moissonneur salarié ne pouvait donc espérer exploiter plus de quelques feddans (de 0,6 ha). Encore n'avait-il pas les moyens de se payer une seconde paire de bœufs et un *nawrağ*. La possession d'un traîneau à disques était de ce fait toujours rentable, car il pouvait être loué à de petits cultivateurs : c'était à plus de cinq charrues que correspondait un *nawrağ*.

Tandis que la trilogie bœufs/animaux de bât/instruments aratoires caractérise la plus grande partie de nos fortunes rurales, les autres biens ruraux paraissent optionnels (voir Tableau 6 en Annexe). Les raisons en sont diverses. La possession de roues hydrauliques (*sāqiya*) (7 inventaires) dépendait d'abord de la géographie. Celle des instruments secondaires, telle la *ğarrāfa*, pl. *ğarārīf* (4 inventaires), a peut-être été négligée pour leur faible valeur. Si les chevaux sont présents dans la plupart des inventaires (32 sur 37), on

46 Girard, « Mémoire », pp. 57 (sorgho), 66 (riz, Delta), 52 (blé, Delta et Ša'īd), 50-51 (region d'Asyūt), 74 (lentilles), 77 (fèves), 75 (petits pois).

47 A. Rayer, *Voyage agricole dans la vallée du Nil* (Paris s. d. [1902?]), p. 266.

48 Girard, « Mémoire », pp. 35, 398-399 ; même observation par Rayer, *Voyage*, 264 (25 ares par jour).

49 Estimation d'agronomes autour de 1900, mais faite sur des domaines en irrigation pérenne. Dans les faits, à l'époque ottomane l'étendue des superficies cultivées dépendait de la date, la hauteur et la durée de la submersion annuelle ; ainsi que de la force de travail humaine et animale disponible.

50 V. Mosséri et Ch. Audebeau Bey, « Le nivelage des terres en Égypte », *Bulletin de l'Institut égyptien*, 5<sup>e</sup> Série, t. XII (1918) [pp. 61-104], pp. 68, 70.

51 Girard, « Mémoire », pp. 52 (Delta), 50 (blé, Ša'īd), 71 (orge, Ša'īd), 57 (sorgho, Ša'īd), 74 (lentilles, Ša'īd).

ne peut déterminer leur fonction : militaire, de parade, de transport, de reproduction, de trait, ou polyvalente. Plus remarquable est le cas des ovins. Présents dans 22 inventaires, ils ne sont cependant plus d'une centaine que dans dix d'entre eux, le chiffre le plus élevé étant de 838 têtes seulement ; aucune de ces fortunes n'a fait de l'élevage ovin une spécialité, ni même une priorité. On le sait : l'agriculture égyptienne n'est pas moutonnière – contrairement aux agricultures classiquement méditerranéennes<sup>52</sup> ; l'absence de bon pâturage naturel, et de chaumes (la moisson à la faucille, accroupi, n'en laissait que très peu), obligeait à nourrir moutons et chèvres de la même manière que le gros bétail c'est-à-dire durant toute l'année à partir des cultures de grand champ : pailles hachées, orge, fèves, trèfle coupé ou sur pied. Or le gros bétail avait l'avantage de fournir la force de travail, en sus de la viande, du lait et des peaux. De la même manière que les fortunes rurales privilégient les bestiaux, et que les cultures pratiquées favorisent toujours les produits alimentaires (céréales et légumineuses, dont le trèfle), les plantes industrielles n'apparaissent que comme options : soit que le défunt les ait cultivées lui-même (6 feddans de canne à sucre [30] ; cultures d'indigo et de coton [31]), soit qu'il laisse un outillage de transformation des produits qui peut être rentabilisé en traitant les récoltes d'autrui : pressoirs [4], chaudron pour l'indigo (*halla nuḥās mu'adda li-l-nīla*) [22]<sup>53</sup>. Ces incursions en dehors des cultures vivrières sont l'exception, et l'outillage correspondant semble avoir été possédé surtout par des artisans spécialisés et d'autres gens du commun<sup>54</sup>. De même, les investissements ruraux concentrés sur des cultures industrielles ou d'exportation, comme le riz, semblent avoir été plutôt un prolongement d'activités avant tout marchandes<sup>55</sup>.

On l'aura compris, les inventaires de succession éclairent d'un jour privilégié l'agriculture de leur temps et permettent de mieux comprendre la combinaison de ses divers éléments, ainsi que leur valeur économique. Nos inventaires, éparpillés sur une quarantaine d'années, abondent en indications de valeur (voir en annexe les Tableaux 7 et 8), précieuses pour l'histoire économique. Elles ne peuvent toutefois prendre sens qu'après l'examen indispensable de deux correctifs : la valeur des monnaies et l'évolution des prix.

52 Comparer avec les troupeaux ovins possédés par les *asker* d'Edirne, İnalçık, « Capital Formation », pp. 128-129, d'après Barkan, « Edirne », pp. 100, 226, 180 : 3 010 moutons et chèvres pour un administrateur de *waqf* décédé en 1548 ; 2 651 moutons pour un *bostancıbaşı* mort en 1605 ; 1 500 moutons, représentant 14 % de la succession du fils d'un Bey mort en 1608 ; etc.

53 La transformation de l'indigo est décrite par Girard, « Mémoire », pp. 55-56, qui évoque « de grands vases de terre cuite » et non des chaudrons.

54 Sur les métiers de l'alimentation au Caire, Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, I, pp. 232-233. Les presseurs d'huile et surtout les raffineurs de sucre surclassaient nettement la masse des artisans. L'organisation sociale et économique des pressoirs d'huile et raffineries de sucre au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle est décrite par Hanna, *Artisan Entrepreneurs*, pp. 63-67.

55 Ex. d'Ismā'īl Abū Ṭāqīyya, *ṣahbandar* des négociants du Caire, mort en 1624, qui investit à grande échelle dans la production de canne à sucre, sous forme d'achat (en 1603) d'une raffinerie au Caire, d'avances sur récolte, de prêts à des planteurs, de prêt de chaudières : N. Hanna, *Making Big Money in 1600. The Life and Times of Isma'il Abu Taqiyya, Egyptian Merchant* (Le Caire 1998), pp. 83-84, 86-89, 96.



### *Le contexte économique : dévaluation et hausse des prix*

On sait que les années 1580-1630 furent, dans le centre de l'Empire ottoman, une période de dévaluation et d'inflation <sup>56</sup>. En 1585 la monnaie d'argent ottomane, l'*akçe*, fut dévaluée brutalement de 44 % par rapport à la monnaie d'or de référence, le *sultani*. Les effets ne s'en firent pas sentir partout. L'Empire était composé d'une juxtaposition de zones monétaires <sup>57</sup>, parmi lesquelles l'Égypte, où la Monnaie du Caire frappait une pièce d'argent spécifique, appelée dans les textes *nişfidḍa* et dans les comptes, plus souvent *pāra* (*medin* dans les sources européennes). Michel Tuchscherer a montré qu'il n'y eut pas de dévaluation brutale en Égypte, contrairement à Istanbul : la valeur du para semble avoir dépendu du rapport entre les quantités d'or importées régulièrement du Soudan, et celles d'argent qui entraient et sortaient du pays avec les flux de son commerce extérieur. La plupart des inventaires de succession utilisent une comptabilité en paras. Le taux officiel était de 40 paras la pièce d'or en 1589 comme en 1525 <sup>58</sup> ; en 1602 il est passé à 50 paras (cf. inventaires de QS 24, Tableau 8 en annexe), et s'y stabilise ensuite. Cette dévaluation de 25 % semble s'être produite par à-coups ; durant les dernières années 1590, plusieurs sources montrent une défiance maximale vis-à-vis de l'aloï des médins en circulation <sup>59</sup>. Les monnaies d'argent européennes, déjà utilisées auparavant, envahissent dès lors les documents stipulés en monnaies réelles : contrats et successions. Elles sont désignées du terme générique de *gurš* pl. *gurūš* ou *qirš* pl. *qurūš*, piastres, et leurs diverses variétés sont soigneusement distinguées <sup>60</sup>. L'étape suivante est l'apparition d'une piastre de compte ; encore minoritaire à l'époque ici étudiée (6 des 27 inventaires de QS 38, en 1625-1626, sont libellés en piastres, dont [31]), le phénomène n'en témoigne pas moins d'un processus irréversible d'absorption de l'Égypte dans la zone monétaire atlantique. C'est en effet le réal espagnol, *riyāl*, à 30 paras, qui est choisi de préférence aux autres monnaies européennes <sup>61</sup>.

56 Ş. Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 2000), chap. 7, « The Price Revolution in the Near East Revisited », pp. 112-130, chap. 8, « Debasement and Disintegration », pp. 131-148, et Annexe II, « Prices Indices for Istanbul, 1469-1914 », pp. 235-240. L'étude fondamentale sur l'inflation autour de 1600 est Ö. L. Barkan, « The Price Revolution of the Sixteenth Century: A Turning Point in the Economic History of the Near East », trad. J. McCarthy, *IJMES*, 6 (1975), pp. 3-28.

57 Pamuk, *A Monetary History*, chap. 6, « Money and Empire », pp. 88-111, notamment pp. 95-101 sur l'Égypte.

58 M. Tuchscherer, « Quelques réflexions sur les monnaies et la circulation monétaire en Égypte et en mer Rouge au XVI<sup>e</sup> et au début du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle », *Annales islamologiques*, 33 (1999) [pp. 263-281], p. 272.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 275.

60 *Ibid.*, pp. 273-276.

61 Cf. QS 29, p. 20 n° 52, inventaire du 20 *şafar* 1019 / 14 mai 1610 : 1 *şarīfī* (monnaie d'or égyptienne) = 45 et 46 paras ; 1 écu vénitien *bunduqī* = 36 paras ; 1 réal = 30 paras ; 1 pataque (*baṭāqa*) = 29 paras ; 1 rixdale (*abū kalb*) = 27 paras. Sur la prépondérance des monnaies d'argent européennes dans les dernières décennies du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, I, pp. 20-22.



Le glissement en valeur de la monnaie de compte, le para, a-t-il affecté les prix ? On sait qu'ils étaient soumis à la fois à des variations de court terme et à des tendances de long terme, elles-mêmes liées de manière complexe à la dévaluation monétaire <sup>62</sup>. De ce point de vue le meilleur observatoire est constitué par les prix des trois grains essentiels, le blé, l'orge et les fèves. Ils peuvent être d'autant plus aisément mis en séries, que les quantités de grains étaient partout enregistrées dans une mesure de capacité unifiée, l'*ardabb* du Caire (*ardabb bi-l-kayl al-miṣrī*) ; plus rarement, en haute Égypte, en *zakība*, pl. *zakā'ib*, équivalant à près de  $\frac{3}{4}$  d'*ardabb* <sup>63</sup>. Encore devons-nous être prudents dans l'examen des chiffres que permettent de collecter les inventaires, ici 19 successions sur 37, ainsi que quelques autres successions relevées dans les mêmes registres de notre échantillon (Tableau 7 en annexe) : certaines de ces valeurs sont des estimations, repérables par leurs chiffres ronds ; les autres enregistrent les prix réels atteints lors de la vente aux enchères des grains, soit sur le marché de Būlāq où se négociaient les produits agricoles de basse Égypte <sup>64</sup>, soit en province. On tenait alors compte de l'état réel des grains, rarement éclairé par les sources. Ainsi en juin 1605, le blé de feu Qāsim Çelebi b. *al-amīr* Yūsuf, ancien *muqāṭa 'ağī al-gilāl*, est vendu en quatre lots <sup>65</sup> :

Quantité ( <i>ardabb</i> )	50	58	37	15
Prix total (paras)	3 100	3 596	2 664	1 080
Prix de l' <i>ardabb</i>	62	62	72	72

Dans l'inventaire de l'émir Ša'bān b. Aḥmad, *müteferrika*, du 18 janvier 1625 [29], l'*ardabb* d'orge est vendu 10 paras à Manšiyyat Dahšūr (al-Ğīziyya), l'*ardabb* d'orge « ancien » (*qadīm*) 8 paras à Suḥaym (al-Ğarbiyya). Contrairement à ce que l'on pourrait croire, la vente sur place n'était pas nécessairement effectuée à un prix inférieur à celui de la ville. À la fin de l'été 1610, la récolte de fèves d'Aḥmad Çelebi b. Pervane, apprenti comptable au Divan [25], est vendue en partie dans les villages, en l'occurrence Kafr al-Šayḥ Salīm et Kafr Sarabwā (?) : les 20 *ardabb* sont vendus 78,2 paras l'un ; le reste, soit 35 *ardabb*, est écoulé à Būlāq, et rapporte « après les frais » (*ba'd al-maṣrūf*) 2 359 paras, soit 67,4 paras l'*ardabb*. Les inventaires ne donnent malheureusement que des éclairages ponctuels sur les variations de prix des grains à très court terme.

Il est plus facile de mettre en évidence les tendances à long terme. Le Tableau 7 permet de distinguer facilement un niveau de base des prix des grains, caractéristique

62 Raymond, *ibid.*, chap. II, « Les prix », pp. 53-80, s'est attaché à éliminer le facteur monétaire dans les fluctuations de prix en indexant ceux-ci sur un « para constant » calculé sur la moyenne des années 1681-1688, *ibid.*, 53 et 42 n. 2. Tableau repris et complété pour les années 1600-1675 par Hanna, *Habiter au Caire*, p. 8 tableau 1.

63 Dans l'inventaire [23], 1 100 *zakība* = 810 *ardabb*.

64 Ex. de grains dont il est expressément précisé qu'ils ont été vendus à Būlāq : QS 29, p. 97 n° 201, et *ibid.*, p. 135 n° 285 [21].

65 QS 25, pp. 518-521 n° 924, inventaire du 10 *ṣafar* 1014 / 27 juin 1605. Actif total : 294 954 paras.

des bonnes années, et des niveaux nettement plus élevés. Les récoltes de 1604 et 1610 furent mauvaises, comme le montrent les chiffres de QS 25 [15, 17, 19] et de QS 29 [21 à 26] <sup>66</sup>. En revanche, le prix de base, autour de 40 paras l'*ardabb* de blé, n'a curieusement pas varié sur quarante-cinq années ; les valeurs les plus basses sont même obtenues dans les inventaires les plus récents [31, 32, 35] avec un décrochage inattendu des fèves, dont la valeur se rapproche de celle de l'orge : ces documents, échelonnés entre août 1625 et février 1626, attestent une excellente récolte au printemps 1625, qui succédait à une récolte 1624 déjà bonne. En collectant les prix du blé dans les inventaires de succession pour onze années entre 1621 et 1634, André Raymond a relevé six années proches du niveau de base, dont 1624, 1625, 1627 et 1628 : conjoncture exceptionnellement favorable <sup>67</sup>.

On aimerait connaître les prix au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle pour replacer la période 1580-1630 dans une perspective plus large. Hudā Ġābir s'est attelée récemment à cette tâche dans son travail sur Le Caire au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle <sup>68</sup>. Au moins jusqu'aux années 1550, le prix de l'*ardabb* de blé a presque toujours oscillé entre 10 et 30 paras ; en 953/1546, il est de 25,5 à 26 paras <sup>69</sup>. Relevons les valeurs collectées pour deux bonnes récoltes, 1552 et 1553, dans un registre du tribunal du Vieux-Caire <sup>70</sup>. Les moissons avaient été si abondantes, plusieurs années de suite, que le gouverneur d'Égypte autorisa, de 1550 à 1553, les Vénitiens à acheter des grains des greniers publics et même directement des particuliers <sup>71</sup>. Dans le registre du tribunal du Vieux-Caire on ne trouve pas de ventes au comptant mais, en grand nombre, des avances sur récoltes (38 contrats portant sur le blé, entre février 1552 et février 1553) et des livraisons avec paiement différé (18 contrats sur le blé, entre juillet 1552 et février 1553). À cette époque de grande stabilité monétaire, le dinar vaut 40 paras. L'*ardabb* de blé *ša'īdī*, stipulé de l'année et de la meilleure qualité, livrable à la récolte, entre avril et août, se vend dans la grande majorité des contrats entre 8 et 10 paras ; acheté à tempérament, entre 14 et 20 paras. Le prix de vente au comptant devait se situer quelque part entre ces deux fourchettes. Il était donc très inférieur à celui des années 1580-1625, même en tenant compte de la dévaluation de 25 %. Un quart de

66 Les crues de 1012/1603 et 1018/1609 furent basses, cf. N.A. Ibrāhīm, *Al-azamāt al-iğtimā'īyya fī Miṣr fī al-qarn al-sābi' 'aṣar* [Les crises sociales en Égypte au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle] (Le Caire 1418/1998), p. 311 Annexe 12, d'après Amīn Samī.

67 Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, I, graphique 5 entre pp. 68 et 69. En paras constants, les valeurs moyennes pour les années fastes sont comprises entre 36 et 74 paras l'*ardabb*. Un *riyāl* = 50 paras constants (*ibid.*, p. 42 note 2) : dans QS 39, le *riyāl* est à 30 paras ; par conséquent, 1 para de 1625-1626 = 1,66 para constant. Cette équivalence diffère de celle de Hanna, *Habiter au Caire*, p. 8 tableau 1, qui propose pour 1625 et 1626 l'indice monétaire 146 (1 para = 1,46 para constant) en se basant à la fois sur les équivalences de l'*ašrafī* et du *riyāl*.

68 Ġābir, *Al-bašar wa-l-ḥağar*, pp. 131-138 sur l'évolution des prix, notamment pp. 132-134 sur les listes mensuelles de prix fixés par le *muḥtasib* (qui excluent le blé et le riz) ; pp. 227-229, tableaux en annexe 11 *alif à dāl*.

69 *Ibid.*, p. 134.

70 Reg. Miṣr al-qadīma 89.

71 Aymard, *Venise*, p. 130, d'après la relation de Daniele Barbarigo, lue devant le Sénat de Venise le 17 août 1554, publiée par Pedani, « Reports », p. 76.

siècle plus tard, trois inventaires de la *qisma* 'askariyya datés de 1579 mettent l'*ardabb* de blé et de fèves à un peu plus de 40 paras en mai, puis en dessous de 30 paras au début septembre, détente des prix due sans doute à une crue de bon augure (voir Tableau 7 en Annexe). Mais l'année suivante, en septembre 1580, 713 *ardabb* 16/24 de blé trouvés dans le moulin (*tāhūn*) du défunt, lui-même meunier (*al-mudawlib fī al-ṭawāhīn*), sont vendus 2 dinars l'*ardabb*, soit 80 à 82 paras <sup>72</sup>. En 993/1585, relève Hudā Ġābir, l'*ardabb* de blé *ša'īdī* se vend à Būlāq de 43 à 50 paras ; pourtant aucune source ne signale de crise cette année-là <sup>73</sup>. Le blé est ainsi passé, avant cette date, avant donc le glissement en valeur de la monnaie, à ce prix plancher de 40 paras que nous retrouvons durant la période 1590-1630.

Quand et comment ce passage a-t-il eu lieu ? Les prix des différentes catégories de viande (de bœuf, mouton, buffle et chèvre), fixés et édictés par le *muḥtasib* du Caire <sup>74</sup>, et relevés par Hudā Ġābir, montrent un glissement lent mais marqué entre 1550 et 1590 : pour le même prix on pouvait acheter 2,5 *raṭl* de viande de mouton entre 1534 et 1551, 2 à 2,5 en 1551 et 1557, 1,25 *raṭl* en 1576, 1 *raṭl* à partir de 1588. Compte tenu de la part prépondérante des céréales (paille et grains) et des légumineuses dans l'alimentation du bétail, nous pouvons penser que le prix de la viande de boucherie suivait de près celui des grains, et que la chronologie des uns et des autres était à peu près identique. L'Égypte connut bien une « révolution des prix » dans la seconde moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, qui fit à peu près doubler en monnaie constante le prix du blé. À moyen terme, sa chronologie est identique à celle relevée par Ömer Lütü Barkan et Şevket Pamuk à Istanbul, Bursa et Edirne : en prix courants, la hausse est très marquée des années 1550 aux années 1590 ; en prix constants (tenant compte de la dévaluation de 1585 et de l'instabilité monétaire des décennies suivantes), la hausse tendancielle est enrayée autour de 1600, mais les valeurs restent erratiques, et souvent très élevées, durant toute la première moitié du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle <sup>75</sup>. La stabilité à long terme du niveau de base des denrées agricoles, combinée à de fortes hausses conjoncturelles, caractérisent aussi bien Istanbul que Le Caire dans les années 1590-1630.

72 QA 8, p. 74 n° 133, 15 ša'bān 988 / 25 septembre 1580. Actif total : 2 113,5 dinars (soit 84 540 paras), dont 33,8 % en blé ; le moulin lui-même était loué à un *waqf*.

73 Ġābir, *Al-bašar wa-l-ḥağar*, pp. 134, 229 et tableau 12, d'après le reg. Būlāq 14. Les valeurs des autres grains (fèves, lentilles, pois des champs) suivent celles du blé.

74 Sur la tarification des denrées alimentaires par le *muḥtasib*, Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, II, pp. 592-593.

75 Pamuk, *A Monetary History*, chap. 7, « The Price Revolution in the Near East Revisited », notamment pp. 119-125, et graph. 7.1 et 7.2, 121 et 123 ; complète Barkan, « The Price Revolution ». L'hypothèse exprimée par Pamuk, *ibid.*, p. 125, se trouve vérifiée : « We can also hypothesize that Egypt where the local silver currency was not subjected to the debasements of the akçe, experienced more limited increases in nominal prices but the rise in prices expressed in grams of silver must have been comparable to those in Istanbul and the Marmara basin. The well-developed maritime transportation and commerce networks around the eastern Mediterranean and across the Mediterranean must have ensured the convergence of these price trends. »

### *Valeur des biens ruraux*

Dans notre échantillon, la valeur des biens autres que les grains (Tableau 8) est elle aussi stable sur le long terme. À court terme, les prix du gros bétail, dont la nourriture consiste en grande partie en grains et en paille, paraissent sensibles à la conjoncture : le prix d'un bœuf en 1610-1611, mauvaise année, oscille entre 291 et 500 paras, contre 150 à 305 paras en 1625-1626, bonnes années. Il en va de même du mouton (40 à 50 paras, contre 10 à 58 paras) comme de l'instrument agricole le plus coûteux, le traîneau à disque ou *nawrağ* (416 à 1000 paras, contre 240 à 600). Bonnes et mauvaises récoltes semblent donc avoir eu un effet d'entraînement sur l'ensemble des prix agricoles. Mais ceux-ci sont le plus souvent masqués par de grandes différences de qualité. Elles sont particulièrement visibles chez les chevaux, soigneusement distingués (étalon *huşān*, jument *faras*, poulain *muh*r) et décrits par leur robe. Les chevaux, comme les mulets, les chameaux et chameelles (*nāqa*, pl. *niyāq*), sont d'ordinaire estimés en unités séparées ; non les bovidés : on se contente, à propos des bœufs, de mentionner qu'ils sont « de couleurs variées » (*aṭwār min muḥṭalif al-alwān*). Parfois les petits (veaux, bufflons, poulains) sont comptés comme une unité distincte, parfois réunis avec leur mère, par ex. *ğāmūsa wa-taba'uhā*, *wa-'iğluhā* ; ce qui rend imprécis le calcul de la valeur unitaire des vaches et des buffles. En tenant compte des correctifs ci-dessus, l'ensemble est cohérent et permet de comparer et comprendre le poids respectif des différents items qui composaient une fortune rurale.

Les inventaires regroupent l'outillage sous le titre *al-aṣnāf*, ou parfois *al-aḥṣāb* « les bois ». Décrivant l'artisanat du Caire au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, André Raymond avait souligné la simplicité de l'outillage, faiblement évalué dans les successions, à l'exception des presses à huiles, des moulins à grains ou des chaudières à sucre <sup>76</sup>. Il y voyait à la fois le signe et un des facteurs de la domination écrasante du négoce sur l'industrie dans une économie peu mécanisée. De même, dans des campagnes « méditerranéennes », d'agriculture pluviale, l'outillage semble représenter peu de chose. Dans les comptes des successions de la *qisma 'askariyya* de Damas entre 1680 et 1691, étudiés par Colette Establet et Jean-Paul Pascual, les frais d'outillage ne représentent que 1,3 % du total, contre 32,5 % pour les impôts, 27,3 % la main d'œuvre, 6,7 % les animaux et leur fourrage <sup>77</sup>. Dans les inventaires des paysans détenteurs d'une tenure (en majorité modestes) de Saideli en Anatolie centrale, en 1581-1582, les outils sont inventoriés sous un item unique, *alet-i hiraset*, avec une valeur forfaitaire unique, 100 *akçe*, soit à peu près la valeur de deux moutons <sup>78</sup>.

Il n'en va pas du tout de même dans les campagnes égyptiennes. L'outillage y représente une part significative des grandes fortunes rurales. Celles de notre échantillon sont rassemblées dans le Tableau 9 en Annexe, qui les ventile par catégorie de biens et, lorsque

<sup>76</sup> Raymond, *Artisans et commerçants*, I, pp. 220-224. Même remarque pour Damas par Establet et Pascual, *La gent d'État*, p. 107.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 216 tableau 27, et commentaire pp. 237-239 : « L'outillage est rudimentaire, si sommaire que le scribe a souvent noté dans une même saisie des objets destinés à des travaux différents. »

<sup>78</sup> S. Faroqhi, « The Peasants of Saideli in the Late Sixteenth Century », *ArchOtt*, 8 (1983) [pp. 215-250], p. 239.

cela est possible, par village. S'agissant de biens agricoles la date de l'inventaire est évidemment importante. Or, à tout moment de l'année la part des récoltes *ḡilāl* est élevée. Celle des instruments peut monter jusqu'à 20 % de l'ensemble des biens agricoles (immeubles et créances non compris). Les deux exceptions du tableau, [30] et [32], s'expliquent. L'inventaire [32] n'a répertorié que les *nawrağ*. À al-Basarīn, dans la Buhayra [30], les biens, inventoriés dans une liste signée du juge de Damanhūr, ne mentionnent que quatre charrues ; à Qalyūb, chef-lieu de province, la valeur des grains est déséquilibrée par les 55 680 paras de la récolte de sésame (44,8 % du total) et celle du bétail par les 33 520 paras du troupeau de 838 moutons (27 % du total). Les investissements de l'émir circassien dans cette ville sont avant tout spéculatifs, et si nous déduisons le sésame et le troupeau ovin du total, les instruments représentent 12,8 % du reste. En bref, dans des fortunes rurales principalement consacrées aux céréales, aux légumineuses et au trèfle *barsīm*, les instruments agricoles pouvaient représenter de 7 à 20 % de la fortune estimée.

Cette proportion significative est due à la valeur élevée de certains instruments. Et c'est parce qu'ils étaient coûteux que, pour les évaluer, certains inventaires sont entrés dans un niveau de détail, qui en fait une source exceptionnelle pour la connaissance de l'outillage agricole du temps. La présence ou l'absence de métal expliquent en bonne part les différences de prix. Le *nawrağ* avec ses disques en fer était logiquement le plus cher des instruments agricoles. Sa valeur s'échelonne entre 225 paras [7] et 1 000 paras [21, 26], avec une concentration des prix relevés entre 300 et 600 paras. L'araire, quant à lui, ne requerrait de métal que pour le soc ; il pouvait être vendu en pièces détachées. L'inventaire [30] énumère 12 araires *mihrāt* à 30 paras l'une, 15 *silāḥāt*, socs en métal, à 9 paras l'un, deux seps (*bisha*, pl. *bisaḥ*) avec leur étauçon (*balanğā*), à 15 paras chacun, et un étrier de sep (*tūq ḡabān*) à 6 paras. Dans l'inventaire [25], au contraire, figurent six araires, apportées au Caire et vendues sans leur soc (*silāḥ*), à 16 2/3 paras l'une. Dans l'inventaire [22], ce sont six étauçons (*balanğāt*) et anneaux de fer (*aṭwāq ḥadīd*) qui sont vendus en bloc pour 50 paras, soit 8 1/3 paras l'un<sup>79</sup>. — La *sāqiya* ne pouvait être montée que par un spécialiste et requerrait des matériaux divers, bois, cordes, godets de terre cuite, briques de revêtement du puits<sup>80</sup>. On pouvait d'ailleurs n'en posséder qu'une partie : à Kawm Ašfīn, l'émir circassien Muṣṭafā [30] possède dix *sāqiya* de bois, mais aussi quatre roues à engrenage, en bois (*tirs*, pl. *atrās*)<sup>81</sup>, à 500 paras la *sāqiya* complète et 150 le *tirs*. Aussi les inventaires précisent-ils souvent que les instruments sont complets (*kāmil*, *mukammal*). Le petit outillage manuel apparaît beaucoup plus rarement<sup>82</sup>, soit parce qu'il

79 Sur les différents éléments de l'araire, Girard, « Mémoire », pp. 91-92. Vocabulaire vernaculaire de l'araire au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, Behnstedt et Woidich, *Die ägyptisch-arabischen Dialekte*, t. 1, p. 62, et t. 2, cartes 474-500. Le *tūq* pl. *aṭwāq* est un étrier de métal liant le sep et l'age, à l'arrière de l'araire, *ibid.*, t. 4, p. 294.

80 L. Ménassa et P. Laferrière, *La Sāqiya. Technique et vocabulaire de la roue à eau égyptienne* (Le Caire 1975).

81 *Ibid.*, pp. 32-38. La chaîne (*ṣalḥ*) de gobets (*ḡādūs*, pl. *ḡawādīs*) est attachée à la grande roue (*al-tirs al-kabīr*) par des dents en bois.

82 Même remarque de J.-P. Pascual, « The Janissaries and the Damascus Countryside at the Beginning of the Seventeenth Century According to the Archives of the City's Military Tribu-

était très bon marché, soit parce qu'il était détenu par les cultivateurs eux-mêmes. Mentionnons en [34] treize troncs de palmier (*aflāq*, pl. de *falaq*) à 5 paras l'un, instrument basique de nivellement<sup>83</sup> ; en [22], six sacs (*talālīs*, pl. de *tillīs*) d'orge, pour 50 paras.

Si l'identification des instruments énumérés jusqu'ici est aisée, il n'en va pas de même de ceux que les inventaires nomment *ġarrāfa* pl. *ġarārīf* et *qaṣṣābiyya*. D'autres documents d'archives tels que les registres des digues indiquent que la *ġarrāfa* (haute Égypte) ou *qaṣṣābiyya* (Delta) était un instrument tracté, d'usage simple, utilisé par exemple pour le curage des ouvertures dans les digues<sup>84</sup> : elle doit correspondre à la ravaie en bois bien connue à l'époque contemporaine. La *qaṣṣābiyya* du Delta se présente au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle comme une sorte de caisse à deux manches, tirée par un bœuf ou un buffle, ou par deux bêtes, ouverte sur la partie antérieure par un rebord évasé, éventuellement bardé de métal<sup>85</sup>. Avant 1914, la *qaṣṣābiyya* valait à peu près le même prix qu'une araire. Ces faits bien connus dans l'Égypte contemporaine ne permettent cependant pas de bien comprendre les termes utilisés dans nos inventaires. En effet, *qaṣṣābiyya* et *ġarrāfa* y coexistent et ne sont nullement interchangeables, au contraire. La valeur élevée de la *qaṣṣābiyya* dans trois des quatre inventaires où elle apparaît (30 paras [34], 90 paras [29] [30], et 150 paras [22]) conduit à s'interroger sur cet instrument, d'autant plus que l'inventaire [29] évalue une *qaṣṣābiyya ḥaṣab*, en bois, à 90 paras, tandis que [22] parle de *qaṣṣābiyya ḥadīd*, en fer, à 150 paras, douze fois la valeur d'une simple *ġarrāfa*, pl. *ġarārīf*. Cette dernière, mentionnée trois fois sur quatre en compagnie d'une ou plusieurs *qaṣṣābiyya*, y est de quatre à huit fois plus nombreuse. Je formulerai l'hypothèse que la *ġarrāfa* des inventaires était un instrument voisin de celui appelé aux XVI<sup>e</sup> et XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles *ġarrāfa* dans le Ṣa'īd, tandis que la *qaṣṣābiyya* était peut-être un instrument plus lourd et sophistiqué, disparu depuis. Faut-il l'identifier au *muqalqal* attesté dans les registres des digues du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, et disparu depuis<sup>86</sup> ?

Le poids du gros bétail dans les fortunes rurales doit être rapproché du coût de l'alimentation de celui-ci. En l'absence de prairies naturelles, tout le gros bétail est nourri à peu près de la même manière : trèfle *barsīm* sur pied ou coupé pendant trois mois en hiver ; fèves et orge pendant les travaux de force – labour et dépiquage pour les bovins,

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nal », dans T. Khalidi (éd.), *Land Tenure and Social Transformation in the Middle East* (Beirut 1984), [pp. 357-369], pp. 362, 368 note 40.

83 Mosséri et Audebeau Bey, « Nivelage », pp. 66 note 5, 70, et pl. II, fig. 6, entre pp. 68 et 69.

84 N. Michel, « Travaux aux digues dans la vallée du Nil aux époques papyrologique et ottomane : une comparaison », dans J.-C. Moreno-Garcia (éd.), *L'agriculture institutionnelle en Égypte ancienne : État de la question et approches interdisciplinaires* (Lille 2005), [pp. 253-276], pp. 267-268.

85 M.-A. Lancet, « Mémoire sur le système d'imposition territoriale et sur l'administration des provinces de l'Égypte, dans les dernières années du gouvernement des Mamlouks », *Description de l'Égypte. État moderne*, XI (Paris 1822) [pp. 461-517], pp. 499-500 note 8 ; J. Barois, *Les irrigations en Égypte* (Paris 1904), p. 139 ; voir aussi Rayer, *Voyage*, p. 265. La description la plus précise figure dans Mosséri et Audebeau Bey, « Nivelage », pp. 67 et 72-79, qui donnent aussi des prix, p. 72 note 1.

86 Michel, « Travaux aux digues », p. 268.



transports pour les chameaux – ; grains et paille séchée le reste de l'année. Sans surprise, nous constatons que les prix les plus élevés pouvaient être atteints par les chevaux, suivis des chameaux et des mules. Un buffle pouvait être plus ou moins cher qu'un bœuf<sup>87</sup>. La valeur relative des espèces animales les unes par rapport aux autres peut être comparée aux prix relevés par Suraiya Faroqhi dans les inventaires des paysans de Saideli en 1581-1582, et par Colette Estabiet et Jean-Paul Pascual dans ceux des *'askar* de Damas à la fin du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle (Tableau 2)<sup>88</sup> : rapportés à la valeur moyenne du mouton, ils apparaissent comparables – cependant, dans plusieurs inventaires du Caire, le bœuf peut valoir jusqu'à 10 moutons.

**Tableau 2 :** Valeur moyenne du bétail dans divers inventaires, Anatolie, Syrie, Égypte.

	Unité monétaire	Mouton	Boeuf	Vache	Buffle	Cheval	Chameau
Saideli (Faroqhi 1983)	<i>Akçe</i>	40 à 60	300	200		300 à 400	
Damas (Estabiet et Pascual 2011)	Piastres	1 1/2	10	10	5	18 à 60	40
Damas (Estabiet 2010)	Piastres	0,9 à 1,7		10	5,6 à 9		39
Le Caire, inventaires de QS 38 [en 1625]	Paras	15 à 50	150 à 300	60 à 120	150 à 500	300 à 1500	400 à 900

En revanche, rapporté au prix des grains, le tableau est tout autre. À Damas, dans les années 1680 le prix de base du blé est de 5 piastres la *gīrāra*, unité de capacité de l'ordre de 2,6 à 3,2 hl<sup>89</sup> : un bœuf, d'un prix moyen de 10 piastres, équivaut donc à 2 *gīrāra* ou 5 à 6 hl. De même, à Saideli, nous pouvons calculer que le prix d'un bœuf équivalait à 5,2

87 C'est aussi ce qui ressort des exemples donnés par A. Mikhail, « Animals and Property in Early Modern Ottoman Egypt », *JESHO*, 53/4 (2010) [pp. 621-652], pp. 627-631, quoiqu'il affirme d'abord, p. 627, que « The *jāmūsa* was by far the most expensive and valuable animal of frequent use in the Egyptian countryside ».

88 Faroqhi, « Peasants of Saideli », pp. 237-239 ; Estabiet et Pascual, *La gent d'État*, p. 240 ; à comparer avec C. Estabiet, « Live Animals Owned by Dead Damascenes : Evidence from Around 1700 », dans S. Faroqhi (éd.), *Animals and People in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul 2010) [pp. 187-201], pp. 189-191.

89 Estabiet et Pascual, *La gent d'État*, pp. 148-149. La valeur de la *gīrāra* est déduite de celle donnée pour l'*ardabb miṣrī* à l'époque mamelouke, qui tournait autour de 70 à 80 kg (ou 0,87 à 1,06 hl) ; valeur abandonnée à l'époque ottomane, voir *supra*, note 34. La *gīrāra* de Damas valait 3 *ardabb miṣrī* d'après al-Maqrīzī et al-Qalqaṣandī, soit autour de 210 à 240 kg ou 2,6 à 3,2 hl. Voir les nombreuses informations compilées par H. Sauvaire, « Matériaux pour servir à l'histoire de la numismatique et de la métrologie musulmanes », *Journal asiatique*, VIII<sup>e</sup> Série, t. VII (1886), pp. 124-177 et 394-468 ; t. VIII (1886), pp. 272-297 : voir VIII, pp. 284-286, tableau A, et VII, pp. 422, 424 ; W. Hinz, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte. Umgerechnet ins metrische system* (Leyde, Köln 1970), p. 46.



hl de blé <sup>90</sup>. Au Caire, en 1625, le prix de base du blé est de 40 paras l'*ardabb* d'environ 1,75 hl : un bœuf, de 210 ou 300 paras dans l'inventaire [30], équivaut à 5,25 à 7,25 *ardabb*, soit 9,2 à 12,7 hl de blé. Le bétail équivalait ainsi à de plus fortes quantités de grains en Égypte qu'en Syrie ou en Anatolie.

Par la masse de données quantifiées qu'ils apportent, les inventaires permettent d'établir deux traits distinctifs de l'économie rurale égyptienne : l'outillage et le gros bétail y étaient plus chers qu'ailleurs en agriculture « méditerranéenne ». Ces deux faits me paraissent dériver l'un et l'autre de la nécessité d'assurer en toute saison l'alimentation artificielle du gros bétail, et de son emploi intensif dans une foule de travaux agricoles : nivellement, labour, dépiquage, *sāqiya*, etc. <sup>91</sup>. Ces travaux requéraient à leur tour un outillage relativement coûteux, tout en assurant des rendements supérieurs à ceux obtenus en céréaliculture sèche. Nous comprenons ainsi mieux la place prééminente qu'occupaient vis-à-vis du reste de la société rurale les détenteurs de ces moyens de production. Dans le cas qui nous intéresse ici, celui des détenteurs non villageois, la substance de leurs investissements dans l'agriculture ne peut cependant être comprise que si nous élucidons l'énigme de leur rapport à la terre.

### *Les fortunes rurales et la terre*

Aucun inventaire, aucun document, ne donnent de valeur à la terre elle-même. Ce n'est pas une surprise, puisque le régime foncier excluait la propriété privée de la terre arable. Pourtant tous les inventaires parlent de la terre d'une manière ou d'une autre. Un petit nombre d'individus de notre échantillon étaient *multazim*, fermiers de l'impôt, du ou des villages où ils avaient des biens [2, 4, 31, 34]. À l'époque que nous étudions les fermes étaient attribuées pour une année fiscale (*sana ḥarāḡiyya*, à partir du 1<sup>er</sup> Tūt, début septembre) <sup>92</sup>. On sait qu'au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, à l'*iltizām*, désormais détenu à vie, était attachée une fraction de terroir appelée *ūsya*, attribuée en propre au *multazim* et dont la culture était à la charge des villageois. Le terme apparaît une fois dans notre échantillon [8] <sup>93</sup>,

90 Il faut, pour opérer le calcul, lever l'incertitude pesant sur l'équivalence de la mesure de capacité, le *müdd*, dont nous prévient Faroqhi, « Peasants of Saideli », p. 234 note 60. Un bœuf valait en moyenne 300 *akçe*, un *müdd* de blé 40 *akçe*, un *kile* de blé 20 *akçe*, *ibid.*, pp. 234, 237. Le *müdd* de Karaman (69,5 l) valait deux *kile* d'Istanbul – 36 l, d'après H. İnalçık, « Weights and Measures », dans *idem* et D. Quataert (éds), *A Social and Economic History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914* (Cambridge 1994), pp. 987-994. Il est vraisemblable que le *müdd* utilisé à Saideli était bien celui de Karaman. J'en déduis l'équivalence 1 bœuf = 5,2 hl de blé.

91 Sur l'emploi intensif de la force animale dans l'agriculture égyptienne, M. Tuchscherer, « Some Reflections on the Place of the Camel in the Economy and Society of Ottoman Egypt », dans S. Faroqhi (éd.), *Animals and People in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul 2010), [pp. 171-185], pp. 175-177.

92 Sur les fermes fiscales au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, M. Shuman, « The Beginnings of Urban *Iltizam* in Egypt », dans N. Hanna (éd.), *The State and its Servants. Administration in Egypt from the Ottoman Times to the Present* (Le Caire 1995) [pp. 17-31], notamment pp. 20-26.

93 QS 20, p. 93 [8], à propos des dépenses en grains pour les quatre *ḥawala* (pl. de *ḥawlī*) « à l'*ūsya* » ; l'inventaire mentionne trois villages de la Minūfiyya.

sans mention directe ou indirecte d'un *iltizām* : laissons ouverte l'interprétation de cette *ūsya*. Retenons que la grande majorité des fortunes que nous étudions n'étaient pas liées de manière visible à l'obtention d'une ferme fiscale. Par ailleurs, plusieurs de nos fortunes rurales ont des revenus tirés de *rizqa*, ces terres de mainmorte particulières à l'Égypte ; nous ignorons s'ils en étaient les ayants droit directs, ce qui n'est pas impossible, ou plus probablement, les preneurs. Cette dernière hypothèse est certaine lorsqu'ils doivent acquitter le *ḥarāḡ* de ces *rizqa*, par ex. Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd Allāh *müteferrika* [8], qui en détenait dans au moins trois villages.

Le terme le plus fréquemment rencontré à propos des revenus fonciers est celui de *zirā'a* : « sa *zirā'a* [du défunt] au village de ... » Parmi les dettes du défunt figure parfois le total, ou le reliquat, de l'impôt foncier (*ḥarāḡ*) dû pour sa *zirā'a*. Le statut privilégié des *'askar* ne dispensait pas du paiement de l'impôt, et le fait d'être étranger au village n'empêchait pas d'émarger comme contribuable de celui-ci, à l'instar des *fallāḥ*, les contribuables par excellence <sup>94</sup>. Au reste, la traduction de *ḥarāḡ* par « impôt » peut nous abuser, car le terme désignait tout revenu d'origine publique, qu'il soit assigné à l'État (*māl al-mīri*), à un *waqf* ou à une *rizqa iḥbāsiyya*. Le terme de *zirā'a* nous est bien connu par les fragments subsistants du cadastre d'Égypte de 1528 : il se réfère en général spécifiquement à des personnages non villageois, à qui le fisc avait consenti sans limite de temps la mise en exploitation d'une vaste étendue de terres arables, pour suppléer à l'absence ou à la défaillance des *fallāḥ* <sup>95</sup>. La documentation contractuelle disséminée dans les registres de tribunaux utilise *zirā'a* dans un sens plus large, à l'occasion de la prise à bail de terres, pour une année fiscale, le bailleur pouvant être un *waqf* représenté par son gérant (*nāzir*) <sup>96</sup>, un village représenté par l'ensemble de ses cheikhs et *fallāḥ*, ou même un groupe de *fallāḥ* seuls. Dans ces contrats la charge de l'impôt *ḥarāḡ* est parfois transférée au preneur. Les contrats, pour un an, peuvent porter sur des superficies étendues, et parfois sur une plante unique, qui est spécifiée. Ils peuvent inclure aussi du cheptel vif et mort. *Al-ḥawāḡā* 'Alī b. 'Aṣṣūr al-Ibyārī, d'après un acte de mars 1568, avait ainsi pris en *zirā'a*, en partenariat avec *al-faqīh* Muḥammad b. Sayf al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr, *ḥaṭīb* et *ṣāhid* (teneur du livre cadastral) du village de Baṭā dans la Ġarbiyya, 80 feddans cultivés en blé, fèves, orge, trèfle, lentilles et pois des champs, la moitié de neuf bœufs et la moitié d'une *sāqiya* équipée <sup>97</sup>. Ces documents recoupent et éclairent les informations disséminées dans les inventaires de succession. Notons comme une excep-

<sup>94</sup> Voir *supra*, note 3.

<sup>95</sup> N. Michel, « Devoirs fiscaux », pp. 541-544, 563, et *idem*, « Villages désertés, terres en friche et reconstruction rurale en Égypte au début de l'époque ottomane », *Annales islamologiques*, 36 (2002) [pp. 197-251], pp. 221-229.

<sup>96</sup> Au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, la grande majorité des locations de terres en *waqf* étaient contractées pour une année agricole, et le loyer payable en trois termes (*aqsāt*) : M. 'Aḥfīf, *Al-awqāf wa-l-ḥayāt al-iqtisādīyya fī Miṣr fī al-'aṣr al-'uṭmānī* [Les fondations pieuses et la vie économique en Égypte à l'époque ottomane] (Le Caire 1991), pp. 186-187.

<sup>97</sup> QS 9, p. 432 n° 888, procès du 25 ġumādā I 983 / 1<sup>er</sup> septembre 1575. La *ḥuḡḡa* du 29 ramadān 975 / 28 mars 1568 mentionne aussi un prêt du *ḥawāḡā* 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Sayf al-Dīn Muḥammad de 12 712 paras et 12 dinars.

tion une *zirā'a* de canne à sucre, qui suppose une culture sur plusieurs années. Muṣṭafā b. Aḥmad « Ibn *al-ḥawāḡā* Ḥiḍr » [30] détenait à Kawm Ašfin, dans la Qalyūbiyya, 6 ¼ feddans de canne à sucre sur pied, évalués à 6 000 paras. Quelques inventaires évaluent en effet la récolte à venir, ce qui donne une sorte de valeur du feddan et permet de comprendre sur quelles bases quantifiées étaient établis les baux. En avril 1595, la succession d'*al-qāḍī* 'Abd al-Barr b. Yaḥyā Ibn Muwaffaq [6] fait figurer notamment la part d'une *zirā'a* de 20 feddans, au village d'al-Ti'bāniyya (al-Ġarbiyya), en association à moitié avec un certain Zakariyā al-Siryāḥūrī, cultivée en blé, orge et lin, et estimée à 4 000 paras : autrement dit, 200 paras le feddan, prix d'à peu près cinq *ardabb* de blé en bonne année ; estimation raisonnable. En août 1597, l'inventaire de Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd Allāh, *müteferrika* [8], qui récolte dans trois villages de la Minūfiyya, inclut 31 feddans de sorgho (*ḍurra*) estimés à 2400 paras : soit 77,4 paras le feddan, ce qui semble bien peu. En juin 1602, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Abd al-Laṭīf, *ṣavuş* [13], laisse une *zirā'a* de 10 feddans de blé à Nāy, dans la Qalyūbiyya, estimée à 1000 paras, soit 100 paras le feddan ; son inventaire détaillé, composé de 38 items, ne mentionne d'ailleurs ni bête de labour, ni instrument aratoire : le prix estimé doit rétribuer une mise de fonds limitée, peut-être restreinte aux semences.

Nous devinons à travers ces notations dispersées que la mise en valeur des biens ruraux s'appuyait sur un dense réseau de contrats. Il est exceptionnel que nous en ayons une connaissance approfondie. En décembre 1589, un procès<sup>98</sup> intenté par le frère et représentant des enfants du défunt 'Alī Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb al-Misīrī [4] nous apprend ainsi que ce dernier avait contracté avec Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd Allāh *müteferrika*, ancien *dawādār* de la Ġarbiyya, une société (*širka*) à part égale pour la *zirā'a* conjointe de 500 feddans en riz, irrigués grâce à 24 *sāqiya*, pour la récolte (*al-muḡall*) de l'année fiscale 997/1589-1590, au village de Sārimsāḥ<sup>99</sup> dans la Daqahliyya. La coutume voulait que les métayers (*al-murābi'ūn*) reçoivent le quart de la récolte effective. Une tempête (*āfa samāwiyya*) ne permit de récolter que 250 *ḍarība* et 12 *wazna* de riz brut (*aruzz šī 'ir*)<sup>100</sup>. Une liste (*qā'ima*), signée du juge de Faraskūr et datée du 27 muḥarram 998 / 6 décembre 1589, établit les frais de récolte effectivement déboursés par le défendeur, avec l'agrément du défunt, pour les deux partenaires, à 55 700 paras, plus 1 916 paras pour le fourrage des bêtes et le bois des roues hydrauliques (*dawlab*). La riziculture intensive au moyen de *sāqiya*, ici une pour 20,8 feddans (env. 12,5 ha), n'étonne pas dans ce village situé sur la rive droite de la branche de Damiette, où le riz pouvait aisément s'écouler vers Is-

98 QS 17, p. 352 n° 414, 14 ṣafar 998 / 23 décembre 1589. Le texte suit immédiatement le très long inventaire des biens d'*al-qāḍī* 'Alī Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb al-Misīrī [4].

99 Écrit Sām.r.sāḥ l. 8 et Sār.m.sāḥ l. 20, il s'agit certainement de Sārimsāḥ du cadastre de 1315, aujourd'hui Širimsāḥ : H. Halm, *Ägypten nach den mamlukischen Lehensregistern*, 2 t. (Wiesbaden 1979 et 1982), t. II, p. 754 ; M. Ramzī, *Al-qāmūs al-ḡuḡrafi li-l-bilād al-miṣriyya min 'ahd qudamā' al-Miṣriyyīn ilā sanat 1945* [Dictionnaire géographique des agglomérations égyptiennes, depuis l'antiquité jusqu'à 1945], 6 t. (Le Caire 1994), t. 2/1, p. 243. Le village avait 1294 feddans en 1315.

100 Sur le sens de *š 'ir*, E.-S. Badawi et M. Hinds, *A Dictionary of Egyptian Arabic. Arabic-English* (Beirut 1986), p. 467a.

tanbul. On sait par la *Description de l'Égypte* que le « dareb » (*darība*) était une mesure de riz particulière à Damiette, et équivalait à 36/13 d'*ardabb* du Caire, soit 5,1 hl <sup>101</sup>. La récolte effective, environ 2,6 hl par feddan, fut en effet très faible. Le plaignant assurait que la récolte escomptée était de 800 *darība*-s, à partager entre les deux associés ; mais la suite du procès, perdu par le plaignant, ne reprend pas cette assertion. Au reste, compte tenu de ce que l'on sait des rendements du début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, l'estimation de la récolte escomptée paraît raisonnable <sup>102</sup>. Elle est même très inférieure au rendement en « année moyenne » que Girard, dans la *Description de l'Égypte*, attribue au riz dans la région de Damiette : 3 ½ dareb par feddan ; il convenait cependant qu'« il n'y a point de culture dont les produits soient plus variables. » <sup>103</sup> Un autre texte du même dossier, daté de mars 1590, évoque des achats de riz « vert », non décortiqué (*aruzz aḥḍar šī 'īr*), effectués l'année précédente dans le même village et d'autres, voisins, au prix de 8 ½ et 8 1/8 dinars la *darība*, soit 325 et 340 paras. Le revenu espéré de la récolte aurait donc été de  $(800 : 500) \times 325 = 520$  paras par feddan, et le revenu réel, durant cette très mauvaise année, de 162 paras par feddan, avant paiement des métayers. Ces 162 paras par feddan suffisaient pour couvrir des frais de 112 paras par feddan ; mais l'amortissement du cheptel constituait sans doute un autre poste, très onéreux, et il fallait encore acquitter le *ḥarāḡ*, qui dans ce village se montait à 2 dinars (80 paras) le feddan. L'année avait donc été déficitaire.

Comme il fallait s'y attendre, investir de grosses sommes dans l'agriculture n'allait pas sans risque. Le type de documents explorés ici articule, parfois avec peine, deux types de logiques, l'une prospective, l'autre effective. Des indications éparses mais concordantes suggèrent que les mises de fonds étaient consenties en fonction de calculs préliminaires simples, voire élémentaires, qui associaient en bloc une superficie définie au préalable en chiffres ronds, et un multiplicateur de produit brut estimé lui aussi en chiffres ronds – de tant de paras par feddan – sans passer par un calcul intermédiaire de rendement à la semence ou au feddan. D'ailleurs, les quantités de semences (*taqāwī*) du blé, de l'orge et des légumineuses étaient déterminées de la manière la plus simple : 1 *ardabb* par feddan. C'est ainsi qu'en février-mars 1611 sont calculées les *taqāwī* revenant au défunt [26] de sa *zīrā'a*, dans des villages non spécifiés de la Šarqiyya : 161 1/3 *ardabb* pour 161 feddans de blé, etc. ; au total, 340 feddans en blé, fèves et orge. De même, le barème de l'impôt foncier : un ou deux dinars (*šarīfī*) le feddan. L'usage

101 Girard, « Mémoire », pp. 31-32, 63. Au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, la *darība* vaut officiellement 8 *ardabb*, soit 15,85 hl : Société sultanienne d'agriculture, *Mémento agricole égyptien* (Le Caire 1920 [3<sup>e</sup> éd.]), p. 254.

102 800 *darība* de 5,1 hl, pour 500 feddans de 0,6 ha, équivalent à un rendement attendu de 13,6 hl/ha. Au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, on estimait qu'en culture *nīlī*, semée en juillet-août, le rendement allait de 1/2 à 1 *darība* (de 15,85 hl) le feddan, soit 19 à 38 hl/ha. En moyenne annuelle, pour l'ensemble du pays et pour les quatorze récoltes effectuées entre 1908-1909 et 1921-1922, le rendement du riz brut a oscillé entre 2,9 et 5,1 *ardabb* le feddan, avec une moyenne de 4,1, soit 19 hl/ha : J. Anhoury, « Le riz en Égypte », *L'Égypte agricole. Bulletin de l'Union des agriculteurs d'Égypte*, 22/155 (1924) [pp. 91-107], p. 94.

103 Girard, « Mémoire », p. 66 ; voir aussi *ibid.*, pp. 178 et 89.

de chiffres ronds s'étendait, comme nous l'avons vu, aux estimations du prix des divers biens ruraux, voire à des achats en bloc. On peut penser que cet ensemble cohérent d'estimations très arrondies était à la base des contrats. Les superficies indiquées, presque toujours en chiffres ronds (500 feddans dans l'exemple qui vient d'être analysé), avaient elles-mêmes plutôt valeur de base de calcul prospectif ; la superficie effectivement prise à bail et cultivée n'importait pas, et n'était pas mesurée, puisque seul comptait le retour sur investissement.

Au reste, on doit envisager que ces fortunes rurales pouvaient se trouver dans la situation inverse, de ne pas détenir de terre en *zirā'a* ou en bail, et de chercher les exploitants à qui louer leur cheptel ; ou d'avoir un cheptel excédentaire au regard de la terre dont ils avaient la *zirā'a*. C'est dans ce sens qu'il faut interpréter, d'une part la majorité des inventaires dénués de référence à une *zirā'a*, de l'autre, lorsque cette dernière est mentionnée, les écarts entre la superficie indiquée et les moyens de production. La variété des situations résultantes fait mieux comprendre que nos 'askar détenteurs de biens ruraux se comportaient, non comme des propriétaires fonciers – qu'ils n'étaient pas – mais comme des entrepreneurs de culture, devant s'adapter en permanence aux différents marchés dans lesquels ils intervenaient. Dans tous les cas de figure, ils se trouvaient dans la dépendance des experts techniques et locaux, connaisseurs dans la valeur des terres, des semences, du bétail, des fourrages, de l'outillage, et de la main d'œuvre qu'il fallait encore recruter.

### *Entrepreneurs de culture, intermédiaires et gens du village*

Pour présenter les choses sommairement, les détenteurs de fortunes rurales touchaient à la société rurale de trois manières : par les intermédiaires qu'ils employaient ou devaient solliciter ; par les emplois saisonniers ou permanents auxquels ils pourvoyaient ; par leur intervention, parfois massive, dans les finances des villages.

Ils étaient fréquemment en relations d'affaires avec d'autres membres de la bonne société du Caire pour des prises à bail ou des contrats d'association. Ils utilisaient les services d'hommes de confiance, parfois à eux, c'est-à-dire liés par la relation de client à patron qu'avait développée cette société à la fois militaire et esclavagiste. Un ouléma, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ḥamāwī [22], détenteur d'un beau cheptel à Qabr al-Mar'a (Buḥayra), est ainsi débiteur de son client (*tābi'*) Ḥasan pour de l'argent et des grains. Des 574 *ardabb* de grains, récolte de sa *zirā'a* de l'année écoulée, la plus grande part est entre les mains de quatre individus : 'Abd Allāh Aga (272 *ardabb*), Farḥāt *müteferrika* (27 ½ *ardabb*), Muḥammad Acemzade (176 *ardabb*), 'Alī Kethüda (35 *ardabb*). Des quantités spécifiées sous leur nom, mais comptabilisées à l'actif du défunt, sont déduites les semences et le fourrage des chameaux, 9 % environ du total : nous pouvons penser qu'il s'agit de sous-locataires à qui il confiait une partie des tâches d'exploitation. Parmi ces hommes de confiance, la présence de comptables chrétiens est bien attestée <sup>104</sup>. Ils

104 Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd Allāh al-'Awnī, *müteferrika* [8], doit ainsi à sa mort en juillet 1597, 2 680 paras au *ṣarrāf* (changeur) chrétien à son service.

avaient aussi des liens avec des notables ruraux, qui apparaissent à des titres divers dans les sources. Enfin les plus riches pouvaient disposer sur place d'agents, *mubāšīr* ou *ḥawlī* – ce dernier terme était aussi utilisé pour les experts hydrauliques des villages <sup>105</sup>. Les informations sont trop dispersées dans la documentation, au gré des inventaires, comptes, procès et actes notariés, pour qu'une vision d'ensemble soit possible. De même sait-on trop peu sur la présence effective des individus de notre échantillon dans les villages. Quelques-uns avaient une maison dans une ville de province, dont il est dans de rares cas spécifié qu'il s'agissait de leur résidence <sup>106</sup>. Mais l'essentiel doit être deviné.

Il en va de même pour l'emploi de la main d'œuvre locale ; ici toutefois, par exception, quelques comptes de succession fournissent un éclairage passionnant, car exhaustif. Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd Allāh al-'Awnī, *müteferrika* [8], décédé avant le 21 juillet 1597 <sup>107</sup>, a fait cultiver du blé, de l'orge et des légumineuses dans trois villages de la Minūfiyya. Il en a récolté 4 603 *ardabb*, dont 1194 (26 %) ont été ensuite dépensés, et 964 (21 %) vendus. Dans les dépenses figure le défraiement de 129 personnes : 47 moissonneurs (j'interprète ainsi le terme *muqāṭi'īn*, que je n'ai pas rencontré ailleurs), 24 conducteurs de *nawrağ* (*sawwāqīn al-nawāriğ*), 4 *ḥawlī* (pl. *ḥawala*) de l'*ūsya*, un *ḥawlī* à la *sāqiya* de la fontaine publique (*sabīl*) au village de Dirāğīn (aujourd'hui Darāğīl), 22 « chameliers au service des chameaux » (*sic*), 20 « chameliers pour le transport de la récolte dans les villages », 3 âniers, 4 éleveurs (*kallāfīn*) de bœufs, 4 *qawsīyyīn* (?) « au service du [défunt] susdit », auxquels s'ajoute un nombre indéterminé de *muṣāyidīn* dans ces villages, que j'interprète non pas comme des « chasseurs » mais comme les gens qui faisaient fuir les oiseaux et autres prédateurs. Les 129 personnes représentent une main d'œuvre adulte et masculine d'autant plus impressionnante que la plus grande partie des travaux agricoles n'ont été requis que dans un seul village, celui de Dirāğīn, où ont été récoltés 3 432 *ardabb*, soit les  $\frac{3}{4}$  du total. Le cadastre de 1315 créditait le village de 2 673 feddans, et celui de 1528, de 1 905 feddans <sup>108</sup>. C'est une fraction significative, quoique impossible à préciser, de la main d'œuvre du village qui se trouvait employée au printemps et au début de l'été par le défunt. Les mêmes, ou d'autres, certainement en moins grand nombre, avaient dû être employés pour les labours de l'automne et de l'hiver, mais n'apparaissent pas ici, parce qu'ils avaient déjà été rémunérés pour cette tâche.

105 N. Michel, « Spécialistes villageois de la terre et de l'eau en Égypte (XII<sup>e</sup>-XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles) », dans J. Dubouloz et A. Ingold (éds), *Faire la preuve de la propriété : droits et savoirs en Méditerranée (I<sup>er</sup> s. av. J.-C. – XIX<sup>e</sup> s. ap. J.-C.)* (Rome 2012), pp. 177-209. Les *mubāšīrīn* et les *ḥawala d'al-qāḍī* 'Alī Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb al-Misrī [4] au village de Sārimṣāḥ (auj. Širimṣāḥ, Daqahliyya), où il avait une *zirā'a* très étendue de riz, sont mentionnés in QS 17, p. 362 n° 454, procès du 2 ġumādā I 998 / 9 mars 1590.

106 C'est le cas de Muḥammad b. Ġa'far, Azeb [11], décédé à al-Manṣūra en awāsīt muḥarram 1007 / 14-23 août 1598 ; il y possédait une maison (*bayt*).

107 L'inventaire date du 10 muḥarram 1006 / 23 août 1597 ; il mentionne la *kulfa* de l'émir *dawādār* pour 32 jours après son décès, ce qui reporte la date de celui-ci au moins au 21 juillet. Quatre de ses créanciers font établir devant différents tribunaux des actes certifiant leur créance, entre awāḥīr dū-al-ḥiğga 1005 / 5-13 août, et le 11 muḥarram 1006 / 24 août.

108 Halm, *Ägypten*, II, p. 345 ; Michel, « Villages désertés », p. 245 tableau 8.



L'ensemble de ces salaires est de 600 *ardabb*, soit 13 % de la récolte totale <sup>109</sup>. À l'exception des *muṣāyidīn* pris en bloc, chacune des personnes défrayées a reçu 4 *ardabb* de grains, soit environ 7 hl. Que représentait ce montant ? S'il n'avait consisté qu'en blé, il aurait été plus que suffisant pour nourrir une famille entière pour l'année (5 hl/an, voir *supra*). Allocation d'autant plus généreuse que les travaux défrayés n'avaient dans la plupart des cas requis que quelques mois. Mais le salaire consistait en blé, orge et légumineuses, selon une ventilation qui ne nous est connue que pour l'ensemble des dépenses (Tableau 3) : le blé n'y représentait que 30 % des frais, contre 45 % pour les fèves et 19 % pour l'orge. La plus grande partie (78 %) de la récolte d'orge était en fait dépensée, tandis que le défunt avait gardé pour lui 82 % du blé, sa production la plus chère.

**Tableau 3** : Récolte et salaires en nature dans l'inventaire de Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd Allāh al-'Awnī, *müteferrika* [8], août 1597.

	Blé	Orge	Fèves	Lentilles	Pois chiches
Récolte (en <i>ardabb</i> )	1 994	289	1 952	193	175
Frais (en <i>ardabb</i> )	361	226	536	67	4
Frais / Récolte	18 %	78 %	27 %	35 %	2 %
Frais / total des frais	30 %	19 %	45 %	6 %	0,3 %

Il n'est pas possible de savoir quelle proportion des fèves, du blé et de l'orge qui constituaient le salaire de cette masse de travailleurs villageois était consommée par ces derniers, soit pour leur famille, soit pour leur bétail, et quelle proportion était réservée, ou vendue. L'apparente simplicité du chiffre de 4 *ardabb*, identique pour tous, masque l'essentiel des relations effectives de l'employeur avec sa main d'œuvre, notamment les éventuels rapports de force. Il fait seulement apparaître le défunt comme un très gros employeur saisonnier.

À ces interventions massives sur le marché de l'emploi s'en ajoutaient parfois d'autres dans les finances des villages. C'est à vrai dire grâce aux inventaires de succession ou à d'autres textes éparpillés dans les *siğill* que nous avons quelque connaissance d'emprunts réalisés par les communautés villageoises. Eleni Gara a mis en évidence de semblables emprunts dans la région de Kara Ferye (Beroia) dans la première moitié du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle <sup>110</sup>. Quelques inventaires de notre échantillon, quatre en tout [4, 29, 30, 31], mentionnent sans autre précision, parmi les créances du défunt, telle somme due par « les gens » (*ahālī*) de tel village, ou par les *fallāhīn* de tel village – expression équivalente,

109 À ces 600 *ardabb* s'en ajoutent 124 pour le fourrage des chameaux et 39 celui des bœufs, 176 pour la *kulfa* de l'émir *dawādār* durant les trente-deux jours qui ont suivi le décès, 39 pour la *kulfa* de la résidence du défunt au Caire, et 20 en *ḥarāğ* de plusieurs *rizqa*. Le total, 998 *ardabb*, ne correspond pas aux 1 194 *ardabb* de dépenses (*maṣrūf*) comptabilisées dans l'inventaire.

110 E. Gara, « In Search of Communities in Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Sources: The Case of Kara Ferye District », *Turcica*, 30 (1998) [pp. 135-162], pp. 141 et 150, a relevé 650 documents de prêts à des communautés villageoises dans 19 registres du tribunal de Kara Ferye.



qui désignait les contribuables responsables de l'impôt <sup>111</sup>. Le plus grand créancier, de très loin, *al-qāḍī* 'Alī Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb al-Misrī, assassiné en août 1589, comptait ainsi six villages parmi ses débiteurs (Tableau 4).

**Tableau 4** : dettes des communautés villageoises dans l'inventaire [4].

Village	Date de la créance	Montant
Šīšīn bi-l-Ġarbiyya <sup>112</sup>	26 ḥiğḡā 988 / 1er février 1581	39 450 paras
Misr	11 ġumādā I 991 / 2 juin 1583	100 dinars [= 4 000 paras]
Sindifā	23 rabī' II 995 / 2 avril 1587	8 000 paras
Minyat Qurūn	26 ša'bān 995 / 1er août 1587	3 000 paras
Šifā wa-Qurūn	17 rabī' I 996 / 15 février 1588	1 200 paras
Maḥallat Misr	5 šawwāl 996 / 28 août 1588	2 000 paras

Chacune des créances a été validée par une *ḥuğḡa* émise au tribunal d'une ville de province proche, notamment celui d'al-Maḥalla al-kubrā, que le défunt fréquentait assidûment. La bourgade de Šīšīn était ainsi redevable depuis huit ans d'une très grosse somme. Si les arriérés (*bawāqī*, pl. de *bāqiya*) d'impôt dus par les villages au Trésor étaient relativement communs, et sont bien documentés par ailleurs, il n'en va pas de même de ceux dus à des particuliers, et nous ne pouvons préciser si le cas de Šīšīn était exceptionnel. Ces dettes de villages incitent en tout cas à replacer les liens des défunts avec la société rurale dans le cadre plus large d'une économie financière dont, à défaut d'une vision complète, les inventaires fournissent un instantané à la date de leur constitution.

### *Les campagnes dans les mouvements de capitaux*

Les sommes les plus élevées que nous relevons dans les registres ont été mobilisées soit pour de vastes opérations commerciales, soit pour des paiements de sommes dues au fisc. Muṣṭafā b. Aḥmad « Ibn al-Ḥawāḡā Ḥiḍr », émir circassien [30], est détenteur d'après son inventaire de juin 1625 d'une très belle fortune rurale de 526 459 paras répartis entre Le Caire et cinq localités de basse Égypte, dont Qalyūb ; ses biens ruraux se montent à eux seuls à 401 160 paras (voir Tableau 9 en Annexe). Mais il doit au *māl mīrī* la somme énorme de 326 160 paras <sup>113</sup>, non détaillée. Le barème du *ḥarāğ* tournait à cette époque autour de deux dinars par feddan ; un gros village de 2 000 feddans effectivement cultivés devait ainsi acquitter chaque année autour de 160 000 paras (dans les années 1580) ou 200 000 paras (dans les années 1610 et 1620), soit au Trésor (le *māl mīrī*), soit au gérant du

111 Sur le sens administratif de ces termes, Michel, « Devoirs fiscaux », p. 527-531, 533-534.

112 Aujourd'hui al-Šīn, dans le *markaz* de Ṭanṭā : Halm, *Āgypten*, II, p. 578 ; Ramzī, *Al-qāmūs*, II, 2, p. 96.

113 QS 38, p. 135 n° 164, *daftar muḥallafāt* du 20 šawwāl 1034 / 26 juillet 1625.

*waqf* bénéficiaire de l'impôt. Les versements au Trésor n'étaient jamais directs : l'État affermait pour un an l'impôt d'un village à un ou plusieurs *multazim*, qui devaient acquitter en trois termes (*bi-l-taqṣīt*) les impôts des terres en cultures d'hiver, et en une fois ceux des cultures d'été (*ḥarāğ al-nabārī*)<sup>114</sup>. 'Uṭmān Çavuş [14] doit ainsi, en octobre 1602, 12 000 paras au Trésor pour le *ḥarāğ al-nabārī* d'Atfih, chef-lieu de province. De même, les *waqf* louaient leurs terres, c'est-à-dire leur *ḥarāğ*. À l'époque que nous étudions les fermes fiscales rurales étaient réservées aux 'askar, militaires ou civils. Comparée aux montants des fortunes de la grande majorité de ces derniers, l'énormité de ces mises de fonds explique que seule une minorité de 'askar pouvaient se lancer dans la spéculation fiscale. Les aléas de la crue et des récoltes, sans parler d'autres causes de résistance rurale, ne rendaient pas l'opération sans risque. Nous l'avons vu plus haut à propos d'une récolte de riz, saccagée par une tempête en 1589. L'obligation pour le fermier de l'État ou le preneur du *waqf* de collecter des sommes considérables sur les *fallāḥ* avant que ces derniers aient pu se rembourser en vendant leurs récoltes, générait souvent des mouvements de capitaux complexes, par emprunts ou avances, qui pouvaient s'effectuer dans des sens divers.

L'examen des inventaires met de ce point de vue en évidence les différences d'échelle. En matière de crédit, les fortunes rurales les plus modestes ne franchissent pas le cercle des relations personnelles. Il faut monter dans la hiérarchie économique pour voir apparaître des responsables villageois, des fermes fiscales, ou des locations de *waqf* ; au plus haut niveau enfin, les successions mettent en évidence un dense réseau de liens de toutes sortes avec des villages entiers, des dignitaires, cheikhs bédouins, *kāšif* de province, ou leurs représentants. À mesure que l'on s'élève dans l'échelle des fortunes s'accroît la proportion des prêts d'argent ou de biens dans l'actif, et parfois le passif. Yūsuf « al-Ṭawīl » (le grand) b. 'Īsā, *müteferrika*, en garnison à Asyūt au moment de sa mort [23], y laisse un actif de 95 722 paras, dont trois maisons *manzil* (13 500 paras), 26 330 paras en bétail, 600 *ardabb* de grains (évalués en bloc à 30 000 paras), et 210 autres *ardabb* prêtés à 'Uṭmān bey, gouverneur du haut Şa'īd ; son inventaire ne signale par de *zirā'a* ni d'*iltizām*, on ignore donc comment il employait ses 25 bœufs, 3 vaches, 3 buffles et 3 *nawrağ* « anciens » (*qadīm*). – Un échelon au-dessus, Muṣṭafā b. Aḥmad « Ibn al-Ḥawāğā Ḥiḍr », émire circassien [30], laisse en juin 1625, 401 160 paras dans cinq localités différentes du Delta, dont 93 626 (23 %) en 18 créances, toutes liées d'une manière ou d'une autre à la vie rurale : avances de graines de lin aux paysans (2 268, 519 et 3 250 paras), de bois pour réparer des *sāqiya* (1 740 paras), ventes non encore acquittées de blé, pois chiches, bovins à des particuliers (256, 250, 850 et 1 320 paras), reliquats de prêts aux *fallāḥīn* (1 150, 1 444 et 921 paras), et surtout avances sur le *ḥarāğ* pour des *waqf* (21 940 paras à Qalyūb) et pour la *ğihat al-kaşf al-sa'īd* (4 100, 5 230 et 9 700 paras), c'est-à-dire probablement les émoluments propres au gouverneur de province. Le total des créances du défunt était à son tour écrasé, comme nous l'avons vu, par les 326 160 paras que le défunt devait au Trésor.

Cet émire circassien est un exemple remarquable de *multazim* à large assise financière, qui s'appuyait sur des ensembles cohérents de biens agricoles (cheptel vif et mort) répar-

114 Shaw, *Organization and Development*, p. 76.

tis entre les villages dont il avait la ferme. L'avantage de cette combinaison était double. D'un côté, l'embauche saisonnière, les contrats de toute sorte, et les prêts ou ventes à crédit, tissaient de multiples liens avec la société villageoise, en particulier avec les contribuables, que les agents de l'émir en tournée ou sur place apprenaient à connaître, et pour lesquels, par conséquent, il était bien plus difficile de se dédire d'un engagement contracté. De l'autre côté, la consistance des biens du *multazim* au village jouait comme une caution au moment de l'attribution des fermes fiscales, ce qui pouvait influencer positivement sur le renouvellement d'une année sur l'autre de celles-ci : rappelons que les enchérisseurs à qui était attribuée une ferme devaient présenter un ou plusieurs garants (*kafīl*) <sup>115</sup>.

*Al-qāḍī* 'Alī Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb al-Misīrī [4] représente un cas tout à fait exceptionnel. Éminence grise du gouverneur Üveys Paşa, il fut tué lors d'un soulèvement de la troupe le 17 août 1589 <sup>116</sup>, et n'avait donc pas eu le temps de mettre en ordre ses biens ; il n'avait, par exemple, pas fondé de *waqf*. Le règlement de sa succession fut pendant plusieurs mois la principale occupation de la *qisma* 'askariyya. Son immense fortune était celle d'un banquier ; l'inventaire lui attribue un actif de 208 101 dinars et 16 paras (8 324 056 paras) <sup>117</sup>, dont 86 % en créances, dues par 304 débiteurs, et un passif de 813 362 paras, presque entièrement constitué de 33 dettes. De grands personnages, ou leurs agents, apparaissent pour de très fortes sommes au crédit et au débit, donnant pour une fois un éclairage sur la mobilité des capitaux que générerait la proximité du pouvoir. En revanche, le silence absolu des registres de tribunaux d'Égypte sur les taux d'intérêt pratiqués ne permet de rien savoir des profits générés par cette activité de crédit à très grande échelle. D'origine rurale et obscure – le nom même de la famille, Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb al-Misīrī, suggère la petite notabilité villageoise, – le défunt était entré dans la classe des 'askar grâce à sa charge de *nāẓir al-saḥāba*, responsable de l'approvisionnement en eau potable de la caravane du *ḥaġġ* <sup>118</sup>. Il possédait de vastes biens ruraux dans son village d'origine, Misīr (al-Ġarbiyya), ainsi qu'à Mīnyat Misīr voisine et dans plusieurs autres agglomérations de basse Égypte. Pour apurer sa succession on vendit au Caire 9 chevaux, 5 mules, 70 chameaux, 109 bœufs, et à Būlāq 112 *ardabb* de blé et 520 de fèves, le tout pour 163 808 paras. À al-Maḥalla al-kubrā, chef-lieu de la Ġarbiyya, et Maḥallat Ziyād, la vente de 500 *ardabb* de blé, 500 de fèves, 200 d'orge et 100 de grains de trèfle, aux soins du *kāshif* de la province, rapporta en bloc 50 000 paras. Le défunt possédait par ailleurs un pressoir à huile de lin, jouxtant sa résidence à l'Azbakiyya, et un pressoir à huile de sésame (*sayraġiyya*) : le premier rapporta 11 695 paras en bétail et 54 320 en huile et graines

115 Shuman, « Beginnings », p. 21. Il ajoute que cette pratique cessa au cours du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, le *multazim* étant désormais seul responsable sur ses biens propres.

116 La date figure dans l'introduction de l'inventaire [4], QS 17, p. 307 n° 412. Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb al-Misīrī était connu par le surnom d'Ibn al-Qāq, et était chargé de répartir les provinces et les fermes fiscales contre rétribution, selon Ibn Abī al-Surūr al-Bakrī, *Kaṣf al-kurba*, p. 314.

117 Ses immeubles au Caire ne sont pas évalués : *ibid.*, p. 328 ; non plus que ses possessions restées en province : *ibid.*, p. 307, introduction à l'inventaire.

118 La *saḥāba* était l'eau potable transportée par la caravane du *ḥaġġ* et financée par un *waqf* de Soliman, cf. S. F. A. 'Umar, *Imārat al-ḥaġġ fī al-'aṣr al-'uṣmānī* (923-1214 h. / 1517-1798 m.) (Le Caire 2001), pp. 208, 237 note 259.

(*baḍr*). Ses investissements ruraux prenaient souvent la forme de crédit : il avait ainsi avancé, pour l'année agricole 996 / 1588-1589 qui s'achevait lorsqu'il fut assassiné, 193 19/24 *ardabb* en semences de blé, fèves, orge, lin, trèfle et lentilles à un certain 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Tūrzīn, et avait avancé le *ḥarāğ* des *zirā'a* de trois de ses fils, pour la somme totale de 112 264 paras (qui correspondraient à 1 403 feddans, si l'on prend un barème moyen de deux dinars le feddan). Nous avons étudié plus haut une association qu'il avait contractée pour la culture de 500 feddans de riz dans la Daqahliyya. Locataire de plusieurs villages en *waqf*, il devait à sa mort 13 989 paras au *waqf* des Greniers sultaniens, 920 à celui des Lieux Saints, 3 445 à celui de la Ḥṣakiyya ; avait pris en location les terres (*rizqa*) relevant de *waqf* de plusieurs particuliers ; surtout, il était *multazim* de plusieurs villages, mais ses comptes avec le Trésor paraissaient sur ce point réglés, puisque rien n'en apparaît dans l'inventaire. Il pratiquait à son tour la sous-location : un certain Yūsuf Çavuş lui avait ainsi loué en septembre 1587, pour 79 070 paras, non encore acquittés deux ans plus tard, la moitié de trois villages de la Ġarbiyya, Šīšīn, Šubrā Bābil et al-Mu'tamadiyya, pour l'année 1587-1588.

Comme tous les détenteurs de grandes fortunes, *al-qādī* 'Alī Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb al-Misīrī était au-delà de toute spécialisation : ses investissements couvrent un vaste éventail de domaines, parmi lesquels, cependant, l'agriculture et les industries de transformation de produits agricoles n'ont cessé d'occuper une place de choix. Le noyau originel, terrien, s'est diversifié, avec la fortune et l'entregent politiques, vers le crédit aux grands personnages, et avec la plus grande fortune, vers les opérations requérant de très gros investissements, tels que le riz, le sucre ou les locations de villages en *waqf* ; chacune de ces opérations exigeait de mobiliser d'un coup des dizaines de milliers de paras, ce qui les mettait hors de portée de la plupart des individus même aisés. Qu'il ait d'ailleurs aidé ses fils à acquérir des *zirā'a* dans la région d'où sa famille était originaire montre son réalisme : il devait se douter que son éclatante faveur politique ne lui survivrait pas, et que ses nombreux enfants (douze à sa mort) retomberaient dans l'obscurité. C'est ce qui arriva.

### *Conclusion : les privilégiés dans une économie du risque*

Exceptionnelle en son temps, l'ascension sociale de 'Alī Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb al-Misīrī, petit notable villageois, n'était pourtant pas sans exemple. Le 13 septembre 1516, dans les derniers mois du régime mamelouk, mourait au Caire al-ḥāğğ 'Alī al-Birmāwī, huissier (*bardadār*) du sultan, chargé des revenus du *dīwān al-mufrad*. Selon Ibn Iyās, qui relate ces faits comme une curiosité et dresse du défunt un portrait très positif, il était issu des *fallāḥ* de Birmā (dans la Ġarbiyya) : son père, ou son frère, aurait vendu de la toile et des étoffes sur les marchés. Il laissait un héritage estimé à 100 000 dinars, dont 17 600 dinars en monnaie d'or, 45 juments et poulains, 100 buffles, 1000 brebis, 400 bœufs pour les roues hydrauliques (*bi-l-dawālib*) : « et il y avait bien davantage chez les paysans dans la campagne »<sup>119</sup>. Autant que cette carrière de villageois parvenu, le profil de sa fortune res-

119 « Wa-ḍā'a lahu 'inda al-fallāḥīn fī al-bilād aḫṭar min ḍālika » : Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-zuhūr fī waqā'i' al-duhūr*, M. Mostafa éd., *Die Chronik des Ibn Ijās, A.H. 922-928/A.D. 1516-1522*

tée avant tout rurale avait retenu l'attention d'Ibn Iyās, qui ne l'aurait pas détaillée si elle lui avait semblé banale. Sans doute le mélange de chiffres précis et d'autres ronds fait-il douter de la véracité de ces derniers, mais non du tableau général, proche par exemple de celui présenté par Muṣṭafā b. Aḥmad « Ibn al-ḥawāḡā Ḥiḍr » [30] près de cent dix ans plus tard. En somme, en faisant fructifier leurs biens ruraux, les *'askar* autour de 1600 s'étaient coulés dans un moule économique qui leur préexistait.

Le premier enseignement des inventaires de succession est relatif à l'économie agricole. Les *'askar* que nous avons étudiés ne concentraient pas leurs investissements ruraux sur les cultures les plus voraces en capitaux, riz ou canne à sucre, mais d'abord sur les produits de base. Or le cœur même (céréales et légumineuses d'hiver) de cette agriculture intensive réclamait des investissements élevés. En effet, les classiques cultures d'hiver, au premier rang desquelles le blé, les fèves, l'orge, le trèfle, bases du fourrage, requéraient des outils coûteux et un gros bétail de qualité pour le nivellement et les labours, le dépiquage, le transport des récoltes. Ceux qui le pouvaient cherchaient à acquérir en bloc le cheptel vif et mort indispensable à des exploitations d'un seul tenant. Ils rentabilisaient leur cheptel en se portant acquéreurs de *zīrā'a*. Dispensateurs d'emplois saisonniers, ils recouraient aussi à diverses formes de contrats pour ajuster leur propre cheptel aux besoins des superficies dont ils supervisaient les cultures, en prenant ou en baillant telles ou telles bêtes, tels ou tels outils. Ils pouvaient faire fructifier leurs récoltes en avançant des semences pour l'année à venir ; leurs bénéfices, en prêtant aux villageois, aux communautés villageoises, en pratiquant les avances sur récoltes. Ce type d'entreprise agricole fondé, sur la possession du cheptel, et non pas sur la propriété de la terre, permettait une mobilité spatiale que rendait à vrai dire indispensable la pratique alors exclusive de la location ou de l'affermage à court terme, en général sur une base annuelle. Nous avons donc affaire, non pas à des maîtres de domaines, mais à des entrepreneurs de culture. C'est à ce dernier titre surtout que leurs liens personnels avec les notables ou le commun des villageois pouvaient acquérir de la valeur.

Les divers modes d'investissement dans les campagnes requéraient des compétences variées, de la part des *'askar* eux-mêmes ou de leurs agents. La possession du cheptel mort et vif supposait des contrats fréquents avec les forgerons, charpentiers, bourreliers, éleveurs, vendeurs de marchés ; un œil aiguisé aux qualités et défauts du bétail et de l'outillage. Leur usage signifiait une bonne connaissance du marché de l'emploi local. Négocier des avances ou des crédits, obtenir leur remboursement dans les délais, supposait d'estimer correctement l'état de fortune des villageois ou des villages. Percevoir le *ḥarāḡ* exigeait le même genre de savoir, et à coup sûr une présence fréquente sur les champs, sur les aires à battre, dans les occasions où les cultivateurs discutent travail. Obtenir le bail d'un *waqf* revenait à convaincre le gérant de celui-ci de sa solvabilité et des compétences que nous venons d'énumérer, et probablement entrer dans le cercle de ses connaissances personnelles ; comme beaucoup de *nāzīr* étaient soit des officiers, soit des

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(Wiesbaden 1961) t. V, l. 10 à 21. G. Wiet, *Journal d'un bourgeois du Caire. Chronique d'Ibn Iyās* (Paris 1960), t. II, p. 64, traduit « chez ses paysans », ce qui me paraît une surinterprétation.

fonctionnaires, ou des membres de leur famille, l'entrée dans des cercles de connaissance devait être un des éléments requis pour une carrière économique réussie. Il en allait de même pour l'obtention d'un *iltizām*, puisque celle-ci passait par la présentation de garants – eux-mêmes connus et réputés solvables –, comme pour la négociation de crédits auprès de riches financiers : il est vrai que ceux-là évoluaient dans des cercles étendus.

Vis-à-vis des premières compétences énumérées, celles liées à la connaissance des choses rurales, les militaires partaient handicapés : citadins, souvent d'origine servile, servant pour la plupart au Caire, dans les principaux ports, ou au Yémen, ils n'avaient guère le temps de s'implanter à la campagne. Les compétences secondes, liées au monde de l'argent et du pouvoir au Caire même, étaient accessibles à ceux qui avaient déjà réussi, et à leurs proches. Nous ne pouvons de ce fait pas considérer les fermes fiscales comme la grande porte d'entrée dans l'économie rurale : elles requéraient des mises de fonds inaccessibles à la majorité des militaires ; d'ailleurs, seule une poignée de 'askar de notre échantillon étaient des *multazim*. Si nous voulons absolument ordonner les situations étudiées plus haut selon une ligne de progression des investissements ruraux, disons que le premier investissement, accessible même à des fortunes médiocres de quelques milliers de paras, était l'acquisition d'un ensemble de cheptel vif et mort d'exploitation. Il permettait de s'enraciner localement, de tisser des liens utiles, rechargés peu à peu par des avances, crédits, associations, achats, que confortaient des prises à bail de *zirā'a*. La réussite incontestable se marquait, à une échelle supérieure de fortune, et grâce à ses relations cairotes, par l'accès aux locations de terres en *waqf* et aux fermes fiscales.

Tel qu'il se dégage des inventaires, le profil économique des 'askar autour de 1600 n'était pas, ou n'était qu'à la marge, rentier <sup>120</sup>. Aucun de ceux examinés ici ne semble avoir créé de *waqf*. Outre la résidence principale et son mobilier, les fortunes de 'askar consistaient en biens de prestige, chevaux, armes et esclaves (notamment des esclaves mâles, très coûteux) <sup>121</sup> ; parfois en immeubles secondaires ; parfois en biens marchands, qui supposaient des sociétés de commerce ; plus souvent, en biens agricoles ; enfin, pour les plus fortunés, en opérations extensives de crédit. L'emploi des fortunes était dominé par le risque : commercial, agricole, politique, et de manière dérivée, fiscal et financier. Cette orientation peut surprendre alors que le noyau dur de ces fortunes était formé par une solde stable, qui permettait de vivre bourgeoisement, sans plus. Elle doit être sérieusement nuancée : une courte majorité des inventaires des 'askar (parmi les fortunes mo-

120 Establet et Pascual, *La gent d'État*, pp. 214-216, distinguent de même, à Damas à la fin du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, les investissements ruraux des militaires, de ceux des agents civils de l'État : les seconds privilégient les locations de vergers, dans la Ġuṭa de Damas, dont ils tirent un revenu à peu près fixe dans une perspective clairement rentière ; les militaires, la production céréalière et fourragère dans des régions plus lointaines, l'élevage notamment de gros bétail, les concessions fiscales.

121 À Damas à la fin du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, la possession d'esclaves distingue de même fortement les 'askar des civils : seuls les civils les plus riches en ont acquis, alors que des 'askar même « modérément riche[s] » en possèdent, *ibid.*, pp. 299-300. Sur la possession de *status symbols* par les 'askar, *ibid.*, pp. 302-303. Description vivante du mode de vie des militaires au Caire en 1599 par A. Tietze, *Muṣṭafā 'Ālī's Description*, p. 66.

destes ou moyennes) ne montre aucune appétence pour le négoce, l'agriculture, ni le crédit. Mais toutes les grandes fortunes avaient recours à l'un ou l'autre, et les plus grandes, à toutes les variétés d'investissements à risques. J'expliquerai cette tendance inconteste par deux facteurs conjugués : le poids considérable des *status symbols*, liés notamment à l'esclavage constitutif de la reproduction de cette société militaire ; les très fortes dépenses, casuelles et aléatoires, par lesquelles passait la satisfaction des ambitions sociales et politiques – les charges s'achetaient, les réseaux s'entretenaient ; bref, le haut risque inhérent à une élite politico-militaire au sein de laquelle les richesses étaient redistribuées à grande vitesse.

Dans ces conditions générales, valables durant toute l'époque ottomane, quelle spécificité présente la période 1580-1630 ici étudiée ? Le point de départ en est dû au hasard du début de l'enregistrement des inventaires de succession dans les *siğill*, et doit être situé dans un contexte plus large. Vers 1580 les militaires ont déjà parachevé leur mainmise sur les gérances de *waqf* sultaniens et émiraux <sup>122</sup> et sur les *iltizām* ruraux. Leurs investissements dans les campagnes suivent des modèles éprouvés ; on ne sait s'ils ont pris plus d'ampleur après 1580. Leur pénétration de l'économie citadine demeure en revanche limitée et le restera jusqu'à la seconde moitié du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, comme l'a montré André Raymond <sup>123</sup>. Même les plus grandes fortunes ne peuvent acquérir le bail ou l'*iltizām*, au mieux, que de quelques villages ; or l'Égypte en compte alors plus de deux mille : les campagnes ne peuvent servir de fondement à d'immenses fortunes ; le système politico-économique maintient les militaires en concurrence pour l'accès aux ressources, sans donner à aucun l'assise nécessaire pour prétendre à l'hégémonie. Tout cela changera aussi avec le long principat de Riḍwān Bey (1631-1656) <sup>124</sup> et la structuration en factions qu'a décrite Jane Hathaway. En ce sens, les inventaires permettent de saisir un moment singulier dans l'histoire des relations entre la classe privilégiée et le monde rural.

122 Le phénomène a été relevé par M. 'Afīfī, *Al-awqāf*, pp. 222-223, 257-262 Annexe 2.

123 A. Raymond, « Soldiers in Trade: The Case of Ottoman Cairo », *British Society for Middle Eastern Studies Bulletin* 18/1 (1991), pp. 16-37 [reprint dans *idem*, *Arab Cities in the Ottoman Period* (Aldershot 2002)].

124 Holt, « The Beylicate », pp. 180, 210-213.



**Tableau 5 :** Composition de l'échantillon des inventaires  
de succession comportant des biens ruraux

[ ]		Date de l'inventaire	Identification du défunt	Actif, en paras
1	QA 8 p. 195 n° 335	6 dū al-ḥiġġa 988 / 12 janvier 1581	<i>Al-ḥāġġ</i> Muḥammad b. Šaraf al-Dīn Ibn Mūsā « Al-Saqqā », meunier ( <i>taḥḥān</i> )	2 290
2	QA 19 p. 245 n° 353	Awā'il dū al-ḥiġġa 1019 / 14-23 février 1611	<i>Al-qādī</i> Muḥammad b. al- marḥūm <i>al-qādī</i> 'Abd al- Ġawād al-Anšārī, substitut hanéfite de l'Atṭīhiyya	637 dinars [= 29 302]
3	QA 19 p. 430 n° 610	29 rabī' I 1020 / 11 juin 1611	<i>Al-ḥāġġ</i> Ḥiġāzī b. 'Abd al- Raḥman b. Aḥmad al-Ṭanāḥī, presseur d'huile de sésame ( <i>al- mudawlib fī al-sayāriġ</i> )	Pas d'évaluation
4	QS 17 p. 307 n° 412	Awāḥir rabī' I 998 / 28 janvier-6 février 1590 (assassiné 5 šawwāl 997 / 17 août 1589)	<i>Al-qādī</i> 'Alī b. 'Alī [Ibn] al- Ḥaṭīb al-Misīrī, <i>nāẓir al-saḥāba al-šarīfa</i>	208 101 dinars et 2 paras [= 8 324 042]
5	QS 18 p. 337 n° 801	Awā'il ġumādā II 1003 / 11-20 février 1595	Murād Çavuş b. 'Abd Allāh	53 251
6	QS 18 p. 368 n° 849 Qādī	29 raġab 1003 / 9 avril 1595	<i>Al-qādī</i> 'Abd al-Barr b. al- marḥūm Kamāl al-Dīn Yahyā Ibn Muwaffaq	33 970
7	QS 20 p. 87	11 muḥarram 1006 / 24 août 1597	'Alī b. Yahyā, <i>müteferrika</i> , <i>kāšif</i> de la Minūfiyya	17 405
8	QS 20 p. 92	10 muḥarram 1006 / 23 août 1597	Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd Allāh « al- 'Awnī », <i>müteferrika</i>	68 456
9	QS 20 p. 152 n° 407	14 ša'bān 1006 / 22 mars 1598	Küçük Aḥmad, <i>azeb</i>	13 860
10	QS 20 p. 318 n° 731	?	'Abbās Aga b. 'Abd Allāh, émir circassien et <i>bāš al-Azlam</i>	19 040 + 22 688 [= 41 728]
11	QS 20 p. 343 n° 812	8 šafar 1007 / 10 septembre 1598 (décédé awāsiṭ muḥarram 1007 / 14-23 août 1598)	Muḥammad b. Ġa'far, <i>azeb</i>	Pas d'évaluation

12	QS 22 p. 20 n° 43	21 šawwāl 1007 / 17 mai 1599	<i>Al-šarīf</i> Ḥalīl, <i>çavuş</i> du Divan du <i>dawādār al-ḥağğ al-šarīf</i> et de la Minūfiyya	51 295
13	QS 24 p. 203 n° 342	24 dū al-ḥiğğa 1010 / 15 juin 1602	‘Abd al-Raḥman b. ‘Abd al- Laṭīf, <i>çavuş</i>	21 020
14	QS 24 p. 350 n° 626	Début ġumādā I 1011 / 17 octobre 1602	<i>Al-ğanāb al-‘ālī al-amīr</i> ‘Uṭmān, <i>çavuş</i> du Divan du Caire, b. al-marḥūm <i>al-ğanāb</i> <i>al-karīm al-‘ālī al-amīr</i> Muṣṭafā, <i>kāšif</i> du Fayyūm	72 935
15	QS 25 p. 255 n° 482	24 rabī‘ I 1013 / 20 août 1604	<i>Faḥr amṭālihi</i> Muṣṭafā « Fayṣal » b. al-marḥūm Ğa‘far al-Zardakāš, <i>müteferrika</i>	12 685
16	QS 25 p. 354 n° 676	20 ġumādā II 1013 / 13 novembre 1604	<i>Ifṭihār al-quḍāt wa-l-hukkām</i> <i>Mawlānā</i> Muḥy al-dīn Efendi	[40 543]
17	QS 25 p. 412 n° 755	Fin ša‘ban 1013 / 20 janvier 1605	<i>Faḥr al-amāṭil wa-l-a‘yān</i> Dū al-Fiḳār b. ‘Abd Allāh, <i>bölükbaşı</i> des Circassiens	[32 050]
18	QS 25 p. 416 n° 760 Al- Bakrī	[Awā’il ramadān 1013] / 21-30 janvier 1605	<i>Šayḥ al-islām</i> Zayn al-‘Ābidīn Muḥammad al-Bakrī al-Šiddīqī	572 645
19	QS 25 p. 441 n° 796	19 šawwāl 1013 / 10 mars 1605	Šāliḥ, de la garnison d’al- Manšūra, b. al-marḥūm Manšūr, <i>mutaqā‘id</i>	Incomplet
20	QS 25 p. 521 n° 925	Awā’il šafār 1014 / 18-27 juin 1605	<i>Al-šayḥ</i> Badr al-Dīn b. al- marḥūm <i>al-šayḥ</i> Muḥammad al-Ṭānūbī	20 000
21	QS 29 p. 97 n° 201 + p. 135 n° 282	Début raġab 1019 / 19 septembre 1610	Maḥmūd b. ‘Abd Allāh, <i>müteferrika</i>	161 287
22	QS 29 p. 106 n° 219	7 ramadān 1019 / 23 novembre 1610	<i>Al-šayḥ al-imām al-‘ālim al- ‘allāma ‘umdat al-mudarrisīn</i> <i>muqayyid al-ṭālibīn</i> Šams al- Dīn Muḥammad b. al-marḥūm <i>al-šayḥ</i> Aḥmad al-Ḥamawī al-ḥanafī	104 157
23	QS 29 p. 115 n° 238	14 ramadān 1019 / 30 novembre 1610	<i>Al-amīr</i> Yūsuf « al-Ṭawīl » b. al-marḥūm ‘Isā, émir <i>müteferrika</i> , militaire à Asyūt	95 722
24	QS 29 p. 145 n° 303	28 šawwāl 1019 / 13 janvier 1611	<i>Al-amīr</i> Ayyūb, <i>çavuş</i> du Divan du Caire	249 792

25	QS 29 p. 174 n° 362 (et QS 29 p. 20 n° 52)	25 dū al-qa'da 1019 / 8 février 1611	<i>Faḥr arbāb al-aqlām nuḥbat aṣḥāb al-arqām al-amīr</i> Aḥmad [Çelebi] b. al-marḥūm <i>al-amīr</i> Pervane, émir des <i>müteferrika</i> , apprenti comptable au Divan ( <i>ṣākird muḥāsabat al-dīwān</i> )	313 222 + 34 389 [= 347 611]
26	QS 29 p. 203 n° 403	Awāsiṭ dū al-ḥiġġa 1019 / 23 février-4 mars 1611	Surūr b. 'Abd Allāh, <i>müteferrika</i>	50 933
27	QS 29 p. 232 n° 475	27 muḥarram 1020 / 11 avril 1611	Maḥmūd b. <i>al-ṣayḥ</i> 'Alī al- Sanhūrī, muezzin	7 690
28	QS 29 p. 316 n° 669	3 raġab 1020 / 11 septembre 1611	<i>Al-ġanāb al-'ālī al-amīr</i> Yaḥyā b. 'Abd Allāh, <i>ṣavuş</i> du Divan du Caire	23 965
29	QS 38 p. 8 n° 17	8 rabī' II 1034 / 18 janvier 1625	<i>Faḥr al-a'yān wa-l-aqrān al-amīr</i> Ša'bān b. al-marḥūm <i>al-amīr</i> Aḥmad, émir des <i>Müteferrika</i>	181 292
30	QS 38 p. 88 n° 122	10 ramadān 1034 / 16 juin 1625	<i>Faḥr al-akābir wa-l-a'yān 'umdat dawī al-šān al-ġanāb al-'ālī al-amīr</i> Muṣṭafā b. al- marḥūm <i>al-amīr</i> Aḥmad « Ibn al-Ḥawāġġa Ḥiḍr », émir des Circassiens	526 459
31	QS 38 p. 150 n° 180	Début dū al-qa'da 1034 / 5 août 1625	<i>Al-ġanāb al-'ālī al-amīr</i> Muḥammad b. Bakīr, <i>müteferrika</i>	40 529
32	QS 38 p. 281 n° 365	22 muḥarram 1035 / 24 octobre 1625	<i>Faḥr al-akābir wa-l-a'yān al-ġanāb al-'ālī al-amīr</i> Piyale b. 'Abd Allāh, aga des Gönüllüyan	312 704
33	QS 38 p. 300 n° 394	Awāsiṭ rabī' I 1035 / 11-20 décembre 1625	<i>Faḥr al-aqrān al-amīr</i> Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd Allāh « al-Diwīdār », <i>gönüllü</i>	1 164 <i>gurüş</i> [= 34 920]

34	QS 38 p. 336 n° 439	7 ġumādā II [ <i>sic pour</i> I ?] 1035 / 6 mars [ou 6 février] 1626	<i>Faḥr arbāb al-aqlām ‘umdat</i> <i>aṣḥāb al-arqām al-qaḍā’ī</i> <i>al-...ī al-qāḍī</i> Šams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. <i>Mawlānā faḥr</i> <i>al-kuttāb al-muḥarrirīn ‘umdat</i> <i>al-ḥussāb al-mu’tabirīn al-</i> <i>qaḍā’ī al-...ī al-qāḍī</i> Badr al-Dīn « Ibn Abī Ṭāqīya », un des principaux secrétaires du Trésor ( <i>min a ‘yān katabat al-</i> <i>ḥazīna bi-Miṣr</i> )	70 790
35	QS 38 p. 344 n° 448	10 ġumādā I 1035 / 7 février 1626	<i>Al-ġanāb al-‘ālī al-amīr</i> Mustadām b. ‘Abd Allāh, <i>gōnüllü</i>	15 649
36	QS 38 p. 356 n° 466	22 ġumādā I 1035 / 19 février 1626	<i>Faḥr al-a ‘yān al-amīr</i> Farrūġ b. ‘Abd Allāh, <i>müteferrika</i>	12 437
37	QS 38 p. 373 n° 499	24 ġumādā I 1035 / 21 février 1626	<i>Al-amīr</i> ‘Abd al-Karīm b. al- marḥūm <i>al-amīr</i> Muḥammad « al-Zardakāšī (?) », régiment des ...	18 435

Tableau 6 : Composition des fortunes rurales

	Date de l'inventaire	Boeufs	Vaches et veaux	Buffles	Moutons	Chevaux	Ânes / Mulets (M)	Chameaux / Chamelles (N)	Araires	Traineaux à disques ( <i>nawrag</i> )	Autres
1	12 janvier 1581	1				3	1/2	1			
2	14-23 février 1611	5	2	1	10	15					<i>Zirā'a</i>
3	11 juin 1611	2				1		1			Créances, <i>zirā'at ful</i>
4	28 janvier-6 février 1590 (assassiné 17 août 1589)	109				9	5 (M)	70			Grains
5	11-20 février 1595	44			60	7 ½	1 (M)	9 + 1½ (N)		2	
6	9 avril 1595	4	1	1		1	1 (A)	2 + 1 (N)	20	4	Grains, <i>zirā'a</i>
7	24 août 1597	11		1		4	2	4	1	2 (3 ?)	Grains
8	23 août 1597	5	21	36	326	n.s.		2 + n.s.		n.s.	Grains + exploitation
9	22 mars 1598	12	2	2	186			5			Maison
10	?					2	1 (M)	24			
11	10 septembre 1598 (décédé 14-23 août 1598)	14	1	4	30	3		4			
12	17 mai 1599	34	1	1	12	6	1 (M)	19			Semences
13	15 juin 1602					4	1 (M)				<i>Zirā'a</i>
14	17 octobre 1602	20		... ?	160	... ?		15		... ?	Grains
15	20 août 1604	4		1		1		1	4		Grains
16	13 novembre 1604	7	1			1/2					Exploitation ?
17	20 janvier 1605					2		1 (N)	3		Grains

↓

	Date de l'inventaire	Boeufs	Vaches et veaux	Buffles	Moutons	Chevaux	Ânes / Mulets (M)	Chameaux / Chamelles (N)	Araires	Traineaux à disques ( <i>nawrağ</i> )	Autres
18	21-30 janvier 1605	79	30		250			11	16+15		Exploitations, grains, puits, <i>sāqīya</i> , <i>zarība</i> , <i>šīna</i> , 8 <i>ğarrāfa</i>
19	10 mars 1605	6	3	1/2	10	2			6	3	Grains
20	18-27 juin 1605	6						... ?			<i>Zirā'a</i>
21	19 septembre 1610	22	4	6	220	2		10	30	1	Grains, <i>zarība</i> , <i>zirā'a</i> , bac
22	23 novembre 1610	32 1/2	3 1/2	2	50	3		6 + 3 (N)			Grains, 1 <i>qaşşābiyya</i> , 8 <i>ğarrāfa</i> , outillage
23	30 novembre 1610	25	3	3	32	15	3 (A)	5		3	Semences
24	13 janvier 1611	151	19	31	260	7	5 (A) + 1 (M)	24	110	17	Grains, coton, bateaux, 13 <i>sāqīya</i>
25	8 février 1611	2				2		5	6	3	Grains, <i>zarība</i>
26	23 février-4 mars 1611	20		5	60	2		8	14	1	Grains et exploitation
27	11 avril 1611	2	1/2	1/2			1 (A)		1		<i>Zirā'a</i>
28	11 septembre 1611	6	6			7	1 (A)	3	3	2	
29	18 janvier 1625	81 1/2	18	30	607	28		16 + 3 (N)	46	3 1/2	2 <i>qaşşābiyya</i> , 6 1/2 1/3 1/4 <i>sāqīya</i> , 9 <i>ğarrāfa</i> ; Grains

	Date de l'inventaire	Boeufs	Vaches et veaux	Buffles	Moutons	Chevaux	Ânes / Mulets (M)	Chameaux / Chamelles (N)	Araires	Traineaux à disques ( <i>nawrag</i> )	Autres
30	16 juin 1625	225	82	55 ½	838	41 ⅔		14 + 9 (N)	74	16	9 <i>qasṣābīyya</i> , 60 <i>ḡarrāfā</i> , 14 <i>sāqīya</i>
31	5 août 1625	16		2	13	4 ½	2 (A)	2 + 1 (N)	9	2	<i>Qasṣābīyya</i> , grains, <i>zīrā'a</i> , <i>sāqīya</i>
32	24 octobre 1625	107	22	14	500	19	2 (M)	28		17	Grains, <i>zīrā'a</i>
33	11-20 décembre 1625	21	4 ?	12	290	8 + 4	4 (A)	4			Grains, <i>ḡanīna</i>
34	6 mars [ou 6 février] 1626	23			13	2	1 (M)		6		Grains, lin, <i>sāqīya</i> , 1 <i>qasṣābīyya</i>
35	7 février 1626	7		3	18				4		Lin, grains
36	19 février 1626	10	5 + 2 (V)	13		2 ½	1 (A)		4	3	grains
37	21 février 1626	25	1	5	57 ½	2	1 (M) + 2 (A)	6	10	1	Grains, ½ <i>sāqīya</i>





		Date de l'inventaire	Blé	Orge	Fèves	Lentilles	Pois des champs	Graines de trèfle	Sésame	Pois chiches	Sorgho	Halba	Graines de lin	<i>Qulqās</i>
[ ]														
21	19 septembre 1610	88 et 91,2	50	60	50	55	110		80					
22	23 novembre 1610	80 à 120	50	80 à 90	50 et 100		110 et 150		100				95	
23	30 novembre 1610	50		50										
25	8 février 1611	57		67,4 et 78									<i>Ahmās</i> 9,2	
26	23 février-4 mars 1611	80	60	80										
28	11 septembre 1611	55												
29	18 janvier 1625	40	8 et 10	22	15	15	42		26	10	10			
30	16 juin 1625	40 et 45	13,5 et 15	20 et 30	20	20	40 et 45	120		11,25			90 et 100	
31	5 août 1625	30	10	17	30 ?		45							
32	24 octobre 1625	40	20	20	20		40							
35	7 février 1626	37	15	25	33 1/3		94							

Tableau 8 : Valeur unitaire des autres biens ruraux š = šarīft, ġ = ġurūš

[ ]	Date de l'inventaire	Taux de change	Boeuf	Vache / (V) Veau	Buffle	Mouton	Cheval	(A) Âne / (M) Mulet	Chameau (N) Chamelle	Araire	Nawrag	Autres instruments
1	12 janvier 1581	šarīft : 41	205				396 1/3		(N) 205			
2	14-23 février 1611	šarīft : 46	6 š.	4 et 8 š.	6 š.	1 š.	8 à 80 š.					
3	11 juin 1611	šarīft : 40										
4	28 janvier-6 février 1590 (assassiné 17 août 1589)	šarīft : 40	327				770	792	659			
5	11-20 février 1595		173			20	400 à 1000	(M) 470	310 à 880 (N) 1000 à 1640		715	
6	9 avril 1595		250	480	400		1000 à 2400	(A) 240	(N) 800	10	300	
7	24 août 1597	?	153		15		266 et 1600	(A) 120	400	200	225 (150 ?)	
8	23 août 1597	?	200	119	166 2/3	40			220			
10	?	?	200	160	280	24,2			400			
11	10 septembre 1598 (décédé 14-23 août 1598)	?					800 et 1520	(M) 650	300 à 1066			

		Date de l'inventaire	Taux de change	Boeuf	Vache / (V) Veau	Buffle	Mouton	Cheval	(A) Âne / (M) Mulet	Chameau (N) Chamelle	Araire	Nawrag	Autres instruments
[ ]	12	17 mai 1599	?	280	220	220	220	620 à 1410	(M) 1400	480			
	13	15 juin 1602	šarīfī : 50					400 à 1280	(M) 800				
	14	17 octobre 1602		254			34	600 et 1200		334 2/3		... ?	
	15	20 août 1604	šarīfī : 50	200		200		600		400	5		
	16	13 novembre 1604	šarīfī : 48	192 à 280	160			1200					
	17	20 janvier 1605	šarīfī : 50					650 et 800		(N) 250	33 1/3		
	19	10 mars 1605		8 1/2 š.	4 š.	22 š.	0,7 š.	12 š.				2,9 š.	
	20	18-27 juin 1605		250						... ?			
	21	19 septembre 1610	šarīfī : 50	5,8 š. = 291	[4 š. =]	200	1 š.	22 et 26 š.		5 à 30 š.	1 š.	20 š.	
	22	23 novembre 1610		450 et 500	250 à 350	225	50	425 à 1000		900 + (N) 75 à 450			Ġarrāfa = 12,5 ; qasšābiyya ḥadīd = 150
	23	30 novembre 1610			300	400	40	1000 et 1125	(A) 66 1/3	650		500	
	24	13 janvier 1611		300	200	400	50	500 et 1000	(M) 600 (A) 100	600	50	600	Sāqīya = 500



	Date de l'inventaire	Taux de change	Boeuf	Vache / (V) Veau	Buffle	Mouton	Cheval	(A) Âne / (M) Mulet	Chameau (N) Chamelle	Araire	<i>Nawrağ</i>	Autres instruments
[ ] 25	8 février 1611		322				805		287 $\frac{1}{3}$ (N) 92	16 $\frac{1}{3}$	416 $\frac{2}{3}$	
26	23 février-4 mars 1611	<i>šarīft</i> : 50	6 š. [300]		200	50	1000		13 š. [650]	50	1000	
27	11 avril 1611		400	400				(A) 200		50		
28	11 septembre 1611		500	(V) 26 2/3			650 à 2000	(A) 250	666 $\frac{2}{3}$	33 $\frac{1}{3}$	500	
29	18 janvier 1625	<i>ğurūš</i> : 30	150 à 305	140 à 219	188 à 510	33,6 et 50	105 à 1200		410 à 900 + (N) 248 à 600	45 et 52	420 et 600	<i>Qaṣṣābīyya</i> = 90 ; <i>sāqīya</i> = 300 à 600 ; <i>ğarrāfa</i> = 20
30	16 juin 1625		188,6 à 300	101 $\frac{1}{4}$ et 130	186	40	249, 450		400, 600 + (N) 600	30	300 à 400	<i>Sāqīya</i> = 500 ; <i>qaṣṣābīyya</i> = 90 ; <i>ğarrāfa</i> = 3
31	5 août 1625		210 et 300		450	32,3	450 à 1500	(A) 45 et 60	780	43,9	500	
32	24 octobre 1625		180	60 et 120	310 à 1800	10 et 15	360 et 500	(M) 675	540		240	
33	11-20 décembre 1625	<i>ğurūš</i>	6 $\frac{1}{6}$ g.	2,5 ? g.	8 $\frac{1}{3}$ g.	0,64 g.	11 $\frac{1}{4}$ g.	(A) 2 g.	15 g.			

	Date de l'inventaire	Taux de change	Boeuf	Vache / (V) Veau	Buffle	Mouton	Cheval	(A) Âne / (M) Mulet	Chameau (N) Chamelle	Araire	Nawraq	Autres instruments
[ ] 34	6 mars [ou 6 février] 1626		146,5 et 180			13,8	450 et 600	(M) 1200		30		$Sāqīya = 300 ; qaṣṣābbīya = 30$
35	7 février 1626		300		150	58 $\frac{1}{3}$				30		
36	19 février 1626		270	106 $\frac{2}{3}$ et 120	75 à 195		315 à 720	(A) 75		45	300	
37	21 février 1626		240	105	180	27,8	600	(M) 450 (A) 60	450	25	450	$\frac{1}{2} sāqīya = 360$

**Tableau 9 :** Ventilation des grandes fortunes rurales par catégories de biens

[ ]	Village	Actif agricole total	Bétail <i>mawāšī</i>	Grains <i>ḡilāl</i>	Instruments
[24] janvier 1611		215 692	93 500 43,3 %	99 992 46,3 %	[22 200] 10,3 %
[29] janvier 1625	Manšiyyat Dahšūr (Ġīziyya)	22 753	[10 380] 45,6 %	[8 853] 38,9 %	[3 520] 15,5 %
	Suḥaym (Ġarbiyya)	106 057	[61 876] 58,3 %	34 255 32,3 %	9 926 9,4 %
[30] juin 1625	Kawm Ašfin (Qalyūbiyya)	45 626	[20 100] 44,0 %	[16 375] 35,9 %	[9 151] 20,1 %
	Qaranfīl (Qalyūbiyya)	64 351	44 610 69,3 %	15 221 23,6 %	4 520 7,0 %
	Dibirkā (Minūfiyya)	56 529	23 770 42,0 %	26 759 47,3 %	6 000 10,6 %
	Al-Basarīn (Buhayra)	16 724	2 100 12,6 %	[14 504] 86,7 %	120 <i>charrues seules</i> 0,7 %
	Qalyūb	124 284	50 350 40,5 %	[69 430] 55,9 %	4 504 3,6 %
[32] octobre 1625		80 445	[47 805] 59,4 %	28 560 35,5 %	4 080 <i>nawraġ seuls</i> 5,1 %

*Les sommes indiquées sont en paras. Les pourcentages sont ceux de la catégorie de biens, par rapport à l'ensemble des actifs agricoles. Les totaux restitués sont indiqués entre crochets.*



# THE RURAL HINTERLAND OF KARAFERYE: SETTLEMENTS, DIVISIONS, AND THE *ÇİFTLİK* PHENOMENON (SEVENTEENTH – EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES)

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THE TOPIC OF THIS ESSAY IS THE RURAL DISTRICT OF KARAFERYE, in present-day central Macedonia, Greece. More specifically, we will focus on two interrelated issues, namely, the distribution and evolution of human settlement as reflected in the Ottoman sources, and the divisions and boundaries which were imposed by the administrative and fiscal organisation of the physical space. In this context, we will also deal with the changes which are linked to a development that had a great impact on Karaferye, namely, the proliferation of the *çiflik* holdings.

The town of Veria – such is the Greek name of Karaferye – was first conquered by the Ottomans in the late fourteenth century (most probably in 1387), but was definitely incorporated into the Ottoman state in or around 1430.<sup>1</sup> The name of the town, which traced its foundation back to antiquity, to the times of the kings of Macedon, and of its district, was corrupted into Karaferye (Black Veria)<sup>2</sup> by the Ottomans, who maintained control until 1912, when Veria became part of the Greek state. From an administrative point of view, Karaferye was first part of the Pasha's district (Paşa sancağı or Paşa livâsı) and later on,

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1 The exact number and dates of the Ottoman conquests of Karaferye have long been debated and are still not certain. Some contributions to this matter include K. Stathopoulou-Asdracha, 'Οι τουρκικές καταλήψεις της Βέροιας (14<sup>ος</sup>, 15<sup>ος</sup> αι.) και τα προνόμια μιας χριστιανικής οικογένειας [The Turkish conquests of Veria (14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> c.) and the privileges of a Christian family]', *Επιθεώρηση Τέχνης*, 20/122 (1965), 152-157; V. Demetriades, *Η κεντρική και δυτική Μακεδονία κατά τον Εβλιγιά Τσελεμπή* [Central and western Macedonia according to Evliya Çelebi] (Thessaloniki 1973), 24-26; Th. Papazotos, *Η Βέροια και οι ναοί της (11ος-18ος αι.)* [Veria and its churches (11<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> c.)] (Athens 1994), 48, 110-111.

2 In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the name of the town was rendered Kara Verea (or Veye), with *ş*, in Ottoman Turkish. See, for instance, N. Todorov and A. Velkov, *Situation démographique de la Péninsule balkanique (fin du XV<sup>e</sup> s.-début du XVI<sup>e</sup> s.)* (Sofia 1988), 112; 167 Numaralı Muhâsebe-i Vilâyet-i Rûm-İli Defteri (937/1530): I. Dizin ve Tıpkıbasım (Ankara 2003), 135 (facsimile).

from the middle decades of the sixteenth century onwards, one of the sub-districts (*kaza*) of the district (*sancak*) of Salonica (Ott. Selânik), to Karaferiye's north-east.

The topography of the *kaza* of Karaferiye was characterised by diversity, much of which is lost today. Its western part, up to the town of Karaferiye, was mountainous, dominated as it was by the mountain range of Ağustos (mod. Vermio/Seli), with its highest peak at 2,052 metres located near the small town of Ağustos (mod. Naousa) north-west of Karaferiye. Mountains also covered much of the southern border. On the other hand, the part of the *kaza* east of Karaferiye was a flat plain all the way to the sea, which constituted the *kaza*'s eastern border over the greatest part of its length. On the south-eastern littoral, there were the extensive saltworks of the sub-district of Çitroz (mod. Kitros). To the north, the plain gave way to extensive rice fields and marshes which reached all the way to the now drained lake of Yenice (mod. Yannitsa). Further east, the *kaza*'s north-eastern land border with the *kaza* of Selânik was also wetland. It was here that the river İnce Kara Su (mod. Haliakmonas), one of the largest then and still in present-day Greece, reached the sea after running through the *kaza* in a south-west to north-east direction. The area around İnce Kara Su and all the way to Karaferiye was a combination of forests and extensive fertile plains, where wheat was cultivated, despite its being liable to heavy flooding. The French diplomat Esprit-Marie Cousinéry reports that on one occasion, which must be dated to the late eighteenth or the early nineteenth century, the river flooded, and a huge area remained inundated for ten years.<sup>3</sup>

### *Internal Divisions*

As elsewhere in the Ottoman lands, administrative divisions were superimposed on the physical topography of the region. As far as its overall size is concerned, the core of the *kaza*, coinciding with the modern regional unit of Imathia, remained stable over the centuries. The *kaza*'s northern and southern borders, however, were subject to change at certain periods. Furthermore, there were internal divisions which followed judicial-administrative, land, and tax configurations.

Thus, the town of Karaferiye and its immediate environs formed, from a fiscal point of view, a high-value revenue-producing district (*hass*) which was originally part of the estates of the *beylerbeyi* of Rumeli. In the course of the first half of the seventeenth century, however, we often find it attached to the sultan's estates (*havass-ı hümayun*), and, from the mid seventeenth century onwards, it was regularly awarded to princesses of the Ottoman dynasty.<sup>4</sup> A group of villages around Menlik (mod. Meliki), to the east of Karaferiye,

3 E. M. Cousinéry, *Voyage dans la Macédoine contenant des recherches sur l'histoire, la géographie et les antiquités de ce pays*, Vol. 1 (Paris 1831), 62-63, 66-68. Cousinéry, who travelled extensively in Macedonia, spent much of the period between 1773 and 1793 in Salonica in his capacity as a diplomat and was there again from 1815 to 1817 as a consul. For a recent overview of his life, with emphasis on his contribution to numismatics, see D. Williams, 'Esprit-Marie Cousinéry (1747-1833)', *INC Compte rendu*, 59 (2012), 27-37.

4 E. Gara, 'Kara Ferye 1500-1650: Menschen, Lokalgesellschaft und Verwaltung in einer Osmanischen Provinz', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Vienna University, 2000, 52, Table 8.

belonged, from the mid sixteenth century onwards, to the charitable foundation (*vakıf*) of Mihrimah Sultan, the daughter of Süleyman the Magnificent.<sup>5</sup> A little later, another group of villages (six or seven) had their revenues attached to the *vakıf* of Sultan Süleyman in the *kaza* of Serfice (mod. Servia).<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, the small town of Ağustos, to the north-west of Karaferye, belonged to the *vakıf* of Ahmed Bey of the Evrenosoğulları family, the descendants of the conquering warlord (*uç beyi*) of the fourteenth century Gazi Evrenos, who were based in nearby Yenice-i Vardar (mod. Yannitsa).<sup>7</sup>

Çitroz, another small town, this time to the south-east of Karaferye, was from early on the seat of a surrogate judge (*naib*) and administrative centre for the whole south-eastern part of the *kaza*. Çitroz also was the centre of a group of villages known as the ‘salters’ (*tuzcıyan*), which belonged to the sultanic estates.<sup>8</sup> In mid-eighteenth-century Otto-

5 According to notes inserted in Tapu Tahrir Defteri (henceforth: TTD) No. 433, the villages İne Kasrı, İne Sel, İsfince, Kopana, Lefterohor, Menlik, Prodrom and Vulçışta were turned into freehold property (*mülk*) of Sultan Süleyman on 12-21 March 1548. He must have subsequently donated them to his daughter’s charitable foundation in Üsküdar which was being built at the time by the famous architect Sinan. In the eighteenth century, these villages were known as ‘kura-ı Menlikân’. See, for instance, Karaferye Kadı Sicili, Vol. 76, pp. 21, 22, 24 (henceforth: KKS 76/21, 22, 24), of 1751. See also V. Günay, ‘H. 1159 (M. 1746) Tarihli Karaferye Kazası Şer’iye Sicili (Transkripsiyon ve Değerlendirme)’, unpublished Yüksek Lisans thesis, Ege University, 1993, 69, 80, 158-159. The *sicils*, that is, the registers of the *kadı* court, of Karaferye that are marked KKS are kept at the Imathia branch of the General State Archives of Greece in Veria. Other *sicils* of Karaferye are kept at archives in Turkey and Germany. The *tapu tahrir* registers are kept at the Başbakanlık Ottoman Archive in Istanbul.

6 See, for instance, KKS 15/167-168 (1638): “vilâyet-i Serficeye cennet-mekân-i firdevsi-yi aşiyân sultan Süleyman han tâba serrâhünün evkâfı defterine tâbi’...” The villages were Istavroz, Servohor, Şikâ, Mesovit, Lutroz, and Monoşpita. This imperial endowment obtained revenue also from other villages situated in *kazas* in the vicinity of the *kaza* of Serfice. Cf. B. Cvetkova (et al.), *Opis na dzizie registri zapazeni v orientalskija otdel na narodnata biblioteka ‘Kiril i Metodii’* (Sofia 1983), Nos 142 (1043/1634), 159 (1045/1635), 399 (1075/1664-5), 404 (1076/1665-6); E. Radushev, S. Ivanova, R. Kovachev, *Inventory of Ottoman Turkish Documents about Waqf Preserved in the Oriental Department at the St St Cyril and Methodius National Library. Part 1 – Registers* (Sofia 2003), Nos 124 (1043/1634), 128 (1044/1634), 174 and 176 (1065/6-1654) (1066-7/1655-1657). We would like to thank Dr Phokion Kotzageorgis who kindly provided us with this information and the bibliographical references to Sultan Süleyman’s endowment in Serfice.

7 Another five villages (“İdri ve diğer İdri, İne, Liziko and Ploki”), presumably in the vicinity of Ağustos, were also part of the Evrenosoğulları *vakıf*. These villages were dedicated by Gazi Evrenos himself.

8 To be precise, the sub-district of Çitroz included both salters’ and common villages; furthermore, even in the former not everybody was a salter. This is evident from the sixteenth-century *tapu tahrir* registers (TTD Nos 424, 433, 723), which record separately the common *reaya* and the *tuzcıyan*. The salters had extensive tax immunities in exchange for their services to the state (salt production and trade was a state monopoly), which partially continued well into the eighteenth century, as evident from the recording of ‘tuzcıyan’ as a separate village category. See, for instance, KKS 76/21, 22, 24 (1751); Günay, ‘H. 1159 (M. 1746) Tarihli Karaferye Kazası Şer’iye Sicili’, 69, 80, 160.

man sources, however, Çitroz was recorded as a section (*kalem*, *mukata'a*) of the *hass* of Longoz, on the peninsula of Chalkidiki, to the south-east of Salonica.<sup>9</sup> The Longoz *hass* belonged to the chief black eunuch of the sultan's palace (*darüssaade ağası* or *kızlar ağası*) from at least the late seventeenth century,<sup>10</sup> but, according to a contract of lease of the tax district of Çitroz, it was no longer held by this official in the mid 1760s.<sup>11</sup> The matter is not entirely clear,<sup>12</sup> but if this information is accurate, the change must be associated with the policy of Grand Vizier Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa (in office 1757-1763), who stripped the chief black eunuch of various fiscal possessions, re-incorporated them into the sultan's estates, and then had them farmed out to other persons.<sup>13</sup> Apart from Çitroz, there were some other villages in the *kaza* of Karaferye which belonged to the charitable endowments of Mecca and Medina, also under the administration of the chief black eunuch and likewise taken away from him, as it seems, around 1760.<sup>14</sup>

9 See, for instance, KKS 81/372/entry No. 3 (henceforth: 81/372/3) (1759).

10 On the *hass* of Longoz (referred to also as the *hass* or *mukata'a* of Langaza, or as a fiscal unit of the latter), see V. Demetriades, 'Φορολογικές κατηγορίες των χωριών της Θεσσαλονίκης κατά την Τουρκοκρατία [Fiscal categories of the villages of Salonica during the period of Turkish rule]', *Μακεδονικά*, 20 (1980), 429-430; E. Kolonos, 'Χωρικοί και μοναχοί στην οθωμανική Χαλκιδική, 15<sup>ος</sup>-16<sup>ος</sup> αιώνες: όψεις της οικονομικής και κοινωνικής ζωής στην ύπαιθρο και η Μονή Ξηροποτάμου [Peasants and monks in Ottoman Chalkidiki, 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries: aspects of economic and social life in the countryside and the Xeropotamou Monastery]', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2000, 94-100; Ph. P. Kotzageorgis, *Η αθωνική Μονή Αγίου Παύλου κατά την οθωμανική περίοδο* [The Athonite Monastery of St Paul during the Ottoman period] (Thessaloniki 2002), 102-104.

11 KKS 85/299/3 (1765); cf. I. K. Vasdravelles (ed.), *Ιστορικά αρχεία Μακεδονίας: Α'. Αρχείο Θεσσαλονίκης, 1695-1912* [Historical archives of Macedonia. I: Archive of Salonica, 1695-1912] (Thessaloniki 1952), 256 (No. 189).

12 In a private communication, Dr Phokion Kotzageorgis has informed us that Longoz is still cited as a *hass* of the chief black eunuch in documents of 1765-1766 about Sikia, a village in Chalkidiki. We thank Dr Kotzageorgis for this information.

13 For the case of the tax district of Athens, which was also taken away from the chief black eunuch and farmed out on a lifelong lease in 1760, see Th. N. Philadelphus, *Ιστορία των Αθηνών επί Τουρκοκρατίας από τον 1400 μέχρι τον 1800* [A history of Athens under Turkish rule from 1400 to 1800], Vol. 1 (Athens 1902), 296-304; E. Gara, 'Patterns of Collective Action and Political Participation in the Early Modern Balkans', in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Political Initiatives 'From the Bottom Up' in the Ottoman Empire. Halcyon Days in Crete VII, A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 9-11 January 2009* (Rethymno 2012), 416 n. 65.

14 These villages either were near Çitroz (Palyaneşt[an]i, Kozamara [?]), or were recorded as villages of the tax district (*kalem*) of Çitroz (Durman, Çerkoyani), even though they were at a considerable distance from Çitroz itself. See, for instance, KKS 85/758/2 (1763), 85/301/1 (1765), 91/858 (1770); cf. KKS 85/299/3 (1765). On the management of the endowments of Mecca and Medina and other imperial endowments by the chief black eunuch, see *TDVİA*, s.v. 'Dārüssaāde' (Ü. Altındağ), 2-3, and 'Haremeyn' (Ş. T. Buzpınar and M. S. Küçükacı), 154. According to J. R. Barnes, *An Introduction to Religious Foundations in the Ottoman Empire* (Leiden 1987), 68-69, control of the endowments was removed from the chief black eunuch during the grand vizierate of Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa, and was restored to him in the mid 1770s.

On the basis of the above, we may argue that, from a fiscal and/or judicial point of view, the *kaza* of Karaferye was divided into four major sub-districts: Karaferye, Ağustos, Menlik, and Çitroz. These internal divisions were very pronounced: the *vakıf* villages as well as those of the *nahiye* of Çitroz seem practically not to make use of the Karaferye court of law; they are documented only in imperial orders regarding taxation or other administrative documents. It seems that for the inhabitants of those villages the capital of the *kaza* and the urban institutions were a distant world. Probably this changed somewhat around the mid seventeenth century: under the combined pressure of the rest of the population, who could not cope with the continuously rising taxes and demands of the central state, and of the imperial administration, which was trying to broaden the tax base, the *vakıf* and *tuzcuyan* villages were forced to share in the tax load.<sup>15</sup> This in practice resulted in a more substantial integration of those areas into the *kaza*.

We find evidence for this development in the *tevzi defterleri*, the lists for the distribution of public expenses among the local population, which were recorded in the *kadı* court registers. Unknown in earlier centuries, such lists became a standard feature of the *kadı sicils* from the late seventeenth century onwards, as the administration of the district's public finances passed into the hands of local leaders and representatives of the taxpaying population (*ayan*, *kethüdas*, *kocabaşıs*). The regularisation of the procedure of tax distribution was reflected in the gradual emergence of a new nomenclature for the *kaza*'s sub-districts, which had remained rather informal until that time –with the obvious exception of the *nahiye* of Çitroz.

By the early eighteenth century, the internal divisions of the *kaza* of Karaferye (that is, leaving the town aside) had crystallised into three main categories: i) villages (*kura*), which were further divided into *çiftlik* households (*haneha-ı çiftliğân*) and villa-ge households (*haneha-ı kura*); ii) Menligân (Melikochoria), that is 'the Menlik villages', a collective designation for the *vakıf* villages of Mihrimah Sultan;<sup>16</sup> and iii) salters

15 For instance, in 1649 the inhabitants of Ağustos were forced to pay the *avarız* tax in the form of a lump sum (*maktu*) of 7,000 *akçes*, while in 1651 the *reaya* population of the whole *kaza* of Karaferye managed to procure a *ferman* ordering the *vakıf* villages of the district to contribute to the *bedel-i nüzüil* tax by way of the so called 'aid to the neighbour' (*konşu yardımı*). See, respectively, KKS 19/66 (1649) and KKS 20/22v/1 and 22r/3 (1651).

16 The name Menligân was established in the late seventeenth century. In a *tevzi* register of 1681 these villages are referred to as "karye-i Menlik ve Seli ma'an tevâbiha"; digital KKS (henceforth: Dig. KKS) 31/53-54 [pp. 320-321] (1681), 'Archeiomnemon', <http://arxeiomnemon.gak.gr/browse/resource.html?tab=01&id=175573>. The same designation is to be found also in KKS 33/3v (1686). In another register of 1686, however, we read "kura-yı Menligân ma'an tevâbiha"; Dig. KKS 33/60-61 [pp. 59-60] (1686). A note on the mode of reference: 'Archeiomnemon' is the portal which hosts the digital collection of the Greek General State Archives, among which the Archives of Imathia. The folders in the digital collection of KKS do not always coincide with the numbering of the *kadı* court registers preserved in the Archives of Veria. Furthermore, it is not clear if the digital collection contains all the surviving *sicil* fragments and, if yes, in which order. Therefore, when referring to a document from the Archeiomnemon collection, we cite the number of the digital folder followed by the number of the digital document (.jpg) and the page number in square brackets.

(*tuzcıyan*).<sup>17</sup> The last category included the town of Çitroz and the salters' villages of its sub-district, while the rest were included in the *kura* category. Another group of villages, known as 'the villages of the *hass*' (*hass kurası*), does not always appear in the *tevzi* lists, since their share in the public expenses was often recorded together with that of the town of Karaferiye, sometimes in separate registers.<sup>18</sup> Lastly, it should be noted that, as in (i) above, each of these categories was further divided into sub-sets, as *çiftlik* and independent villages were recorded separately (more on this below).

These categories did not remain operative for very long. From the 1760s onwards they disappear from the *tevzi* registers and all the villages are once again listed under the same heading, namely 'the *kaza* of Karaferiye' (*kaza-ı Karaferiye*) or simply '*kaza*'.<sup>19</sup> It is not clear what triggered this change; it is probable, however, that it is connected to the chiftlicisation process. As we shall discuss later in more detail, in the course of the eighteenth century the overwhelming majority of agricultural land in the *kaza* of Karaferiye came under the control of almost exclusively Muslim landholders. In earlier decades, this transformation had given rise to the need to record separately the *çiftlik* and the independent villages; by the 1760s, however, the extensive chiftlicisation of the district may have rendered this practice impractical. It must be noted, on the other hand, that the memory of the old administrative and fiscal categories did not completely disappear and they continued to resurface occasionally in the second half of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century. Thus, for instance, the preamble of a list of distribution of a monetised sheep tax (*celepkeşan ağnamı bedeli*) refers to the *tuzcıyan* villages and other settlements as distinct units,<sup>20</sup> while a list of 1785 distinguishes, again in its introductory text, the *kura* from the *çiftlik*s.<sup>21</sup>

Unlike the Menlik villages, the town of Ağustos and the *vakıf* villages of the Evrenosoğulları did not contribute to the *kaza*'s public expenses. It appears that Ağustos, which lay, as noted, to the north-west of Karaferiye and was inhabited almost exclusively by Christians, was emancipated as early as the mid seventeenth century. Unlike the other internal divisions of the *kaza* of Karaferiye (Menlik villages and *nahiye* of Çitroz),

17 See, for example, Dig. KKS 61/62-63 [pp. 79-80] (1724).

18 See, for instance, Dig. KKS 41/50-51 [p. 52-53] (1698) and 62/16 [p. 695] (1727). Among them there were also three of the *vakıf* villages of Sultan Süleyman (İstavroz, Servohor, and Monoşpita).

19 See, for instance, Dig. KKS 83/46-47 [pp. 910-911] (1761) and 85/43-44 [pp. 1017-1018] (1762); KKS 91/860-863 (1770).

20 "... ber mu'tad-ı kadim mahallât-ı Müslümanan altıbinaltıyüz akçe ve Katerin ve Tuzcuyan karyelerine ber vech-i maktu beşbinikiyüz akçe ve Yancista karyesine üçyüzaltmış akçe ikrar olunduktan sonra..."; KKS 85/760.

21 "Bais-i tahrir-i defter oldur ki medine-i Karaferiye kazasının bilcümle âyan ve ashab-ı çiftlikân ve reaya-ı varoş ve kura ve vükelâ-ı vilâyet meclis-i şer'e gelüb ... ber mu'tad-ı kadim hisse-i varoş ... akçe ifraz ve maada hisse-i kaza olan ... akçe zeyl-i defterde tahrir ve beyan olunduktan sonra..."; KKS 99/59-62.



Ağustos was elevated to the status of an independent *kaza* around 1640,<sup>22</sup> and maintained this status in the course of the eighteenth century as well. However, it is interesting to note that some eighteenth-century orders which concerned both Karaferye and Ağustos were addressed only to the *kadı* of the former town,<sup>23</sup> which, if not an oversight of the central scribal service, may suggest that Ağustos was not fully separated from Karaferye.

While matters relating to the administration of public expenses promoted the integration of the *kaza*'s settlements, other developments worked in the opposite direction. The proliferation of *çiftlik*-holdings in the plain of Karaferye from the late seventeenth century onwards and, especially, the expansion of the life tax-farms (*malikâne*), as can be observed in the eighteenth century, created new internal divisions or accentuated old ones. This is particularly true of the area of Çitroz, which came, around 1760, if not earlier, under the control of Hasan Ağa, the Albanian tax-farmer *cum* governor (*voyvoda*) of the nearby town of Katerin (mod. Katerini), the major town of the *kaza* of Platamone, to the south of Çitroz, and later of his sons.<sup>24</sup> Hasan Ağa's family managed to obtain not only lands but also the tax-farms of both the *hass* of Çitroz, which included the town of the same name and the old *tuzcıyan* villages, and a group of seven villages around Kilindir (mod. Kolindros) and Libanova (mod. Eginio), a little more to the north. These villages belonged at that time to the *vakıf* of Seyyid Hasan Paşa, Grand Vizier in 1743-1746.<sup>25</sup> Even though Çitroz remained part of the *kaza* of Karaferye, as evidenced by its inclusion in the official lists of distribution of fiscal and other communal expenses of that *kaza* in the second half of the eighteenth century, its association with Katerin through the family of Hasan Ağa must have gradually loosened its ties with Karaferye.<sup>26</sup> It was apparently as a result of this that the area of Çitroz became, in the late eighteenth century, a sub-district (*nahiye*) of the newly formed *kaza* of Katerin.<sup>27</sup>

22 The first mention of a separate *kaza* of Ağustos that has come to our notice is to be found in KKS 16/306 (1640).

23 See, for instance, KKS 85/7/2 and Rumeli Ahkâm Defteri No. 21, entry No. 612 (1765). The Rumeli Ahkâm Defterleri are registers which contain summaries of imperial decrees, and are kept at the Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi in Istanbul.

24 There are various entries about Hasan Ağa in the *sicil* of 1746 that Vehbi Günay has studied. In one of them, regarding a dispute between Hasan and the people of Karaferye (*Karaferye ahali-leri*), the former is mentioned as the holder of the *mukata'a* of the Holy Cities (*merkum Hasan'ın uhde-i iltizamında olan mukata'a-ı Haremeyn-i Muhteremeyn'nin cesim mukata'alarından olub*). Günay, 'H. 1159 (M. 1746) Tarihli Karaferye Kazası Şer'iye Sicili', 72-74, 330-331.

25 On Seyyid Hasan Paşa, see İ. H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*. IV. Cilt, II. Kısım: XVIII. Yüzyıl (Ankara 1995), 360-363; Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmanî*, Vol. 2 (Istanbul 1996), 643-644.

26 On the tax-farms and landholdings of Hasan Ağa and his sons, see A. Anastasopoulos, 'Imperial Institutions and Local Communities: Ottoman Karaferye, 1758-1774', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1999, 2, 32-33, 41, 43. For Çitroz as a *çiftlik* of Veli Paşa, the son of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, in the early nineteenth century, see V. Panagiotopoulos with D. Dimitropoulos and P. Michailaris (eds), *Αρχείο Αλή Πασά συλλογής Ι. Χώτζη Γενναδείου Βιβλιοθήκης της Αμερικανικής Σχολής Αθηνών* [The Ali Paşa archive of the I. Chotzis collection at the Gennadius Library of the American School at Athens], Vol. 3 (Athens 2007), 549.

27 *Tevzi* tax registers of 1785 make no mention of either Çitroz or Katerin; they record only four



The remark that the British military officer, antiquarian and surveyor William Martin Leake, who visited Karaferiye in 1806, made that at that time Kilindir, to the north of Çitroz, “formerly belonged to Véria, but is now enumerated among the villages of Elasona” may be read in the above context.<sup>28</sup> At the present state of our knowledge, it is not clear why Leake associated Kilindir not with Platamone/Katerin but with Elassona (Ott. Alasonya), which is further away to the south-west, but this may have to do with the particular circumstances of that period, namely the expansion of the rule of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa and his sons to this region, as discussed below.

In concluding this preliminary overview of the internal divisions and the borders of the *kaza*, we should not fail to make two more points. After describing his sojourn in Lefterohor (mod. Palaio Eleftherochori), a village near the coast, to the south-east of Karaferiye, the British physician Sir Henry Holland remarked: “This district is the most easterly part of the territory of Ali Pasha, and the point at which he approaches nearest to Constantinople. It was formerly mentioned that his requisitions in the region of the ancient Macedonia comprize (sic) four large cantons, stretching westwards from that part of the Pindus chain about Ochrida, Kastoria, &c. to the head of the gulph (sic) of Salonica.”<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the inclusion, around 1798, of Karaferiye in the vast territory that Tepedelenli Ali Paşa of Yanya and his family controlled in the southern Balkans must have rendered the external borders and internal divisions of the *kaza* of Karaferiye irrelevant, or, at least, it must have lessened their importance. Unfortunately, little is known about the district of Karaferiye in this period, but it seems that Ali Paşa and his family used here, too, what had become by then standard practice for people like them when they wanted to impose their rule on an area: a combination of brute force, taking over of tax-farms, and *çiftlik*-formation and appropriation.<sup>30</sup>

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of the villages that used to belong to the *nahiye* of Çitroz, namely Libanova, Loncanoz, Kilindir and Kadahya. All of them were situated in the northern part of the former sub-district; Dig. KKS 100/2-3, 11-12, 26-27 (1785).

28 W. M. Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, Vol. 3 (London 1835), 293. Panagiotopoulos with Dimitropoulos and Michailaris (eds), *Αρχείο Αλή Πασά*, 1:618, note that Kilindir is not known to have been a *çiftlik* of Ali Paşa. For petitions of the people of Kilindir to Ali Paşa, see *ibid.*, 1:618-621, 2:53-56. For a document of 1814 referring to the “return of Kilindir by *ferman* to Karaferiye” (“ο Κολιντρος εγηρεσε με φερμανι στο Βεργοτηκο”), see *ibid.*, 2:466-467.

29 Cf. H. Holland, *Travels in the Ionian Isles, Albania, Thessaly, Macedonia, &c. during the Years 1812 and 1813* (London 1815), 308-309.

30 For a recent treatment of this period and a recapitulation of earlier Greek scholarship about it, see G. D. Moschopoulos, *Το Ρουμλούκι (Καμπανία) κατά την πρώιμη και μέση οθωμανοκρατία (14<sup>ος</sup> αιώνας – 1830)* [Roumlouki (Kampania) during the early and middle period of Ottoman rule (14<sup>th</sup> century – 1830)] (Thessaloniki 2012), 184-206, 216. See also S. P. Aravantinos, *Ιστορία Αλή Πασά του Τεπελενλή* [History of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa] (Athens 1895), 606; I. I. Giannopoulos, ‘Τα τσιφλίκια του Βελή πασά υιού του Αλή πασά’ [The *çiftliks* of Veli Paşa, son of Ali Paşa], *Μνήμων*, 2 (1972), 135-158, esp. 153; A. Uzun, ‘Tepedelenli Ali Paşa ve Mal Varlığı’, *Belleten*, 65/244 (2001), 1035-1077, esp. 1062-1063, 1072-1073; H. Sezer, ‘Tepedelenli Ali Paşa ve Oğullarının Çiftlik ve Gelirlerine İlişkin Yeni Bilgi – Bulgular’, *OTAM*, 18

The second point to be made is that for the Christian population of the *kaza* of Karaferye there also existed the ecclesiastical divisions, which did not coincide with the administrative ones. Thus, Ağustos remained under the authority of the Metropolitan of Veria even after it became a *kaza*, while the district of Çitroz and the villages near the north-eastern border of the *kaza* of Karaferye were independent bishoprics under the authority of the Metropolitan of Salonica, not of Veria.<sup>31</sup> Given that the Church had not only spiritual authority over the faithful, but also tax-collecting rights, and that it was involved in local politics, it was an important factor in the lives of the Christians.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, monasteries owned landed property, which sometimes was substantial.<sup>33</sup> For instance, the French diplomat François Pouqueville described the Monastery of Prodromos, to the south-east of the town of Karaferye, as the owner of various dependencies, vineyards, and fields.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, in eighteenth-century *tevzi defters*, which reflect the revenue-producing capacity of the settlements of the *kaza*, the Monastery of Prodromos, but also others, such as the monasteries at Dovra (Ott. Dobra), to the north-west of Karaferye, Vulçista, to its east, and Moutsiali, to its south-east, were allocated shares expressed in terms related to agriculture (*çift*) or animal husbandry (*ganem*).<sup>35</sup> Overall, however, monastic landownership and its impact on the countryside of Karaferye have not been studied adequately.<sup>36</sup>

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(2005), 333-357, esp. 336, 340, 344-351; Panagiotopoulos with Dimitropoulos and Michailaris (eds), *Αρχείο Αλή Πασά*, 4 vols (Athens 2007-2009).

31 Bishoprics of Kitros and Campania, respectively.

32 P. Konortas, *Οθωμανικές θεωρήσεις για το Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο: βεράτια για τους προκαθήμενους της Μεγάλης Εκκλησίας (17<sup>ος</sup> – αρχές 20<sup>ού</sup> αιώνα)* [Ottoman perspectives of the Ecumenical Patriarchate: *berats* for the heads of the Great Church (17<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries)] (Athens 1998); M. N. Michael, *Η εκκλησία της Κύπρου κατά την οθωμανική περίοδο (1571-1878): η σταδιακή συγκρότησή της σε θεσμό πολιτικής εξουσίας* [The Church of Cyprus in the Ottoman period (1571-1878): its gradual consolidation into an institution of political authority] (Nicosia 2005). See also A. Anastasopoulos, 'Building Alliances: A Christian Merchant in Eighteenth-Century Karaferye', *Oriente Moderno* n.s., 25/1 (2006), 68-69.

33 Kolonos, 'Χωρικοί και μοναχοί'; Kotzageorgis, *Η αθωνική Μονή Αγίου Παύλου*; S. N. Laiou, *Τα οθωμανικά έγγραφα της μονής Βαρλαάμ Μετεώρων, 16<sup>ος</sup>-19<sup>ος</sup> αι.* [The Ottoman documents of the Varlaam Monastery at Meteora, 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> c.] (Athens 2011).

34 F. C. H. L. Pouqueville, *Voyage de la Grèce*, Vol. 3 (Paris 1826), 89-90 ("On a attaché à sa mense plusieurs metoecies ou succursales, des vignobles et des fermes appelées *Agrous*").

35 For list entries which concern monasteries, see, for instance, KKS81/388 (1759), KKS 85/760 (1765), KKS 85/777 (1765), KKS 88/634 (1768). See also KKS 96/296 (1777), where dependencies (*metochia*) of the Monasteries of Prodromos and "Olymboz" (the Agios Dionysios of Mount Olympus Monastery?) are recorded. The monastery at Vulçista is known as a dependency of the Osiou Gregoriou Monastery on Mount Athos.

36 Cf. Ph. P. Kotzageorgis, 'Τα μοναστήρια ως οθωμανικές τοπικές ελίτ [Monasteries as Ottoman local elites]', in E. Kolonos (ed.), *Μοναστήρια, οικονομία και πολιτική: από τους μεσαιωνικούς στους νεότερους χρόνους* [Monasteries, economy and politics: from medieval to modern times] (Heraklion 2011), 179-184.

### Settlements

*Tapu tahrir* registers of the first half of the sixteenth century, which are the earliest fully surviving sources of this type, indicate a total number of 180-190 villages in the *kaza* of Karaferye: 179 in c. 1526, 188 in c. 1543.<sup>37</sup> A large number of these villages antedated the Ottoman conquest,<sup>38</sup> and were still inhabited almost exclusively by Christians at this period, which suggests that the establishment of Ottoman rule did not greatly affect the pattern of human settlement in the region of Karaferye. Villages were situated not only in the plain, but also in the mountains. It must be noted that the settlement of mountainous areas in Greece and elsewhere in the Balkans has often been attributed to the withdrawal of local populations to the safety of the mountains as a result of Ottoman conquest.<sup>39</sup> It is, however, highly unlikely that this was the case in Karaferye. The survival of late Byzantine villages, the absence of Turkish colonisation in the plain and the large number of settlements recorded as early as 1519, all indicate that the villages in the mountainous areas of the *kaza* were rather the result of early demographic growth.

If the data from the *tapu tahrir* registers are to be trusted, the population of the countryside experienced stagnation in the first half of the sixteenth century, which was followed by a steep decrease: between 1543 and 1568 the *kaza* lost 25 per cent of its taxpaying population. This development, however, did not lead to the desertion of settlements. On the contrary, many villages were deserted in the second half of the sixteenth century, at a time of demographic recovery for the *kaza*. This is not as paradoxical as it seems, because the sources indicate a change in the settlement pattern at that time. It appears that small settlements were deserted in favour of larger ones; the villages of the early seventeenth century are, on the average, larger than those of the early sixteenth.<sup>40</sup>

The demographic recovery of the second half of the sixteenth century did not last long. In the first half of the seventeenth century the population decreased at a steady pace, with 1645 appearing to be a turning point with regard to the demography of the *kaza*. If we juxtapose the original official figures of the various tax registers of the period 1645-1651 with the amended figures that were supposed to reflect the actual situation on the ground,<sup>41</sup> we conclude that the number of taxpaying households dwindled very rapidly

37 The oldest surviving register is the undated TTD 986, which was probably composed in 1506 and survives only in fragment. TTD 70 (again a fragment) dates, according to BOA's catalogue, from 1519. TTD 424 and 433 date from the era of Süleyman the Magnificent. TTD 424 was most probably composed in 1526 and 433 in 1543. TTD 723 dates from 1568 and not 1613, as cited in the archive's catalogue, but probably repeats earlier data. About the dating of the *tapu tahrir* registers of Karaferye, see Gara, 'Kara Ferye 1500-1650', 86-87.

38 Cf. G. Ch. Chionides, *Ιστορία της Βεροίας, της πόλεως και της περιοχής*. Τόμος δεύτερος: *Βυζαντινοί χρόνοι* [A history of Veria, the town and the district. Volume II: The Byzantine era] (Thessaloniki 1970), 105.

39 See, for instance, *ibid.*, 68.

40 These trends are discussed in detail in Gara, 'Kara Ferye 1500-1650', 89-113.

41 The official figures were included in the tax registers drawn up in Istanbul, the so-called imperial registers (*defter-i hakâni*). These were based on earlier surveys and did not reflect the demographic decline, which is why they became the object of negotiation between the notables

within only a few years. To give an example, in the years between 1645 and 1648, there was, according to *cizye* tax registers, a significant decrease in the number of Christian households throughout the *kaza*: 5.7% in the town of Karaferye, 19.6% in the old *vakıf* villages, 17.9% in the new ones, 14.5% in the villages of the sub-district of Çitroz, and 25.6% in the remaining villages of the *kaza*.<sup>42</sup>

It should be borne in mind, however, that tax registers are not population surveys and their use for demographic purposes is always fraught with risk. We can never be certain that the sources reflect a demographic crisis in the sense of a real fall in the population and not an economic crisis that resulted in the decrease of the taxpaying households.<sup>43</sup> We know that the middle decades of the seventeenth century were a period of severe economic and fiscal crisis, and this is clearly reflected in the records.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, given the fact that both the tax and the *kadı* court registers constantly mention in those years fleeing taxpayers (*gürihte*) and deserted villages, there is no doubt that there was also a real drop in the population of the *kaza*. A severe failure in agricultural production in 1647<sup>45</sup> may have triggered the collapse of a population already exhausted by the steep rise in tax demands by the central state and the exactions of local power-holders. Unlike what had happened in the second half of the sixteenth century, this time the desertion of several villages seems not to have been part of a shift in the pattern of settlement but to have been accompanied by overall population decline.

The changing nature of available documentation prevents us from drawing definite conclusions, but it seems that the population continued to fall and villages to disappear in the second half of the seventeenth century. If the *cizye* tax registers are to be trusted, by the 1670s the villages in the hinterland of Karaferye had lost more than 60 and those in the sub-district of Çitroz more than 70 per cent of their Christian taxpayers as compared

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of the *kaza* and tax collectors. Once a compromise was reached, a new register was drawn up, with amended figures, and the tax load was redistributed accordingly. Both registers were copied into the registers of the *kadı* court, the source of our information. For a detailed discussion of the demographic developments, see *ibid*.

42 Gara, 'Kara Ferye 1500-1650', 105, Table 19.

43 The matter was hotly debated in the 1980s, with Maria Todorova questioning Bruce McGowan's conclusion regarding the decrease of the Balkan population in the seventeenth century. B. McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade, and the Struggle for Land, 1600-1800* (Cambridge 1981); M. Todorova, 'Was There a Demographic Crisis in the Ottoman Empire in the Seventeenth Century?', *EB*, 2 (1988), 55-63. For a recapitulation of the debate (with further literature) and new findings on Anatolia, see O. Özel, 'Population Changes in Ottoman Anatolia during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries: The "Demographic Crisis" Reconsidered', *IJMES*, 36 (2004), 183-205.

44 Between 1645 and 1651, the *avarız* households dropped in the town of Karaferye from 181 to 146 and in the villages (with the exclusion of the *vakıf* villages and the *tuzcuyan* population) from 899 to 506.5; Gara, 'Kara Ferye 1500-1650', 110, Table 21. The *avarız* households were tax units which reflected the economic vigour of the district.

45 According to the testimony of village elders, that year's crop was only half a normal one; KKS 18/5r/3 (1647).

to the early 1600s (Tables 1, 2). Admittedly, many households may have converted to Islam but, in the absence of quantifiable data, it is impossible to estimate the demographic impact of conversion, if any. Given the fact, however, that there is no report of noticeable Muslim village population in the *kaza* of Karaferye, conversion alone cannot account for the steep drop in Christian households from the late 1640s onwards.

**Table 1:** Christian taxpaying households (*cizye haneleri*) in the hinterland of Karaferye in the seventeenth century

Year	1600	1620	1645	1664	1675
<i>Hanes</i>	2,638	2,461	2,278	1,177	952

SOURCES: MM (Maliyeden Müdevver) 14961 (1600), BOA, Istanbul; KKS 9/83 (1620), 17/43 (1645), 23/398 (1664), 29/1r (1675), General State Archives of Greece – Imathia Branch, Veria.

NOTE: The list does not include the taxpaying households of *vakıf* villages or those of the sub-district of Çitroz.

**Table 2:** Christian taxpaying households (*cizye haneleri*) in the *nahiye* of Çitroz in the seventeenth century

Year	early 17 <sup>th</sup> c. <sup>46</sup>	early 1640s <sup>47</sup>	1647	1687
<i>Hanes</i>	1,437	1,078	922 <sup>48</sup>	382

SOURCES: KKS 15/491 (1639), 17/30v-31r (1647), 33/443a (1685) and 443c (1687).

A degree of demographic recovery was achieved only in the early eighteenth century. New villages made their appearance, particularly in the first half of that century, while other villages expanded, as is indicated by epithets which denote separation into an ‘upper’ and a ‘lower’ or an ‘old’ and a ‘new’ village (e.g., Kopanovo-yı Bala and Kopanovo-yı Zir or Servohor-ı Atik and Servohor-ı Cedid as compared to mere Kopano and Servohor, respectively, in the sixteenth and seventeenth-century registers). In any case, the number of villages recorded in the registers of the mid eighteenth century onwards is roughly the same as that of a century earlier. Vehbi Günay, who has studied a *kadı* court

46 The *defter* dates from 1639 but its figures are based on an earlier census. This is evident not only from the high number of households recorded but also from some notes made by the scribe who copied it into the *kadı* court register.

47 The *defter* dates from 1647 but its figures are based on an earlier census, which was obviously conducted after 1639 (cf. note above).

48 The figure results from the extraction of the households in deserted villages (a total of 156 *hanes*) from the number given in the imperial register (1,078 *hanes*). The list of deserted villages is preceded by the headline “bâlâda mestur olan Çitroz defterlerinin gürihte olan köyleri tekrar bu mahallde tahrir olunmuşdur.”

register of 1746, cites 110 villages recorded in it.<sup>49</sup> The *tevzi defters* that were compiled twenty years later, in 1765, list about 120 settlements.<sup>50</sup>

When we compare the eighteenth with the sixteenth century, it appears that the *kaza* of Karaferye lost one-third of its villages, having roughly 110-120 in the mid eighteenth century, down from roughly 180-190 two centuries earlier. However, this observation is compromised by at least two factors: one, as explained above, the borders of the *kaza* changed in the course of time, for instance, with the detachment of Ağustos and its environs. Two, it should not be forgotten that both the *tapu tahrir* registers and the *tevzi* lists were drawn up for fiscal purposes and were neither population nor settlement censuses in the modern sense. Furthermore, the methodology of compiling the former and the latter type of document was not the same. Regarding the *tevzi* lists, in particular, one can find villages which appear or disappear in different lists even of the same year, while there are other villages whose existence is certain but which are not mentioned in any of the surviving *tevzi defters*.<sup>51</sup>

Thus, for instance, an *avarız* register of 1747 records 86 villages and 38 *mezra* 'as (the term usually designates the arable land of deserted villages), 30 of which were in private hands (the rest were cultivated by the inhabitants of nearby villages).<sup>52</sup> A *tevzi* register of the same year, however, records 93 villages, only 72 of which are included in the former list (Appendix I).<sup>53</sup> Even if we disregard the *mezra* 'as and do not count them as proper settlements, the discrepancy between the two lists is considerable. Once the two lists are merged and corrected for the missing—in comparison to the sixteenth-century registers—villages of Ağustos, Lefterohor, and Katerin,<sup>54</sup> we end up with a total of 108 villages, which sounds about right.

Unfortunately, the Ottoman authorities were not interested in compiling systematic lists of the *kaza*'s villages. The eighteenth-century lists that we have at our disposal reflect administrative and fiscal practices that either promoted an artificial 'merging' of villages or counted only some settlements, not all, as villages (*kura*). In addition, not all villages were liable to the same taxes, hence the discrepancy between different types of lists such as the ones commented upon above. It should not come as a surprise, therefore,

49 Günay, 'H. 1159 (M. 1746) Tarihli Karaferye Kazası Şer'iyе Sicili', 66-70. The villages belong to six different categories: 30 are *kura* (independent villages), 51 *çiftligân karyeleri* (*çiftlik* villages), 8 *kura-ı Menligân* (independent villages of Menlik), 10 *tuzcıyan kurası* (salters' villages), 6 *çiftligân-ı Menligân* (*çiftlik* villages of Menlik), and 12 are *çiftligân-i der has* (*çiftlik* villages of the Treasury). There are 117 entries in total but only 110 different villages; seven villages appear in more than one category.

50 KKS 85/760, 85/774, 85/776-778.

51 Anastasopoulos, 'Imperial Institutions', 34.

52 Dig. KKS 73/26-28.

53 Dig. KKS 73/41-43.

54 Both Lefterohor and Katerin provided special services to the state. Lefterohor, besides belonging to the endowment of Mihrimah Sultan, was a *derbend* village watching over the road leading from Salonica to southern Greece, while Katerin was a *menzil* station for the imperial post service.



that we see the number of the villages recorded in the *tevzi* registers in the second half of the eighteenth century diminishing further. Three such lists of 1785 record 62 villages,<sup>55</sup> while two lists of 1812 record fewer than 30 settlements by name (28 in one, 29 in the other), the rest being bundled up anonymously under the names of 19 big landholders.<sup>56</sup> A closer look at such lists, however, often shows that many of the missing villages, even if not all of them, can be accounted for, at least until the detachment of the south-eastern part of the district in the second half of the eighteenth century, in the aftermath of the creation of the *kaza* of Katerin (Appendix II).

Travellers' accounts often give the impression of a well-populated province packed with villages. Leake, who, as noted above, visited the region in 1806, estimated the total number of villages around Karaferye at 300, but we do not know how he arrived at this figure nor do we know exactly which area he had in mind.<sup>57</sup> The same figure is given by Pouqueville.<sup>58</sup> Such a number of villages seems to be hugely exaggerated: it exceeds by far even the peak of the mid sixteenth century and is not corroborated by Ottoman documentation. On the other hand, it should be taken into account that in all probability these foreign observers did not estimate the number of villages on their own; they reproduced information given to them – probably by locals. Could it be that their informants had such a vague – and grossly incorrect – picture of the *kaza*? Or did they count smaller units, such as *çiftlik*s, as separate settlements? The latter sounds plausible and could perhaps explain the huge discrepancy between the figure of Leake and Pouqueville and that of the Ottoman registers, but maybe still not completely.<sup>59</sup>

In terms of the human geography of the rural district of Karaferye, the sixteenth-century *tapu tahrirs* suggest, as noted above, the clear demographic domination of Christians over Muslims. It is difficult to draw conclusions as to the later period, but one may reasonably assume that the situation did not change drastically. It should be noted in this context that there is no evidence of widespread conversion to Islam in the region. With regard to a few village names which serve as ethnic markers (Eflahlar, Servohor, Turkohor, Kumanıç), it is risky to draw conclusions on such slender evidence, without a comprehensive knowledge of the settlement history of these communities and the region in general. Likewise, the distinction between the area around Karaferye as 'Rumluk-Graikochora' (the land of the Greeks) and that north of Yenice-i Vardar and Vodina as 'Slavochora' (the land of the Slavs) seems to reflect the political tensions in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Macedonia, rather than older concepts of division of the Christian population.<sup>60</sup>

55 Dig. KKS 100/2-3, 11-12, 26-27.

56 KKS 103/5, 103/12-13. The first in line in both lists, cited as "devletlû veliünniam efendimiz hazretleri", must be Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, followed by his son "devletlû Veliyüddin Paşa hazretleri/efendimiz". Among the villages of the 19 landholders, only İnesel, registered under the name of Kaymak (?) Bey, is singled out as flooded, *mağruk*.

57 Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, 3:293.

58 Pouqueville, *Voyage*, 3:94.

59 For example, a *tevzi* register of 1762 apportions the villages' share to 213 units; Dig. KKS 85/43-44 [pp. 1017-1018].

60 Cf. N.T. Schinas, *Οδοιπορικά σημειώσεις Μακεδονίας, Ηπείρου, νέας οροθετικής γραμμής και*



### *The Chiftlicisation Process*

As in many other Ottoman provinces, the *çiftlik*s were a feature of the countryside of Karaferye by the eighteenth century.<sup>61</sup> Bruce McGowan has observed that Karaferye was a heavily chiftlicised region as early as the first half of the eighteenth century.<sup>62</sup> Even though there are points in McGowan's methodology and interpretation of the sources which may be called into question, there is no doubt that the local elite of Karaferye, but also the elite of neighbouring districts, had obtained control of a considerable part of rural land. In 1746, 59 per cent of the *kaza*'s villages were fully and another 4.6 per cent partly chiftlicised (which means that villagers' landholdings and *çiftlik*s co-existed within a village); only 31 common and 9 salters' villages remained still independent, a total of 36.4 per cent.<sup>63</sup> In this context, we may assume that the reappearance as *çiftlik*s of some villages, which had disappeared from the Ottoman registers for several decades, suggests that they may have been resettled on the initiative of their new landowners. This landholding elite was Muslim in terms of its religious identity. Very few non-Muslims appear among the landowners of this sort: under 10% in the *tevzi* lists of the second half of the eighteenth century despite the fact that the district of Karaferye was largely inhabited by Christians.

To dwell a little more on this issue, references to *çiftlik*s in the *sicils* increase over time. The term itself is to be found in *sicil* entries of the first half of the seventeenth century, but, generally speaking, it concerns small plots. Investment in land appears to have

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Θεσσαλίας [Travel notes about Macedonia, Epirus, the new borderline, and Thessaly], fasc. 2 (Athens 1886), 202-207; A. Struck, *Makedonische Fahrten. II Die Makedonischen Niederlande* (Sarajevo 1908), 26 and map. As Mr Giannis D. Moschopoulos has kindly pointed out to us, the earliest known mention of the term 'Rumluk' appears in the Greek translation of a *buyruldu* of 1822; I. K. Vasdravelles (ed.), *Ιστορικών Αρχείων Βεροίας. Εκλογαί* [Historical Archive of Veria: Selections] (Thessaloniki 1942), 92 (No. 73). We have been unable to locate the original entry in order to confirm this reading.

61 For a thought-provoking treatment of *çiftlik*-formation in the district of Thessaly, see S. Laiou, 'Some Considerations Regarding *Çiftlik* Formation in the Western Thessaly, Sixteenth-Nineteenth Centuries', in E. Kolovos, Ph. Kotzageorgis, S. Laiou, and M. Sariyannis (eds), *The Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, the Greek Lands: Toward a Social and Economic History. Studies in Honor of John C. Alexander* (Istanbul 2007), 255-277. See also the by now classic articles by H. İnalcık, 'The Emergence of Big Farms, *Çiftlik*s: State, Landlords, and Tenants', and G. Veinstein, 'On the *Çiftlik* Debate', in Ç. Keyder and F. Tabak (eds), *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East* (Albany 1991), 17-34 and 35-53, respectively.

62 McGowan, *Economic Life*, 75, 94. On *çiftlik*s (some as far as Karaferye) owned by residents of Salonica, see D. Papastamatiou, 'The Structure, Content and Development of Large Estates in the Environs of Salonica during the period 1697-1770', in E. Balta, G. Salakidis & Th. Stavrides (eds), *Festschrift in Honor of Ioannis P. Theodorides. II. Studies on the Ottoman Empire and Turkey* (Istanbul 2014), 375-402, and Ph. Kotzageorgis and D. Papastamatiou, 'Wealth Accumulation in an Urban Context: The Profile of the Muslim Rich of Thessaloniki in the Eighteenth Century on the Basis of Probate Inventories', *THR*, 5/2 (2014), 177-178.

63 Calculation based on Günay, 'H. 1159 (M. 1746) Tarihli Karaferye Kazası Şer'iyе Sicili', 66-70.

been quite popular among the elite and the developments of the mid seventeenth century and the years that followed gave them the opportunity to amass landholdings.<sup>64</sup> The sources leave no doubt that the unprecedented increase in taxation, combined with population decline, were the two most important forces behind the change in the landholding pattern. Strongman tactics may have been in use, but, on the basis of the surviving Ottoman sources, it seems more plausible to assume that – regardless of what had preceded this stage – most *çiftlik*s as such were created legally or at least without the use of physical violence, through the purchase of land from peasants who were heavily indebted, or through the purchase of the *tapu* of deserted lands.<sup>65</sup> On the other hand, the emergence of the *çiftlik*s may be a factor which explains the abandonment of several old and the foundation of some new villages. The *sicil* entries indicate that it was during the years of the war with the Holy League in 1684-1699 that the free peasantry of Karaferye collapsed under the heavy exactions of the central administration. *Çiftlik*s proliferated at a rapid pace.

The story of how the villages of the *kaza* were recorded for fiscal purposes is very interesting and illuminating for the development of *çiftlik* expansion in Karaferye and – why not? – elsewhere as well.<sup>66</sup> A separate *çiftlik* entry, under the name of the landholder (*çiftlik-i Alame efendi-zade*), appears for the first time in a *tevzi* list of 1687;<sup>67</sup> however, no *çiftlik* villages were recorded. Peasant households living on *çiftlik*s started being recorded separately from the rest, even if they resided in the same village, sometime in the 1690s; the first such record we have been able to locate dates from 1695/96.<sup>68</sup> These units were sometimes designated as ‘*çiftlik*s subject to the *hane* system of paying taxes’ (*hane-güzar çiftligân*). It took another ten years for the formal establishment of a separate category for the *çiftlik* population. It is in a register of 1702 that we see for the first time the designation ‘*çiftlik* households’ (*haneha-yı çiftligân*) as opposed to ‘*reaya* households’ (*haneha-yı reaya*).<sup>69</sup> At that time, some of the chiftlicised villages still included free peasant holdings as well, therefore we find them registered twice. It would take roughly another half century before the chiftlicisation process was completed or, at least, near-completed. In the mid eighteenth century, *çiftlik*s and non-*çiftlik* villages were systematically recorded as

64 E. Gara, ‘Moneylenders and Landowners: In Search of Urban Muslim Elites in the Early Modern Balkans’, in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Provincial Elites in the Ottoman Empire. Halcyon Days in Crete V, A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 10-12 January 2003* (Rethymno 2005), 144-146.

65 For the ways in which *çiftlik*s could be created, see McGowan, *Economic Life*, 136-141.

66 For Manastır, see M. Ursinus, ‘The *Çiftlik Sahibleri* of Manastır as a Local Elite, Late Seventeenth to Early Nineteenth Century’, in Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Provincial Elites*, 255; Idem, ‘The Transformation of the Ottoman Fiscal Regime, c. 1600-1850’, in C. Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World* (London and New York 2012), 429-433.

67 Dig. KKS 37/20 [p. 160] (1687). In a list of 1727 it is recorded as *karye-i Alame-zade*; Dig. KKS 62/15 [p. 694] (1727).

68 KKS 40/9-10 [pp. 879-880] (1695/96).

69 Dig. KKS 44/19 [p. 625] (1702). In the previous year, *çiftlik* and independent villages had been separately recorded but only the latter featured a heading, namely *haneha-i reaya*; Dig. KKS 42/13 [p. 13] (1701).

two different categories of settlements in relation to their landholding status (cf. Appendix I).<sup>70</sup> In the later period, however, this distinction seems to have been blurred: the *tevzi* registers of the second half of the eighteenth century do not record separately the *çiftlik* from the independent villages, although both types of settlements continued to exist.<sup>71</sup>

By the middle decades of the eighteenth century, we find some rather large concentrations of rural land in the hands of specific individuals. For instance, in 1746, Ramiz es-Seyyid Mehmed Efendi bought 1,694 *dönüms* of arable land (*tarla*), as well as land where peasant dwellings (*çiftçi damı*), storehouses for straw (*samanhane*), and threshing-floors (*harman yeri*) stood, from 14 Christians of the village of Rabsomanik – which already was partly chiftlicised according to *tevzi defters* of the same year.<sup>72</sup> The entry was labelled by the scribe of the court of law “The document of the *çiftlik* of the village of Rabsomanik that the honourable Ramiz es-Seyyid Mehmed Efendi bought”.<sup>73</sup> It is important to further point out in relation to this transaction that the use of the term *çiftlik* in the entry shows clearly that it did not signify either big landownership nor a commercial farm, which is evidence of a discrepancy between what the term meant for eighteenth-century Ottomans and how it is used by historians today. More specifically, the land sold by the villagers was defined as *çiftlik* even before the sale: “We sell and give ownership of and hand over, by valid, irrevocable, sharia-conforming sale, the private landholdings, known as *çiftlik*, that we possess in the village called Rabsomanik, our storehouses for straw, our gardens and threshing-floors, and our private lands which contain our fruit-bearing and other trees, with all their appendages and dependencies. We also cede, by consent of the master of the land, our fields that fall under this *çiftlik*, are situated in many locations and we plough and cultivate, as well as the right to possess them.”<sup>74</sup>

70 See, for instance, Günay, ‘H. 1159 (M. 1746) Tarihli Karaferye Kazası Şer’iye Sicili’, 138-160, for a *tevzi defter* where *çiftligân* and *kura* form separate categories.

71 See, for instance, the case of KKS 99/59-62 (1785) cited above: “bais-i tahrir-i defter oldur ki medine-i Karaferye kazasının bilcümle âyan ve ashab-ı çiftligân ve reaya-ı varoş ve kura ve vükelâ-i vilâyet meclis-i şer’e gelüb.” See also KKS 91/856-859 of 1770, where the payment of the *avarız* and *bedel-i nüzül* taxes is allocated to *hanes* of *reaya* and *hanes* of *çiftlik*.

72 Günay, ‘H. 1159 (M. 1746) Tarihli Karaferye Kazası Şer’iye Sicili’, 154, 158, 170, 174. The village is spelt sometimes Rabsomanik, and sometimes Rapsomanik, even in entries of the same register, such as that of 1746.

73 “Ramiz es-Seyyid Mehmed Efendi hazretlerinin işтира eylediği Rabsomanik karyesi çiftliği hüccetidir”; Ibid., 82, 135.

74 “Rabsomanik nam karyede mutasarrıf olduklarımız çiftlik ta’bir olunur baştinelerimiz ve samanhanelerimiz ve yurd ve harman yerlerimiz ve eşcar-ı müsmire ve gayr-ı müsmirelerimizi müstemil mülk baştinelerimizi cümle tevabi’i ve levahiki ile ... bey’-i batt-ı sahih şer’î ile bey’ ve temlik ve teslim ve çiftlik-i mezburede tabi’yet ile ziraat ve hirasat eyledüğümüz mevazi-i adidede vaki ... tarlalarımızı dahi hakk-ı tasarrufunu ma’rifet-i sahib-i arz ile ... ferağ ...”; Ibid., 136-137. It is also worth noting the distinction between private property sold by the peasants, and *miri* land transferred by consent of the *sahib-i arz*, which had been a constant feature in sales of agricultural land since at least the early seventeenth century. On this matter, see also Laiou, ‘Some Considerations’, 258-259, 268-270.

Another example of a large estate is the property of el-Hac Mehmed Ağa, the head (*serdar*) of the janissaries, who owned an 80-*dönüm mülk çiftlik*, and also possessed 2,500 *dönüms* of forest, uncultivated and arable land, meadows, etc., all in the village of Sadina. His *çiftlik* included: 20 houses for the farmers (*yirmi bab çiftçi menazili*) half roofed with tiles and half with reed (*saz*), 20 storehouses for straw (*samanhane*) roofed with reed, two rooms for the landowner's agents (*subaşı odası*), a stable (*ahır*), a two-storey granary (*altı göz fevkani bir ambar*), and a threshing-floor (*harman*), as well as various quantities of cereals and other agricultural products: wheat, barley, millet, sesame, rye, and straw.<sup>75</sup>

Since they do not contain any systematic registration of *çiftlik*s, the *sicils* cannot be used to calculate their exact number in the region of Karaferye. Nor do they provide definite answers to other questions, such as how labour was organised in them, even though it is clear that they combined agricultural and stock-breeding activities. Moreover, it is not easy to detect to what extent the landholders were based in towns, or in the villages. Finally, we can only assume that factors which favoured the formation of *çiftlik*s in other regions apply also to Karaferye: indebtedness of the local population, as mentioned above, but also disorder and lack of security. The need of the villagers to find powerful patrons must have made, at least for some, the estates of powerful *çiftlik*-owners a sought-after destination.

### Conclusion

This preliminary overview of developments in the rural hinterland of Karaferye shows that conditions were not uniform throughout the *kaza*. Despite its stability as a judicial-administrative unit in the context of Ottoman state structure, there were, at all times, various factors which had a disruptive effect on its administrative and fiscal unity. The dedication of villages as *vakıf* property, the concentration of land in the hands of the few, or the emergence of powerful figures such as Hasan Ağa of Katerin or Tepedelenli Ali Paşa were such factors, which were at work concurrently or at different periods.

Furthermore, the changes in internal divisions were not, for the most part, the results of administrative decisions made by the central government, but were related to the initiatives and interests of individuals who belonged to the state or local elite. On the other hand, these changes affected the lives of the many with respect to important aspects of their everyday lives, such as the terms under which they exploited the land or their fiscal obligations.

On another level, this essay suggests, despite its modest scope, that the Ottoman sources are invaluable, but not always adequate for an exhaustive study of rural societies and economies in the long duration, and this despite the facts that Ottoman society was predominantly rural, that rural economy was a major producer of fiscal revenue, and that the state was actively interested, at least up to the seventeenth century, in recording the

75 KKS 93/363/1 (1773). Cf. Papastamatiou, 'The Structure, Content and Development of Large Estates', 386-395, as to what a *çiftlik* might include.

producing capacity of rural communities. It is certain that, as with many other Ottoman regions, what we do not know about rural Karaferye – which may be considered a typical medium-size Balkan district – outweighs by far what we do know, which is not only a matter of lack of research but also of the nature of the source material which is available. The Ottoman state was a huge bureaucratic mechanism, but not one which bequeathed us systematic series of uniform data for the whole of its long existence; nor was there any legal requirement on private individuals to record transactions before any authority.<sup>76</sup> However, even if it is uncertain if comprehensive answers can ever be obtained, patterns of settlement, demography, land regime, organisation of labour, productive capacity, taxation, marketing policies and networks etc., are all areas in which there is ample room for and are well worthy of research. In this context, long-term and comparative perspectives are useful in that they bring out the dynamics which developed over time and help fill in gaps, respectively, and it is in this light that we have ventured this preliminary overview of rural Karaferye.

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76 On the limited use of documents as evidence in the *kadı* courts of Çankırı and Kastamonu, see B. A. Ergene, 'Evidence in Ottoman Courts: Oral and Written Documentation in Early-Modern Courts of Islamic Law', *JAOS*, 124/3 (2004), 471-491. Cf. I. Tamdoğan-Abel, 'L'écrit comme échec de l'oral? L'oralité des engagements et des règlements à travers les registres de cadis d'Adana au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle', *RMMM*, 75-76 (1995), 155-165. But see also the argument of L. Peirce, *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 2003), 102, 279-285.

**Appendix I. Villages in the *kaza* of Karaferye in 1747,  
according to *tevzi* and *avarız* tax registers**

SOURCES: Digital KKS 73/26-28 [pp. 28-30] (1747), 73/41-43 [pp. 43-45] (1747), ‘Archeiomne-mon’ (see footnote 16 above for details).

NOTES: 1) The list includes the majority but not all of the *kaza*’s villages at the time. 2) Most of the *mezra* ‘as are villages that were deserted in the mid seventeenth century.

PLACE NAME	TYPE (if not a village)	TAX CATEGORY	FORMER SUB- DIVISION	LANDHOLDING
Alabori				<i>çiftlik</i>
Aletra		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Altunlar		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		[ <i>çiftlik</i> ]
Arkudihor		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Armira	<i>mezra</i> ‘a <sup>77</sup>			
Asomata		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Aya Marin		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Ayan [= Ayo Yani]		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>	<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	<i>çiftlik</i>
Ayan-i Kebir [= Ayo Yani-i Kebir]		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Barbeş				<i>çiftlik</i>
Beş Kardaş		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		[ <i>çiftlik</i> ]
Birsiyol (?)	<i>mezra</i> ‘a <sup>78</sup>			
Boğat	<i>mezra</i> ‘a <sup>79</sup>			
Boştani		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Branyat				<i>çiftlik</i>
Brataništa		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Braza		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Budaya				<i>çiftlik</i>
Çerkoyani		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Çirhoverye	<i>mezra</i> ‘a <sup>80</sup>			
Çitroz		<i>tuzcıyan</i>	<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	
Çornova		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>

77 Cultivated (*der-ziraat*) by Abdi Ağa.

78 One of eight settlements formerly taxed as part of the villages of Sadina and Votali (*ba ferman-ı âli Sadina ve Votali karyelerinin tenzilâtından bu sekiz mezra’aya nakl olunan hanelerdür*).

79 Cultivated by Sarıca-zade and İbrahim Ağa.

80 Cultivated by “the monks” (the Monastery of Prodromos).

PLACE NAME	TYPE (if not a village)	TAX CATEGORY	FORMER SUB- DIVISION	LANDHOLDING
Delimano (?)	<i>mezra'a</i> <sup>81</sup>			
Dihaleri [= Dihalevri]		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Diyol	<i>mezra'a</i> <sup>82</sup>			
Dobra		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i> and <i>reaya</i>
<i>Doksara → Likoviç [and] Toksara</i>				
Dolyani		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Draçko		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Draništa				<i>çiftlik</i>
Durman		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Eflahlar		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Filur	<i>mezra'a</i> <sup>83</sup>			
Flurya <sup>84</sup>	<i>mezra'a</i> <sup>85</sup>	<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		[ <i>çiftlik</i> ]
Galahto		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Graboşa				<i>reaya</i>
Holova		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Holpan (?) [= Horapan (?)]	<i>mezra'a</i> <sup>86</sup>			
Horanoz		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i> <sup>87</sup>	<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	<i>çiftlik</i> and <i>reaya</i>
İksir Kambo		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
<i>İksir Livad → Uzunce Ova</i> <sup>88</sup>				
İne Kasrı		<i>menligân-ı kura</i>	<i>vakf-ı Mihrimah</i>	[ <i>reaya</i> ]
İnesel		<i>menligân-ı kura</i>	<i>vakf-ı Mihrimah</i>	[ <i>reaya</i> ]
İskiliç				<i>çiftlik</i>
Ispurlita		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Istavroz		<i>çiftligân-ı der havass</i>	<i>vakf-ı Süleyman</i>	<i>çiftlik</i>
Istupi		<i>tuzcıyan</i>	<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	

81 Cultivated by zaim Mustafa Ağa.

82 Formerly taxed as part of Yavorniča (*Yavorniča karyesinden [ba] ferman-ı âli tenzil ve işbu mezra'a[ya] vaz u nakl olundu*).

83 Cultivated by the village of İne Kasrı.

84 Appears both as a village (in the *tevzi defteri*) and a *mezra'a* (in the *avarız defteri*).

85 Cultivated by the village of Brataništa.

86 Cultivated by Sarica-zade and İbrahim Ağa.

87 Appears as a village (under *kura*) in the *avarız defteri*.

88 The *avarız* register (Dig. KKS 73/26-28) has İksir Livad, while the *tevzi* (41-43) Uzunce Ova.



PLACE NAME	TYPE (if not a village)	TAX CATEGORY	FORMER SUB- DIVISION	LANDHOLDING
İzmeksini [= Kırıovrisi alias İzmeksini]	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>89</sup>			
Kadahya [= Kataha]		<i>tuzcıyan</i>	<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	
Kalareki	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>90</sup>			
Kaloyani [= Kalyani (?)]	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>91</sup>			
Kalur Pığat [= Kaloyero Pığad]		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Kapsahor		<i>menligân-ı kura</i>	<i>vakf-ı Mihrimah</i>	[ <i>reaya</i> ]
Kara Çalı				<i>çiftlik</i>
Kastanya		<i>tuzcıyan</i>	<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	
Kastanya		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Kavasıla		<i>çiftligân-ı kurâ</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Kefalorinca [= Kefalovriça]	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>92</sup>			
Kilinder		<i>tuzcıyan</i>	<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	
Kırsova	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>93</sup>			
Klisura	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>94</sup>			
Kokova		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Kopan Ova [= Kopano]		<i>menligân-ı çiftligân</i>	<i>vakf-ı Mihrimah</i>	[ <i>çiftlik</i> ]
Kopanova [Kopanova-i Zir (?)]	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>95</sup>			
Korono		<i>tuzcıyan</i>	<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	
Kostihor		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Kravata		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Kuçka		<i>çiftligân-ı der havass</i> <sup>96</sup>		<i>çiftlik and reaya</i>
Kudunyani		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Kulura		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>

89 One of six settlements formerly taxed as part of Tohova (*ba ferman-ı âli Tohova karyesinden tenzil olunub işbu zikr olunan altı mezra'aya nakl u tehmil olunan hanelerdür*).

90 As above.

91 Cultivated by the village of Rapsomanik.

92 Formerly taxed as part of Sadina and Votali.

93 Cultivated by Abdi Ağa.

94 Cultivated by Hüseyin Ağa.

95 Cultivated by Abdi Ağa.

96 Appears as a village (under *kura*) in the *avarız defteri*.

PLACE NAME	TYPE (if not a village)	TAX CATEGORY	FORMER SUB- DIVISION	LANDHOLDING
Kum		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Kumanıç		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Kumara	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>97</sup>			
Kurşova				<i>çiftlik</i>
Kutleş				<i>çiftlik</i>
Liban Ova		<i>tuzcıyan</i>	<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	
Likoviç [and] Doksara		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Likoviçišta		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Lopatar	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>98</sup>			
Loziça-i Bala		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Loziça-i Zir		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Makirinoz	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>99</sup>		<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	
Makrihoroz		<i>tuzcıyan</i>	<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	
Mikrağuz [= Makroğuz]		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Manastir-i İskit	monastery			
Maruşa		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Mavrangel <sup>100</sup>	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>101</sup>	<i>çiftligân-ı der havass</i>		[ <i>çiftlik</i> ]
Meç		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Menlik		<i>menligân-ı kura</i>	<i>vakf-ı Mihrimah</i>	[ <i>reaya</i> ]
Mera	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>102</sup>			
Mesko [= Meskova (?)]	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>103</sup>			
Milat [= Milayit (?)]	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>104</sup>			
Milova				<i>çiftlik</i>
Mircana [= Kircan]	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>105</sup>		<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	

97 Formerly taxed as part of Durman (*Durman karyesinün tenzil olunan dört haneleri işbu üç aded mezra 'aya nakl u tehmil olundu*).

98 Formerly taxed as part of Tohova.

99 Formerly taxed as part of Sadina and Votali.

100 Appears both as a village (in the *tevzi defteri*) and a *mezra 'a* (in the *avarız defteri*).

101 Cultivated by the village of Menlik.

102 Cultivated by the village of Braza.

103 Formerly taxed as part of Sadina and Votali.

104 Cultivated by Sarıca-zade and İbrahim Ağa.

105 Formerly taxed as part of Tohova.

PLACE NAME	TYPE (if not a village)	TAX CATEGORY	FORMER SUB- DIVISION	LANDHOLDING
Misovit	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>106</sup>		<i>vakf-ı Süleyman</i>	
Monoşpita		<i>çiftligân-ı der havass</i>	<i>vakf-ı Süleyman</i>	<i>çiftlik</i>
Nera	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>107</sup>			
Nisi	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>108</sup>			
Palâni		<i>tuzcıyan</i>	<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	
Palâneştani [= Neştani, Apano]		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>	<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	<i>reaya</i>
Palatiniça [= Palatiça]		<i>çiftligân-ı der havass</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Pırna [= Prina]	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>109</sup>			
Piskopi		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Podrom [= Prodrom]		<i>menligân-ı kura</i>	<i>vakf-ı Mihrimah</i>	[ <i>reaya</i> ]
Podrom Süleyman Ağa		<i>menligân-ı kura</i>		[ <i>reaya</i> ]
Pojarit		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Polit	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>110</sup>			
Pravati [= Pravatar]		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Radâni			<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	<i>çiftlik</i>
Rahova		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Rapsomanik		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Reşani				<i>çiftlik</i>
Ritinyani		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Rumpiğat [= Vromopiğad]	<i>mezra 'a</i>			
Sadina		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Sarakina	<i>mezra 'a</i> <sup>111</sup>			
Şehir Altı		<i>çiftligân-ı der havass</i>		[ <i>çiftlik</i> ]
Seli		<i>menligân-ı kura</i>	<i>vakf-ı Mihrimah</i>	[ <i>reaya</i> ]

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106 Formerly taxed as part of Sadina and Votali.

107 Formerly taxed as part of Durman.

108 Formerly taxed as part of Sadina and Votali.

109 Cultivated by Sarıca-zade.

110 Cultivated by the village of Alabori.

111 Cultivated by the village of Palaneştani.

PLACE NAME	TYPE (if not a village)	TAX CATEGORY	FORMER SUB- DIVISION	LANDHOLDING
Selvihor [= Servohor]		<i>çiftligân-ı der havass</i>	<i>vakf-ı Süleyman</i>	<i>çiftlik</i>
Sifuli (?)	<i>mezra'a</i> <sup>112</sup>			
Şikâ	<i>mezra'a</i> <sup>113</sup>		<i>vakf-ı Süleyman</i>	
Tağramon		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Tırhaleb		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Tırhovišta		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Tirpotama [= Tripotamo]		<i>çiftligân-ı der havass</i> <sup>114</sup>		<i>çiftlik and reaya</i>
Tohova		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>	<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	<i>çiftlik</i>
Toplâni		<i>çiftligân-ı der havass</i> <sup>115</sup>		<i>çiftlik and reaya</i>
Trapali (?)	<i>mezra'a</i> <sup>116</sup>			
Triyanda		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Tukur Ova [= Trikurva (?)]	<i>mezra'a</i> <sup>117</sup>			
Turkat	<i>mezra'a</i> <sup>118</sup>			
Turya [= Turna (?)]	<i>mezra'a</i> <sup>119</sup>			
Uhtumon		<i>çiftligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Uskutina		<i>menligân-ı kura</i>	<i>vakf-ı Mihrimah</i>	<i>[reaya]</i>
Uskutrina [= Uskuterna]		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Uzunçe Ova		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Vara	<i>mezra'a</i> <sup>120</sup>			
Vestiça		<i>çiftligân-ı der havass</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Vestiça-i Cedit		<i>çiftligân-ı der havass</i>		<i>[çiftlik]</i>

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112 Formerly taxed as part of Sadina and Votali.

113 Cultivated by Hüseyin Ağa.

114 Appears as a village (under *kura*) in the *avarız defteri*.

114 Appears as a village (under *kura*) in the *avarız defteri*.

115 Appears as a village (under *kura*) in the *avarız defteri*.

116 Cultivated by the village of Braza.

117 Formerly taxed as part of Tohova.

118 As above.

119 Formerly taxed as part of Durman.

120 Formerly taxed as part of Sadina and Votali.

PLACE NAME	TYPE (if not a village)	TAX CATEGORY	FORMER SUB- DIVISION	LANDHOLDING
Viromeri			<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	<i>çiftlik</i>
Vosova		<i>hanegân-ı kura</i>		<i>reaya</i>
Votali			<i>nahiye-i Çitroz</i>	<i>çiftlik</i>
Vulçışta		<i>menligân-ı çifligân</i>	<i>vakf-ı Mihrimah</i>	[ <i>çiftlik</i> ]
Yançışta		<i>çifligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Yavatoz		<i>çifligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Yavornıça		<i>çifligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>
Yeraki		<i>çifligân-ı kura</i>		<i>çiftlik</i>

\* \* \*

## Appendix II. Villages in the *kaza* of Karaferye, 1725-1815, according to *tevzi* tax registers

SOURCES: Digital KKS 62/15-16 [pp. 694-695] (1727), 73/41-43 [pp. 43-45] (1747), 100/2-3 [pp. 1-2] (1785), 105/43-44 [pp. 44-45] (1815), ‘Archeiomnemon’; KKS 85/427-429, 760, 774, 776-778 (1765), KKS 103/3-5 and 10-13 (1812).

NOTES: 1) Villages marked with (\*) belonged originally to the *nahiye* of Çitroz and, sometime in the second half of the 18th century, most likely not earlier than the 1770s, were presumably attached to the newly formed *kaza* of Katerin. 2) Those marked with (:) belonged to the category ‘villages of the hass’ (*hass kuraları*). 3) The *vakıf* villages of Mihrimah Sultan (Menligân) are marked with (†). Since they did not disappear, they must have been subsumed under Menlik and Podrom [= Prodrum] in later registers. 4) Villages marked with (‡) are designated as ‘mountain villages’ (*dağ kuraları*) in the register of 1815. 5) The *tevzi* lists do not include the town of Ağustos and the *vakıf* villages of the Evrenosoğlu family, as well as Lefterohor (*derbend*) and Katerin (*menzil*).

1727 <sup>121</sup>	1747	1765	1785	1812-15
Alabori		Alabori	Alabori	Alabori
Alame-zade				
Aletra	Aletra	Aletra	Aletra	
Altunlar	Altunlar	[Altunlar] <sup>122</sup>		
Arkudohor	Arkudihor	Arkudohor	Arkudohor	Arkudihor (‡)
Asomata	Asomata	Asomata	Asomata	Asomata
Aya Marin	Aya Marin	Aya Marin	Aya Marin	Aya Marin
Ayan-i [= Ayo Yani] Çitroz (*)	Ayan-i [= Ayo Yani] Çitroz (*)	Ayan (*)		
Ayan-i Kebir [= Ayo Yani-i Kebir]	Ayan-i Kebir	Ayan-i Kebir		
Barbeş		Barbeş		
	Beş Kardaş	Beş Kardaş		
Boştâni	Boştâni	Boştâni	Boştâni	Boştâni (‡)
Branyat		Branyat		
Brataništa	Brataništa	Brataništa (listed together with Palâneştani)		
Braza	Braza	Braza		Braza (‡)
Budaya		Budaya		
Çerkoyani	Çerkoyani	Çerkoyani		Çerkoyan (‡)

121 There are no analytical lists of the categories Menligân and *tuzcıyan*. The villages in question have been added inside square brackets.

122 Altunlar does not appear in the registers of 1765, but is listed in a *tevzi defter* of 1770; KKS 91/856-859.

1727	1747	1765	1785	1812-15
[Çitroz (*)]	Çitroz (*)	Çitroz (*)		
Çornova	Çornova	Çornova	Çornova	Çornova (‡)
Dihalevri	Dihaleri	Dihalevri		
Dobra	Dobra	Dobra	Dobra	Dobra (‡)
Doksara	Doksara	Doksara (listed together with Likoviç)		
Dolyani	Dolyani	Dolyani	Dolyani	Dolyani (‡)
Draçko	Draçko	Draçko		Dıraçko (‡)
Draništa		Draništa		
Durman	Durman	Durman	Durman	Dirman (‡)
Eflahlar	Eflahlar	Eflahlar	Eflaklar	
	Flurya	Flurya		
Galahto	Galahto	Galahto		
Graboşa (‡)		Graboşa		
		Grical (†)		
Holova	Holova	Holova		
Horanoz (*)	Horanoz (*)	Horanoş (*)		
Horapan		Horapan	Horapan	
			İkşehajmeni	
İksir Kanbo	İksirokanbo	İksirokambo		
<i>İksir Livad → Uzunce Ova</i>				
[İne Kasrı (†)]	İne Kasrı (†)	İne Kasrı (†)		
[İnesel (†)]	İnesel (†)	İnesel (†)		İnesel, <i>mağruk</i>
		İsfiniça (†)		
İskiliç		İskiliç		
Ispurlita	Ispurlita	Ispurlita		
Istavroz (‡)	Istavroz (‡)	Istavroz	Istavroz	Istavroz
	Istupi (*)	Ustupi (*)		
[Kadahya [= Kataha] (*)]	Kadahya (*)	Kadahya (*)	Kadahya	
Kaloğra Piğad [= Kaloyero Piğad]	Kalur Piğat	Kalur Piğat		
	Kapsahor	Kapsihor		
			Karaçalı	
Kastanya	Kastanya	Kastanya	Kastanya	
[Kastanya [Çitroz] (*)]	Kastanya [Çitroz] (*)	Kastanya [Çitroz] (*)		
Kavasıla	Kavasıla	Kavaşıla	Kavasıla	



1727	1747	1765	1785	1812-15
Kefaloriça [= Kefalovrisiça]		Kefaloriça [= Kefalovrisiça]		
[Kilindir (*)]	Kilindir (*)	Kilindir (*)	Kilindir	
		[Kiremit] <sup>123</sup>		
Kokova	Kokova	Kokova		
[Kopanov = Kopano] (†)]	Kopan Ova (†)	Kopanov-i Bala (†)		
		Kopanov-i Zir (†)	Kopanov-i Zir	Kopanov
[Koronoz (*)]	Koronoz (*)	Koronoz / Koronos (*)		
Kostihor	Kostihor	Kostohor	Kostihor	Kostihor (‡)
Kravata	Kravata	Kravata	Kravata	Kravata
Kuçka (‡)	Kuçka (‡)	Kuçka	Kuçka	Kuçka (‡)
Kudunyani	Kudunyani	Kudunyani	Kudunyani	
Kulura	Kulura	Kulura	Kulura	Kulura
Kum	Kum	Kum	Kumköyi	
Kumaniç	Kumaniç	Kumaniç	Kumaniç	Kumaniç (‡)
Kurşova		Kurşova		
Kutleş		Kutleş		
[Libanov (*)]	Liban Ova (*)	Libanov (*)	Libanov-i cümle	
Likoviç	Likoviç	Likoviç (listed together with Doksara)	Likoviç	
Likoviçişt	Likovişt	Likoviçişt	Likoviçişt	
		Lonçanoz (*)	Loncanoz	
Loziça-i Bala	Loziça-i Bala	Loziça-i Bala	Loziça-i Bala	Loziça-i Bala (‡)
Loziça-i Zir	Loziça-i Zir	Loziça-i Zir	Loziça-i Zir	Loziça-i Zir (‡)
		Lulumaro		
			Lutroz	
	Makrihoroz (*)			
Makroğuz	Mikrağuz	Mikroğuz	Mikroğuz	Mikroğuz
Maruşa	Maruşa	Maruşa	Maruşa	Maruşa (‡)
Mavrangel (‡)	Mavrangel (‡)	Mavrangel	Mavrangel	Mavrangel

123 Kiremit does not appear in the *tevzi defters* of 1765, but is listed in another *sicil* entry of 1765; KKS 85/769/1.

1727	1747	1765	1785	1812-15
	Meç	Meç	Meç	Meç
[Menlik (†)]	Menlik (†)	Menlik (†)	Menlik	Menlik
Milova		Milova		
Monoşpita (î)	Monoşpita (î)	Monoşpita	Monoşpita	Monoşpita
		Mustalih		Mustali, <i>vakıf</i>
		[Nişi] <sup>124</sup>		
Palâneştani [= Neştani, Apano] (*)	Palâneştani (*)	Palâneştani (*) (listed together with Brataništa)		
	Palâni (*)	Palâni (*)		
Palatiça (î)	Palatiça (î)	Palatiça	Palatiça	Palatiça
Piskopi	Piskopi	Piskopi	Piskopi	
[Podrom [= Prodrum] (†)]	Podrom (†)	Podrom	Podrom	Podorm
Pojarit	Pojarit	Pojarit		
Pravatar	Pravati	Pravatar		
Radâni (*)		Radâni (*)		
Rahova	Rahova	Rahova	Rahova	
Rapsomanik	Rapsomanik	Rabsomanik	Rapsomanik	
Reşâni		Reşâni		
Ritinyani	Ristinyani [= Ritinyani]	Ritinyani		Ritinyani (‡)
Sadina	Sadina	Sadina		Sadina
Şehir Altı (î)	Şehir Altı (î)	Şehir Altı	Şehir Altı	
[Seli (†)]	Seli (†)	Seli (†)		
Servihor (î)	Selvihor [= Servohor] (î)	Servihor-i Atik	Servihor-i Atik	Servihor
		Servihor-i Cedid	Servihor-i Cedid	
			Şikâ	
Süleyman Obası				
Tağramon	Tağramon	Tağramon	Tağramon	Tağramon
Tırhaleb	Tırhaleb	Tırhaleb		
Tırhovišta	Tırkovišta	Tırhovišta	Tırhovišta	Tırhovišta
Tohova	Tohova	Tohova		
Toplâni (î)	Toplâni (î)	Toplâni		Toplâni (‡)

124 Nişi does not appear in the registers of 1765, but is listed in *tevzi defters* of 1759 (KKS 81/387-388) and 1777 (KKS 96/295-297).

1727	1747	1765	1785	1812-15
Tripotama [= Tripotamo] (:) )	Tirpotama (:) )	Tirpotama	Tripotama	
Triyanda	Triyanda	Triyanda	Triyanda	
		Turkohor	Turkohor	
Uhtumon	Uhtumon	Uhtumon		
Uskutrina [= Uskuterna]	Uskuterna	Uskutrina	Uskuterna	Uskutrina (‡)
[Uskutina (†)]	Uskutina (†)	Uskutina	Uskutina	
İksir Livad [= Uzuncova]	Uzunce Ova	Uzuncova <sup>125</sup>		Uzuncova
Veçišta [= Vestiça] (:) )	Vestiça (:) )	Veştiça-i Atik	Veştiça-i Atik	Veştiça
	Vestiça-i Cedid (:) )	Veştiça-i Cedid	Veştiça-i Cedid	
Vosova	Vosova	Vosova		
		Vromeri (*)		Vromeri
[Vulçišta (†)]	Vulçišta (†)	Vulçišta (†)		
Yançišta	Yançišta	Yançišta	Yançišta	Yançišta
Yavatoz	Yavatoz	Yavatoz	Yavatoz	Yavatoz
Yavorniça	Yavorniça	Yavornitiça	Yavorniça	Yavornitiça
Yeraki	Yeraki	Yeraki	Yeraki	Yeraki

<sup>125</sup> İksirolivad does not appear in the registers of 1765, but is listed in a *tevzi defter* of 1770 from which Uzuncova is missing; KKS 91/856-859. It also appears in an entry of 1757; KKS 80/486.



AGRICULTURAL LOANS AND EUROPEAN MERCHANTS  
IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CYPRUS:  
THE CREDIT NETWORK OF RAGUSAN CONSUL  
GIOVANNI GARMOGLIESI

Theoharis STAVRIDES\*

IN A LETTER OF DECEMBER 1743, Nikolos Moukkellefis of Famagusta urgently asked the Consul of Ragusa in Cyprus, Giovanni Garmogliesi, for a loan of 50 *gurus*, expressing the hope that “together with your Excellency, perhaps I the poor one may at least cover the expenses of the cotton-workers”. The letter ended with expressions of extreme gratitude to the European Consul: “and I would lie down and rise, and I would bless you day and night”.<sup>1</sup> Twelve days later, Moukkellefis wrote to Garmogliesi again, acknowledging the receipt of twenty *gurus* – less than half the amount asked for, and seeking a further 80 *gurus*, needed for buying cotton seed. On the back of the letter, the Consul noted that he had sent 30 *gurus*, instead of the 80 asked for by the Cypriot farmer.<sup>2</sup>

Credit from European merchants living in Larnaca, the island’s main port, was one of the primary ways of financing agriculture in eighteenth-century Cyprus. As becomes clear from various documents, this was not a one-way relationship. While the merchants provided farmers with the necessary cash in order to carry out their agricultural activities, they often received in return not money with interest, but marketable agricultural products, which were, in turn, necessary for their own mercantile activities, since often these loans were repaid in kind. In this way, the European merchants were able to safeguard their supply of merchandise well before the harvesting season.<sup>3</sup> That this was a practice

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1 Archivio di Stato di Venezia (ASV), Archivio del Consolato Veneto a Cipro (ACVC), b. 20, n. 24; P. M. Kitromilides, ‘Κοινωνικές σχέσεις και νοοτροπίες στην Κύπρο του δεκάτου ογδόου αιώνα [Social relations and mentalities in eighteenth-century Cyprus]’, *Ελληνικά*, 39 (1988), 350.

2 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 25; Kitromilides, ‘Κοινωνικές σχέσεις’, 351.

3 G. Grivaud, ‘Les institutions économiques de Chypre à l’époque ottomane (1570-1878)’, *Μελέται και Υπομνήματα*, 6 (2009), 98-99. See also Nuri Çevikel, *Kıbrıs Eyâleti: Yönetim, Kilise, Ayân ve Halk (1750-1800)* (Gazimağusa 2000), 258-260. On credit in Cyprus in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, see R. C. Jennings, *Christians and Muslims in Ottoman Cyprus and the Mediterranean World, 1571-1640* (New York 1993), 281-295. On credit in eighteenth-century Cyprus, see Çevikel, *Kıbrıs Eyâleti*, 237-238, and Ali Efdal Özkul, ‘The Consuls and their Activities in Cyprus under the Ottoman Administration (1571-1878)’, *Turkish Studies*, 8/2 (2013), 251-255, both of which provide information based on the island’s *şeriye sicilleri*.

which went back to the seventeenth century becomes clear from the fact that it is also mentioned in a 1697 report of the French Consul, who wrote that “les marchands, tant françois qu’anglois, ont ici une mauvaise manière de négociier en ce qu’ils donnent dans le mois de janvier leur argent aux gens du païs à intérêt de quinze à vingt pour cent, et à payer en soye ou en cottons à la récolte, selon que le prix se coupera ...”.<sup>4</sup>

In the 1760s, Giovanni Mariti, a clergyman who lived in Cyprus for several years and was familiar with local society, wrote that

interest is reckoned in Cyprus at twelve per centum per annum. The rate is of old standing, and generally allowed in consideration of the great risk, which attends the lending money to villagers. The law of Mohammad confounds usury with loans on interest, so that both are forbidden to Turks. Nevertheless they lend and borrow, but in notes of hand the lender includes the interest with the principal; thus a loan of 100 piastres would be entered on the bond as 112 piastres without further note.<sup>5</sup>

Thus we may assume that repayment in kind was not only a way for the merchants to obtain marketable agricultural products, but also, possibly, a way to disguise their usurious activities, which were frowned upon by local culture, behind a façade of advance payment for these products.<sup>6</sup>

The phenomenon of credit given by European merchants to Cypriot farmers was closely connected to a series of developments that profoundly affected the island’s rural society in the eighteenth century. With their conquest of Cyprus, in the last decades of the sixteenth century, the Ottomans attempted to win over the island’s overwhelmingly rural population by abolishing serfdom and turning serfs into small-time independent farmers, within the framework of the *timar* system.<sup>7</sup> These early measures won over the loyalty of

4 G. Grivaud, ‘L’île de Chypre en 1697 d’après un mémoire du consul François Luce’, *Επετηρίδα Κέντρου Επιστημονικών Ερευνών*, 12 (1983), 181.

5 G. Mariti, *Travels in the Island of Cyprus*, ed. C. D. Cobham (Cambridge 1909), 124. See also the contemporary (mid-eighteenth century) account of a Dutch traveller, according to which the profit of the European creditors often rose to 20-30%. C. D. Cobham, *Excerpta Cypria: Materials for a History of Cyprus* (Cambridge 1908), 250.

6 On Islam and usury (*riba*), see M. S. Noorzoy, ‘Islamic Laws on *Riba* (Interest) and their Economic Implications’, *IJMES*, 14 (1982), 3-17. On the question of credit and interest in the Ottoman Empire, see H. İnalcık, ‘Capital Formation in the Ottoman Empire’, *Journal of Economic History*, 29 (1969), 97-140; J. E. Mandaville, ‘Usurious Piety: The Cash Waqf Controversy in the Ottoman Empire’, *IJMES*, 10 (1979), 289-308; B. Masters, *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East. Mercantilism and the Islamic Economy in Aleppo, 1600-1750* (New York and London 1988), 160-163; Ş. Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge 2000), 77-87.

7 On Ottoman policy in Cyprus after the conquest, see H. İnalcık, ‘Ottoman Policy and Administration in Cyprus after the Conquest’, in Th. Papadopoulos and M. Christodoulou (eds), *Πρακτικά του Πρώτου Διεθνούς Κυπριολογικού Συνεδρίου* [Proceedings of the First International Cyprological Conference], vol. III, part I (Nicosia 1973), 119-136; V. Costantini, *Il Sultano e l’Isola Contesa: Cipro tra Eredità Veneziana e Potere Ottomano* (Milan 2009), 75ff; eadem, ‘In Search of Lost Prosperity: Aspects and Phases of Cyprus’ Integration into the Ottoman Em-

the local population and contributed to the relative stability and prosperity of the island in the first decades of Ottoman rule.<sup>8</sup>

However, by the eighteenth century, this process had been reversed: as a result of the increase in international trade, subsistence agriculture, with its emphasis on the cultivation of cereals, was gradually abandoned, giving place to commercial agriculture and cash crops. The rise of commercial agriculture, in conjunction with the development of tax-farming, resulted in the decline of the *timar* system and the emergence of the *çiftlik*s, large landowning units, whose production was geared towards commerce. In this new environment, cash crops, like cotton, became the island's most important items of trade, leaving behind traditional products like wine and cereals. A corollary of the emergence of the *çiftlik*s was the decline of *miri* land belonging to the state and the consequent dispossession of many peasants, who turned from small-time independent farmers to agricultural workers.<sup>9</sup> These developments, in conjunction with the increasing monetisation of the economy, rendered the mutual interdependence between merchant and farmer a vital characteristic of the Cypriot economy in the eighteenth century.<sup>10</sup>

The case of Giovanni Garmogliesi, who acted as Consul of Ragusa in Cyprus in the first half of the eighteenth century, is indicative of a European merchant providing credit to Cypriot farmers. Garmogliesi's lending activities, spanning a period of four decades, from the mid-1710s to the mid-1750s, are amply documented by a series of promissory notes, judicial documents, letters and accounts, to be found in the Archives of the Venetian Consulate of Cyprus, in the State Archives of Venice. Garmogliesi's promissory notes and letters are in Ottoman Turkish or Greek, while the accounts, apparently written by the Consul's own hand, are usually in Italian.<sup>11</sup>

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pire', in M. N. Michael, M. Kappler and E. Gavriel (eds), *Ottoman Cyprus: A Collection of Studies on History and Culture* (Wiesbaden 2009), 56-61.

8 See, for example, the observations of R. C. Jennings on the patterns of the population of Cyprus during the first decades after the island's conquest by the Ottomans in Jennings, *Christians and Muslims in Ottoman Cyprus*, 191-199. See also Th. Papadopoulos, *Social and Historical Data on Population (1570-1881)* (Nicosia 1985), 31-36.

9 H. İnalçık, 'The Emergence of Big Farms, *Çiftlik*s: State, Landlord, and Tenants', in Ç. Keyder and F. Tabak (eds), *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East* (Albany 1991), 22-24; S. Faroqi, 'Crisis and Change, 1590-1699', in H. İnalçık with D. Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge 1994), 447-452; D. Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* (Cambridge 2000), 129-132. On the case of Cyprus, see M. N. Michael, *Το τσιφλίκι της οθωμανικής περιόδου: Μοναστηριακά τσιφλίκια στους Κώδικες 49 (1813-1841) και 51 (1818-1881) της Ιεράς Μονής Κύκκου* [The *çiftlik* of the Ottoman period: monastic *çiftlik*s in codices 49 (1813-1841) and 51 (1818-1881) of the Holy Monastery of Kykkos] (Nicosia 2005); Grivaud, 'Les institutions', 38-43; Th. Stavrides, 'Cyprus 1750-1830. Administration and Society', in Michael, Kappler and Gavriel (eds.), *Ottoman Cyprus*, 102-106.

10 On the interrelationship between city and countryside, see also Masters, *The Origins*, 155-157, where it is indicated that in seventeenth-century Aleppo, c. 60% of all loans registered in the *kadı* court records were given to villagers, while the percentage appears to have risen to c. 80% in the early decades of the eighteenth century.

11 On the Archives of the Venetian Consulate in Cyprus and their content, see G. Migliardi



These documents indicate that the Ragusan merchant was at the centre of an extensive credit network, covering several Cypriot villages and consisting of both Muslim and Christian debtors from all strata of rural society. Villages covered by Garmogliesi's network were mostly located in the fertile plain of Messaoria, which was the island's most important agricultural region, and included great rural centres, like Kythrea, Lefkoniko, Lyssi, and Vatyli. The network also included several communities in the area east of Larnaca, towards Famagusta, as well as a handful of villages further to the west, in the Li-massol district.<sup>12</sup>

In his network, Garmogliesi employed agents, who were probably resident in the villages and knew the locals well, and were thus in a position to provide information and to act as his proxies in the conduct of daily business. One such example appears to have been Greek Orthodox priest Papa Liassis, who wrote to the Ragusan Consul in December of 1747, in order to inform him about his debtors in the village of Kythrea. Papa Liassis wrote to Garmogliesi that, by inquiring in the village, he had found out that, before his death, Süleyman *kâhya* had acknowledged a debt of 158 *guruş*. He also informed the Consul that the cotton owed by Hacı Mehmed Neyzen was ready for delivery, asking him to send canvas and rope, so that he would be able to sew sacks to carry it, as well as a coach to collect it.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, in the village of Lefkoniko, Garmogliesi's 'man' was a certain Georgis, who collected cotton from Hacı Osman Ağa on his behalf.<sup>14</sup>

From the above it appears that, in his transactions with Christian and Muslim Cypriot farmers, the Ragusan Consul employed Greek Orthodox locals. This pattern has been also observed in other provinces of the Empire, where local Christians spearheaded the economic penetration of the Ottoman countryside by European merchants, either as partners, agents, or proxies.<sup>15</sup>

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O'Riordan (ed.), *Archivio del Consolato Veneto a Cipro (fine sec. XVII – inizio XIX)* (Venezia 1993); D. Desai, 'Une nouvelle source ottomane sur Chypre au XVIIIe siècle', *Turcica*, 26 (1994), 261-270; Th. Stavrides, *Studies on the History of Cyprus under Ottoman Rule* (Istanbul 2012), 139-149.

12 Kitromilides, 'Κοινωνικές σχέσεις', 352; A. Hadjikyriacou, 'Society and Economy on an Ottoman Island: Cyprus in the Eighteenth Century', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, School of Oriental and African Studies, 2011, 225-226. Similar networks were also maintained by other merchants of Larnaca, such as G. Markantonides, who conducted such a credit and commercial network in the early nineteenth century. For Markantonides, see K. Louis, 'Οι οικονομικές δραστηριότητες του εμπόρου και διοικητικού παράγοντα της Λάρνακας Γεωργάκη Μαρκαντωνίδη (1817-1839) [The financial activities of the merchant and administrative agent of Larnaca Georgakis Markantonides (1817-1839)]', in E. Balta, T. Stavrides, I. Theocharides (eds), *Histories of Ottoman Larnaca* (Istanbul 2012), 113-138.

13 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 56.

14 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 58.

15 Masters, *The Origins*, 90-105; E. Frangakis-Syrett, *The Commerce of Smyrna in the Eighteenth Century (1700-1820)* (Athens 1992), 103-114; D. Goffman, 'İzmir: from Village to Colonial Port City', in E. Eldem, D. Goffman and B. Masters (eds), *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, İzmir and Istanbul* (Cambridge 1999), 123-125.

The religion of the debtors is revealed by their names, while the language of the letter or the promissory note is totally unconnected to the signatory's religion. Several letters in Greek were written by Muslim villagers, such as Hasan Ağa of Akrounda or İbrahim Ağa of Makrasyka.<sup>16</sup> Conversely, there is only one example of a promissory note written in Ottoman Turkish and signed by a Greek Orthodox villager, Christophis Atnah.<sup>17</sup> The use of the Greek language in most of these documents, even the ones signed by Muslims, is probably indicative of its use as a *lingua franca* of many mixed Cypriot villages, a phenomenon that persisted until well into the twentieth century.<sup>18</sup>

Of course, the signatory may not necessarily have been the actual writer of the letter. In a largely illiterate society, villagers would have recourse to people within their community who could read and write, regardless of whether they knew one's own language or not.<sup>19</sup> This is evident in the case of Loizis Papaloi of Kalopsida, who wrote a letter to Giovanni Garmogliesi in November 1745, in good handwriting and perfectly accented Greek,<sup>20</sup> while his subsequent three promissory notes from 1746, 1747, and 1749, respectively, are definitely written by a different hand and with very bad spelling.<sup>21</sup> The fact that Loizis was illiterate and used the services of other, literate or semi-literate, villagers is confirmed by the latter of the three promissory notes, which concludes with the words: "I support the above and seal with my finger" (*στερεοννο τα ανοθεν κ βουλλοννο με το δαχτηλιν μου*), followed by Loizis' fingerprint.<sup>22</sup>

Therefore, these sources are also indicative of the degree of literacy of Cypriot villagers. Most of the Greek documents are written in really bad handwriting and are rife with mistakes of spelling and syntax, indicating that, often, the scribe merely transcribed what he was hearing into Greek letters. On the other hand, letters and promissory notes in Ottoman Turkish are much more clearly written, apparently by literate scribes. This should come as no surprise, as most of these were signed by Muslim medium or high-ranking Ottoman officials who could either read and write properly or, at least, have access to educated scribes.

A revealing linguistic aspect of the Greek promissory notes and letters is the widespread use of Italian expressions or words in documents written in the earlier eighteenth century, regardless of whether they were signed by Christians or Muslims. In these Greek documents, expressions like *προμοντάρω*<sup>23</sup> (*promettere*: to promise), *μα-*

16 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, nn. 7, 13, 16-17.

17 ASV, ACVC, b. 25, n. 16.

18 K. Z. Özerk, 'Reciprocal Bilingualism as a Challenge and Opportunity: The Case of Cyprus', *International Review of Education*, 47 (2001), 257-259.

19 On literacy in Cyprus in the Ottoman period, especially among the Greek Orthodox clergy, see Th. Stavrides, 'Η εκπαίδευση του κλήρου στην Κύπρο (16ος-20ός αιώνας)' [The education of the clergy in Cyprus (16th-20th century)], *Επιστημονική Επετηρίς της Κυπριακής Εταιρείας Ιστορικών Σπουδών*, 5 (2001), 285-292, 302-304.

20 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 41.

21 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, nn. 47, 55, 72.

22 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 72.

23 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 3.

ντενίρω<sup>24</sup> (*mantenere*: to maintain) or αβιζάρω<sup>25</sup> (*avvisare*: to inform) are clearly Hellenised Italian words, which may be considered as a cultural residue in Cypriot society from the four-century-long Latin rule, which had ended barely a century and a half earlier.<sup>26</sup> The wording of most promissory notes in Greek is almost identical, which indicates that they were probably reproducing a standard formula provided by the Ragusan Consul himself.

On the other hand, late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Greek sources are rife with Turkish words and expressions, an indication of the definitive establishment of Ottoman Turkish culture on the island. Therefore, we see these Italianate influences appearing less and less as the century progresses, particularly after the middle of the century, an indication of the waning influence of Latin culture and the rising influence of Turkish. An interesting example of this period of transition is the letter of *Mühürdar* Hasan Ağa from the village of Kiti, written in the summer of 1751, in which we see the co-existence of the word αβιζάρω (*avvisare*) with a word like σικκιλίζω, still used in the Greek Cypriot dialect, coming from the Turkish verb *sıkılmak* and meaning ‘to be pressed, embarrassed, or annoyed’.<sup>27</sup>

Another issue that may be studied is the tone of these documents, and especially the degree of respect, with which the signatory addresses the European merchant. Several of the letters to Giovanni Garmogliesi may be characterised as ‘friendly’. In some Greek letters, the Ragusan Consul is addressed by people asking for money as a “dear and beloved friend” (ακριβός και ηγαπημένος φίλος),<sup>28</sup> or in a somewhat more respectful tone, some other villagers “greet His Excellency” and describe themselves as his “dear friends”.<sup>29</sup> In most Turkish letters, the Consul is characterised as a “venerable, esteemed and honourable friend” (*hürmetlü, rağbetlü, riayetlü dostum*).<sup>30</sup> These friendly debtors were invariably Muslims who were local Ottoman officials or magnates, like Feyzullah, *naib* of Larnaca,<sup>31</sup> *kâhya* Hacı Mehmed of Kolossi,<sup>32</sup> *mühürdar* Hasan Ağa

24 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 4.

25 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 7.

26 On the cultural residue of Latin rule in the island, especially concerning the influence of Catholicism in Ottoman Cyprus, see Z. N. Tsirpanlis, *Ο κυπριακός ελληνισμός της διασποράς και οι σχέσεις Κύπρου-Βατικανού (1571-1878)* [Cypriot Hellenism of the diaspora and the relations between Cyprus and the Vatican (1571-1878)], (Thessaloniki 2006), 265-318. See also the table of the most common given names of the Christian taxpayers of the *kaza* of Tuzla, from the *nüfus defteri* of 1831, which contains a large number of Italianate names, like Loyizis, Pieris, Yakumis, Yerolemis, or Franceskos, in E. Balta, F. Yaşar, E. Bayraktar, ‘Gayr-i Muslims in Tuzla (Larnaca): The Census Register of 1831’, in Balta, Stavrides and Theoharides (eds), *Histories*, 152.

27 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 82.

28 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, nn. 48, 101.

29 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 58.

30 ASV, ACVC, b. 27, nn. 31, 66.

31 ASV, ACVC, b. 21, n. 94; b. 27, nn. 31, 66, 75-76, 78, 93, 122; b. 28, nn. 143, 149, 152, 158, 161, 239-240, 337, 358, 401.

32 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, nn. 100-102.

of Kiti,<sup>33</sup> *kulkâhya* Hacı Osman Ağa of Lefkoniko,<sup>34</sup> or Süleyman *kâhya*<sup>35</sup> and Hacı Mehmed Neyzen of Kythrea.<sup>36</sup>

On the other hand, several letters written in Greek, whether by Christians or Muslims, are marked by a more submissive tone towards the Ragusan Consul. That this partially reflected the style of Greek letter-writing of that period is indicated by the fact that such expressions were, among others, used by one of the most affluent Greek Orthodox of Cyprus, Dragoman Christophakis Konstantinou, who asked for a loan of 5,000 *guruş*, in excellent Greek, “slavishly” greeting (*δουλικῶς χαιρετῶ*) Garmogliesi, and signing as his “slave” (*δούλος*), despite his high rank.<sup>37</sup>

However, more often than not, those asking for loans are of a much lower status than the Ragusan Consul, on whose cash they depended for their agricultural operations. For example, Baltassar Antzouli of Pyla addresses Garmogliesi, in 1737-1738, as “my most illustrious, most noble and dear master” (*εκλαμπρότατε, ευγενέστατε και ακριβέ μου αφέντη*), proceeding to verbally kiss his hand (*φιλό το χέρι της*) and to sign at the end as his “slave” (*δούλος*).<sup>38</sup> Süleyman Ağa of Episkopi and Hasan Ağa of Akrounda also signed their letters as Garmogliesi’s “slaves”, while greeting him “slavishly” (*δουληκός*).<sup>39</sup>

The dire and urgent need of these peasants for cash is highlighted by the fact that they sometimes asked for any sum of money Garmogliesi could spare them. For example, in one of his letters, Baltassar Antzouli of Pyla asked for 100 *guruş*, but, in the event of the Consul not having enough money, he could send anything he could spare (*στείλε μου όσα ορίσης*).<sup>40</sup> On 26 May 1741, *Bölükbaşı* İbrahim Ağa of Makrasyka wrote a brief and urgent letter to Garmogliesi, asking for a loan of 20 *guruş*, since he “ran out of leaves” (*ελήφτηκα το φήλλο*), apparently mulberry leaves to feed his silkworms.<sup>41</sup> Two months later, the same İbrahim Ağa came back with a second plea for a loan of 20 *guruş*, either because his first request was ignored, or because of further needs, acknowledging his previous debts and promising to repay everything together.<sup>42</sup> In January 1745, Süleyman Ağa of Episkopi asked the Ragusan Consul for a loan of 50 *guruş* for unspecified urgent agricultural works,<sup>43</sup> while in November 1751, the *naib* of Larnaca Feyzullah asked Gar-

33 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, nn. 82, 91, 93.

34 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, nn. 58-59.

35 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, nn. 48, 56.

36 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, nn. 78, 84, 92.

37 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 70. On Dragoman Christophakis Konstantinou, see Kitromilides, ‘Κοινωνικές σχέσεις’, 357; idem, ‘Η ανωνυμία μιας ‘επώνυμης’ γυναίκας στην Κύπρο του 18<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα [The anonymity of an ‘eponymous’ woman in eighteenth-century Cyprus]’, *Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 27 (2006), 511-516.

38 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, nn. 4, 6, 8.

39 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 32 for Süleyman Ağa and b. 20, nn. 7, 13 for Hasan Ağa.

40 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 6.

41 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 16.

42 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 17.

43 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 32.

mogliesi for an urgent loan of 30 *guruş*, since his processing of the silk cocoons had to be completed within five days, otherwise all his efforts would have been in vain.<sup>44</sup>

Moreover, the Ragusan Consul did not satisfy only the farmers' need for cash, but occasionally also other kinds of demands. In March 1751, the same Feyzullah asked Garmogliesi for one *zenbil* of rice and two *kile* of wheat, because the workers in his cotton fields had remained without food and, consequently, could not work (*hizmetkârlarım aç kaldılar, penbe tarlalarımı sürmüyorlar*).<sup>45</sup>

A perennial way used by the weak in order to gain the good will of a higher authority, on which they depend, is the use of complimentary gifts. Nikolos Moukkellefis's second letter to Garmogliesi was accompanied with two rabbits, two ducks, a partridge, and 40 lemons, apparently designed to earn the Consul's favour.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, Baltassar Antzouli of Pyla sent the Ragusan merchant a calf and four pigeons,<sup>47</sup> while İbrahim Ağa of Makrasyka sent him some game (*κηνήγγιν*), asking him not to hesitate to contact him whenever he had any need for such items.<sup>48</sup> Even Ottoman officials sometimes resorted to such measures, such as Osman, *Miralay* of Famagusta, who, in 1771, sent to the Venetian Consul eight pumpkins, promising to deliver the pledged barley after the harvest.<sup>49</sup>

In general, it appears that European merchants in eighteenth-century Cyprus chose to base their wealth on commerce and credit, while avoiding investing directly in land and becoming landowners,<sup>50</sup> apparently as a result of a prohibition on foreign subjects owning real estate in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>51</sup> In this, Garmogliesi was apparently no exception, although we have some information on his urban properties.<sup>52</sup> In January 1748, George Koumi of Varosha reached an agreement with the Ragusan Consul to act as a sharecropper (*εις πομχιαργάν*) in the latter's garden (*περιβόλιν*) and received from his employee Georgis the sum of 25 *guruş*, promising to repay his debt in silk.<sup>53</sup> Although

44 ASV, ACVC, b. 27, n. 66.

45 ASV, ACVC, b. 28, n. 239.

46 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 25. Kitromilides, 'Κοινωνικές σχέσεις', 351.

47 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 4.

48 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 17.

49 ASV, ACVC, b. 22, n. 51.

50 For this trend in the eighteenth century, see E. Rizopoulou-Igoumenidou, *Κινητά και ακίνητα πράγματα του Ευαγγέλιου Περιστιάνου, Σούδιτου Βένετου του κατά την Σκάλαν της Λάρνακος* [Movable and immovable properties of Evangelis Peristianos, Venetian subject of the Scala of Larnaca] (Larnaca 1998), 46. For the reversal of this trend by the 1830s, see E. Balta and M. Ayar, 'Ottoman Larnaca in the Age of Reforms: A Study of the *Temettuat* Register (1833)', in Balta, Stavrides and Theocharides (eds), *Histories*, 255-256.

51 On this prohibition, see M. Yazbak, *Haifa in the Late Ottoman Period, 1864-1914: A Muslim Town in Transition* (Leiden 1998), 223. The ban was lifted by a law enacted in 1867: S. J. Shaw and E. K. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. 2 (Cambridge 1977), 119; Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire*, 132; Yazbak, *Haifa*, 223.

52 See, for example, the purchase of two houses in Larnaca by Garmogliesi in 1742, in ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 20.

53 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 57.

this document indicates that Garmogliesi could, in certain cases, act as a landowner, this is the only such document in the collection and it only concerns a garden, possibly situated in an urban area like Varosha, on the outskirts of Famagusta.

The presence of sharecroppers is one indication of the stratification of Cypriot rural society featured in some of these letters.<sup>54</sup> In 1751, Hacı Mehmed Neyzen of Kythrea, a local landowner, informed the Consul that he was sending his sharecropper (*πομησάρης*), named Hadji Ioannis, to pay part of the debt he owed.<sup>55</sup> In the following year, dying Hacı Mehmed's wife and son, now masters of his *çiftlik*, sent the same sharecropper to hand over the cotton harvest to Garmogliesi.<sup>56</sup> This indicates a significant aspect of social relations in eighteenth-century Cypriot rural society: the domination of large landowners, who employed sharecroppers in order to cultivate their estates. In the case just mentioned, a Muslim landowner used a Christian sharecropper. However, great landowners were not always Muslim, and Greek Orthodox ecclesiastical institutions, in particular, could also employ sharecroppers in their agricultural operations.<sup>57</sup>

The use of seasonal agricultural workers, particularly for the cotton harvest, is also featured in these documents.<sup>58</sup> In September of 1755, Hacı Mehmed Ağa of Kolossi informed Giovanni Garmogliesi that he employed 25 cotton-workers (*βαμβακάδες*) in his cotton plantation, and these were asking for 10 *guruş* each as wages, leading the Muslim landowner to send his son Mehmed Ağa to the Ragusan Consul in order to receive a loan of 500 *guruş*.<sup>59</sup> In 1753, Elhac Ebubekir wrote to Garmogliesi asking for a loan of 14 *guruş* in order to pay his cotton-workers (*penbeciler*), whom he had agreed to reward with a total of 60 *guruş* for their services.<sup>60</sup>

A fundamental characteristic of the letters and promissory notes given to the Ragusan Consul was the fact that they often included a pledge for repayment of the loan in kind. This practice of money-lending *cum* advance purchase, known as *selem* or 'forward con-

54 On sharecropping in the Ottoman Empire, see Ö. L. Barkan, 'Les formes de l'organisation du travail agricole dans l'Empire Ottoman aux XV<sup>e</sup> et XVI<sup>e</sup> siècles', *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, 1 (1939), 14-44, and 2 (1940), 165-180; S. Joseph, *Islamic Law on Peasant Usufruct in Ottoman Syria (17th to early 19th century)* (Leiden 2012).

55 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 78.

56 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 84.

57 On Greek Orthodox monasteries and sharecropping during the Ottoman period, see S. Laiou, 'Σχέσεις μοναχών και Χριστιανών λαϊκών κατά την οθωμανική περίοδο (15ος-αρχές 19ου αι.) [Relations between monks and Christian laymen in the Ottoman period (15th - early 19th c.)]', in E. Kolovos (ed.), *Μοναστήρια, οικονομία και πολιτική από τους μεσαιωνικούς στους νεότερους χρόνους* [Monasteries, economy and politics from the medieval to the modern age] (Herakleio 2011), 209-212. On sharecropping in a Cypriot Monastery, see M. N. Michael, *Ο κώδικας 54 της Ιεράς Μονής Κύκκου και οι οικονομικές δραστηριότητές της (1813-1819)* [Codex 54 of the Holy Monastery of Kykkos and its economic activities (1813-1819)] (Nicosia 2001), 90-92.

58 On the use of seasonal workers in agriculture in Ottoman Cyprus, see Michael, *Ο Κώδικας 54*, 78-79.

59 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 102.

60 ASV, ACVC, b. 21, n. 92.



tracts', was widespread in several regions of the Ottoman Empire. This was an arrangement that apparently suited both the farmer, who had limited access to cash, and the merchant, who hoped to obtain marketable agricultural produce for his business. These contracts "usually contained a calculated rate of interest disguised as an artificially low price for the commodity in question, hence guaranteeing a profitable return when the lender sold the goods on the open market after they were delivered by the borrower".<sup>61</sup>

Cotton was by far the most important of the items pledged to Garmogliesi, and this comes as no surprise, since cotton was, according to Giovanni Mariti, the chief item of Cypriot commerce, "reckoned the finest in the Levant, for its whiteness, substance and length of staple".<sup>62</sup> The most important of the island's cotton-producing villages were situated in the plain of Messaoria, where Garmogliesi focused his credit activities.

In October 1744, Kasim from the village of Kouklia of Messaoria promised Garmogliesi to repay his debt of 40 *gurus* in the following March in "good cotton" (*εις καλόν πανπάκην*) and in "the first market sale" (*εις προτον παζάριν*).<sup>63</sup> A similar case was that of Mehmed from the village of Vatyli, also in the plain of Messaoria, who promised to repay the 50 *gurus* which he received from Garmogliesi expressly for two sacks of cotton "to his liking" (*οπου να του αρέσουν*) by the following March, delivering the product himself to the Consul's home.<sup>64</sup> Hadji Demetris of the Saint Kassianos quarter of Nicosia also promised Garmogliesi, in February 1749, to repay a debt of 115 *gurus* in "good *mahlouzin*" (Arabic *mahluj*), that is, hand-carded cotton, on the 1st of March.<sup>65</sup>

Most of the villagers pledging cotton to Garmogliesi specified that they would pay in "good cotton" at the time of the first market, in March. The fact that the cotton would be delivered to the European merchant in the beginning of spring indicates that, by then, it would have undergone all the necessary processing and, upon its delivery, it would be ready to go to market. According to Mariti, "the crop is gathered in October and November, but it requires time to free the cotton from the husk, and extract the seed, so that the first shipments are not ready until the February or March following".<sup>66</sup>

61 B. Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700-1900* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1995), 137. On *selem*, see Doumani, *Rediscovering*, 135-180. Hadjikyriacou, 'Society', 205-237.

62 Mariti, *Travels*, 111. On cotton production and trade in Cyprus in the Ottoman period, see Grivaud, 'L'île de Chypre', 181-182; Y. Triantafyllidou-Baladié, 'Το βαμβάκι στην Κύπρο: καλλιέργεια, ανάπτυξη, εκμετάλλευση, στην περίοδο της οθωμανικής κυριαρχίας: (1571-1878) [Cotton in Cyprus: cultivation, development, exploitation, in the period of Ottoman rule: (1571-1878)]', *Επετηρίδα του Κέντρου Επιστημονικών Ερευνών*, 22 (1996), 113-142; Çevikel, *Kıbrıs Eyâleti*, 257-260; Th. P. Ioannou, *Εμπορικές σχέσεις Κύπρου – Γαλλίας κατά το 18ο αιώνα* [Commercial relations between Cyprus and France in the eighteenth century] (Nicosia 2002), 247-260.

63 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 30.

64 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 52.

65 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 65.

66 Mariti, *Travels*, 112.



The second most popular item in these transactions was silk.<sup>67</sup> In 1739, both Baltasar Antzouli and Stefanos Gaitanos promised to repay their debts of 32 and 300 *gurus* respectively with the next silk (*με το ερχόμενον μετάξην*).<sup>68</sup> In March 1746, Süleyman *kâhya* of Kythrea sent with Hadji Lorentzos, probably a sharecropper, and with his own man, Mustafa, a quantity of silk to Garmogliesi, asking him to weigh it and make his arrangements (*καμε τον λοαρσμον του*) with Hadji Lorentzos, asking for a loan of 500 *gurus*.<sup>69</sup>

Of particular interest is the timing of the repayment in silk. In February 1714, Nikolas Christophi promised to repay in silk a debt of 10 *gurus* to Garmogliesi at the “first market of Famagusta” (*το προτον παζαρην της Αμοχουστου*),<sup>70</sup> while in December 1748, Georgis Konstanti of Potamitissa promised to repay his debt by the time of the feast of St Barnabas, six months later.<sup>71</sup> This was so since, as Giovanni Mariti informs us, according to an old custom, the annual price of silk in the island was decided at the fair of St Barnabas, on the outskirts of Famagusta, on June 11, Julian calendar.<sup>72</sup> Georgis’s promissory note does not mention the repayment of the loan in kind, but having in mind Mariti’s information, it appears probable that this payment would have been made in silk. This is corroborated by the case of brothers Georgis and Kasparis from the village of Avgorou, who signed a promissory note, in the presence of village priest Papa Nikiphoros, to repay Garmogliesi a debt of 37 *gurus* “by the time of the silks” (*εως τα μεταξια*).<sup>73</sup>

In certain cases, the Ragusan Consul also received pledges in other products. In September 1758, the wife and the mother of the deceased *naib* of Larnaca Feyzullah, apparently a major *çiftlik* landowner in the Messaoria region, caused the issuing of a *hüccet*, acknowledging that the late *naib* owed money to Garmogliesi and had pledged the wheat, barley, cotton, cut straw, and all produce of his fields in the villages of Yenagra and Prastio as a guarantee for the repayment of that debt (... *balyoz-ı mesfure olan deyn mukabelesinde [...] Yenağra ve Brastyo karyelerinde hasil olan buğday ve arpa ve penbe ve saman cümle-i mahsulat balyoz-ı mesfurundur...*).<sup>74</sup>

As we see from the contemporary account of Giovanni Mariti, cotton and silk were the primary items of Cypriot commerce around the middle of the eighteenth century,<sup>75</sup> a fact which indicates the uses to which the Ragusan Consul would probably put these

67 On silk production and trade in Cyprus during the Ottoman period, see Grivaud, ‘L’île de Chypre’, 180-181; Y. Triantafyllidou-Baladié, ‘Σηροτροφία και διεθνείς εμπορικές σχέσεις στην Κύπρο στην περίοδο της οθωμανικής κυριαρχίας (1571-1878) [Sericulture and international commercial relations in Cyprus in the period of Ottoman rule (1571-1878)]’, *Επετηρίδα του Κέντρου Επιστημονικών Ερευνών*, 23 (1997), 167-187; Ioannou, *Εμπορικές σχέσεις*, 234-247.

68 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, nn. 8-9, respectively.

69 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 48.

70 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 3.

71 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 64.

72 Mariti, *Travels*, 114.

73 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 54.

74 ASV, ACVC, b. 28, n. 348.

75 Mariti, *Travels*, 111-114.

products. As an important European merchant residing in the port city of Larnaca, Garmogliesi apparently used his credit relations with Cypriot farmers in order to provide for his own commercial activities. Thus we may note that the relationship between the European merchants of Larnaca and the island's farmers, though by no means equal, was a reciprocal one, since each party provided the other with what was necessary to conduct its business — agricultural products and cash respectively.

Their need for cash in a monetised economy, coupled with their limited access to it, was the main reason why the farmers had to rely on the European merchants of Larnaca for the financing of their agricultural operations. However, this reliance on credit from the merchants held considerable perils for the farmers, since the latter were dependent on conditions outside their control, like the weather, in order to repay their debts. In April 1737, Baltassar Antzouli of Pyla asked for Garmogliesi's patience over his not handing over the pledged cotton on time, since the weather, "the rains and the clouds" (*τα νερά και η σινεφγής*), had prevented him from harvesting,<sup>76</sup> while in July 1741, İbrahim Ağa of Makrasyka excused himself for not coming to Larnaca to visit the Consul in person, invoking the illness of his child.<sup>77</sup>

A letter written to the Ragusan Consul by a certain Mustafa in the summer of 1756 indicates that one of Garmogliesi's debtors would have to sell not only his *çiftlik* of Kouklia, in Messaoria, but also his own house (*oturdukları evler*), in order to repay his debt.<sup>78</sup> If a *çiftlik* landowner had found himself in such a dire position that he would have to sell his own house because he did not have enough money to repay his debt, we can imagine the fate reserved for small-time farmers, who were often forced to sell their plots to their creditors when a miscalculation or adverse weather conditions prevented them from harvesting adequately, and so remained landless agricultural workers.<sup>79</sup>

Agricultural debts, gradually developing into outright usury, remained a perennial problem of Cypriot rural life until well into the British period. In 1878, Robert Hamilton Lang (1832-1913), British Consul in Larnaca and later director of the Imperial Ottoman Bank, wrote that "the horse-leech which bleeds the peasant is the usurer from whom he borrows to pay his taxes and to subsist until his crop is matured. These advances he procures at an almost fabulous cost. Not only does he borrow at an interest of 2 and sometimes 3% per month, but the lender insists on being paid in kind."<sup>80</sup>

76 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 4.

77 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, n. 17.

78 ASV, ACVC, b. 21, n. 83.

79 On dispossession resulting from credit default, see Masters, *The Origins*, 157-158. On dispossession in Cyprus during the British period, see R. Katsiaounis, *Labour, Society and Politics in Cyprus during the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century* (Nicosia 1996), 102-109.

80 R. H. Lang, *Cyprus: Its History, its Present Resources, and Future Prospects* (London 1878), 254. In a similar vein, see also the 1869 report of Greek Consul G. S. Menardos, in Th. Papadopoulos, *Προξενικά έγγραφα του ΙΘ' αιώνα* [Consular documents of the nineteenth century] (Nicosia 1980), 260.

In his 1930 *Survey of Rural Life in Cyprus*, British official B. J. Surridge noted that in the 1920s, 82% of Cypriot farmers owed an average of 36 pounds per capita.<sup>81</sup> A commission, appointed in 1918 by the Colonial Government in order to study the problem of rural indebtedness, submitted a report summarising the conditions in the early twentieth century, reflecting, to a great extent, the eighteenth century situation also: the report pointed to the “improvidence” of the farmers as the chief reason for their excessive indebtedness, which allowed “unscrupulous village merchants and money-lenders” to control them and make them lose “the freedom to sell their produce on the market”. Thus the farmers were “obliged to deliver, sometimes after faulty weighing, their products to the creditor”. The report also pointed to the “inordinate rates of interest”, indicating that “when repayment was in kind, the effective rate of interest charged was often over fifty per cent”. As the farmers, even in the early twentieth century (and even more so in the eighteenth), were usually illiterate, they “had to take the trader’s word for the state of his account with him. Only the merchant kept accounts, the farmer merely signing bonds indicating the amount of his outstanding debt plus interest due to the creditor.”<sup>82</sup>

The eighteenth-century developments, illustrated by the case of Ragusan Consul Giovanni Garmogliesi and his credit network, signalled the beginning of a vicious circle that, together with the rise of commercial agriculture and the emergence of the *çiftliks*, rendered Cypriot farmers completely dependent on city-dwelling merchants, who took away their production, and in many instances, dispossessed them. The phenomenon of agricultural loans from European merchants, which developed in the eighteenth century, set up a pattern that would persist for at least two centuries, fundamentally transforming Cypriot rural society and its economy.

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81 B. J. Surridge, *Επισκόπησις της εν Κύπρω αγροτικής ζωής* [A survey of rural life in Cyprus] (Nicosia 1930), 33.

82 G. S. Georghallides, *A Political and Administrative History of Cyprus 1918-1926* (Nicosia 1979), 178-179.



THE ‘GREAT TRANSFORMATION’  
OF OTTOMAN AGRARIAN RELATIONS  
IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY



# THE OTTOMAN AGRARIAN QUESTION AND THE MAKING OF PROPERTY AND CRIME IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Yücel TERZİBAŞOĞLU\*

THIS ARTICLE IS BASED ON RESEARCH ON THE AGRARIAN REGIME of south-eastern Europe in the nineteenth century, focusing especially on its economic and legal dynamics. One of the major themes that emerge from the research is the central role the local councils and the provincial court system, two new local institutions formed in the course of the century, played as loci, not only of conflict settlement but, more importantly, where agrarian interests were articulated and a new regime was shaped with long-term consequences for the local society and economy. The research taps into a reservoir of archival material which remains little used but carries a great potential for the history of the region: the minutes of the new local councils (*idare meclisleri*) and courts (*nizamiye mahkemeleri*), and the files of the High Council for Judicial Enactments (or the High Court of Appeal) (*Meclis-i Vala-yı Ahkam-ı Adliye*) in Istanbul. The study of the daily workings of the new local administration and the legal system points to the need for a better contextualisation of the overall administrative re-organisation which took place in the course of the nineteenth century, for this re-organisation involved not only a renewed design for the provincial administration but also the invention of key new central institutions in the imperial capital such as the *Meclis-i Vala*.<sup>1</sup> In the broadest of terms, the administrative and legal re-organisation curbed the powers of the Sultan and led, for the first time, to a separation

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of powers in Ottoman government through the formation of representative forms of rule both in the provinces and in the capital.<sup>2</sup>

The article is an attempt at re-examining the history of the Ottoman ‘legal revolution’ in the nineteenth century to see the shape it took in the local Balkan context. Two areas of law will be of particular interest: property and crime. This choice is partly dictated by the nature of the source material, as most of the cases the new court system dealt with, and therefore, most of the documentary material, pertain to conflicts in these two areas, which, the paper will try to show, were interrelated. But the fact that most conflicts centred on issues of property and crime is also indicative of the deeper social changes taking place in the region at the time. The term ‘legal revolution’ is borrowed from Eric Hobsbawm;<sup>3</sup> it was with this that he described the legal transformations taking place in different parts of the world in the course of the nineteenth century. It is indeed inspiring to conceptualise what is commonly referred to as the ‘Tanzimat reforms’ in the Ottoman Empire within this more general and universal comparative framework. Hobsbawm argued that a transformation of the agrarian economies and societies of the nineteenth century was made possible in different parts of Europe and elsewhere through a politico-legal revolution directed against both the landlords and the peasantries aimed at installing markets in land and labour for a ‘rational utilisation of land’. This entailed the abolition of arrangements and institutions commonly and generically known as feudalism, primary among which were different forms of forced labour. Indeed, serfdom was formally abolished in different parts of Europe from 1789 (France) through to 1848 (Central Europe) and the 1860s (Russia).

In the Ottoman Empire too, with the promulgation of the Tanzimat edict initiating the reform process (1839), different forms of forced labour prevalent until then were formally abolished and a standard agricultural tax was introduced instead. The legislation that followed (regarding landed property, crime, and administration, *inter alia*) dramatically altered the agrarian relations in the Empire by institutionalising individual ownership of land, criminalising a variety of communal practices in agriculture and in rural areas, and installing a new administrative grid. This had long-term consequences for different regions in the Empire, which await further study. The Ottoman legal revolution in this sense is comparable to the Habsburg and Romanov legal revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe, since the economic argument in favour of productivity and rational utilisation of land had an equal attraction for the enlightened despots of these regions, and, Hobsbawm argued, initiated similar answers and produced comparable consequences. For large parts of Europe (central and eastern), the legal revolution came from above, and imposed from outside, “a sort of artificial earthquake rather than as the slide of long-

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*Griechenland*, hg. von Michael Stolleis unter Mitarbeit von Gerd Bender und Jani Kirov. (Studien zur europäischen Rechtsgeschichte 292). Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann 2015.

1 For the formation and workings of the *Meclis-i Vala* see M. Seyitdanlioğlu, *Tanzimat Devrinde Meclis-i Vala (1838-1868)* (Ankara 1999).

2 See S. Zubaida, *Law and Power in the Islamic World* (London 2003).

3 E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789-1848* (London 1962), 151-160.

loosened land”.<sup>4</sup> This aspect of the legal revolutions in the Ottoman and Russian Empires, and the consequences of such transformations certainly call for comparative research agendas. More pertinent for the present purposes is the nature of the pre-existing fault lines over which the Ottoman legal revolution in the Balkans was constructed, and on which the fate of the new regime was predicated.<sup>5</sup> This is the wider context of the Ottoman agrarian question in the nineteenth century.

### *Local Councils as Rural Courts and Law Makers in the Nineteenth Century*

The available archival information provides important clues to a changing legal system governing property relations and dispute settlement after the 1840s, in the Ottoman Empire. In order to analyse the material consequences of the change in the legal system for the lives of the peasants and landowners, as well as the nature of the texts that resulted from the reconstituted legal process, it is imperative to contextualise the documentary evidence, i.e., to first look into the nature of the change in the norms, practices and understandings of the law governing property relations on land in the Empire.

Most of the available work on the Ottoman legal system, and especially on the courts and legal process, until recently failed to take into account the radical change from the *shari* to the *nizami* court system. Most legal historical work has concentrated on the early modern period in which the *sharia* courts constituted the backbone of the formal dispute settlement process. Recently there have appeared some notable additions to the study of the workings of the *sharia* courts in different contexts.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, it remains an often cited but rarely analysed fact that these courts lost most of their jurisdiction in the course of the nineteenth century at the expense of the new *nizami* courts. There is therefore a notable gap in our understanding of the workings of these latter courts in the late nineteenth century.

It is important to note that the *nizami* courts constitute an important aspect of the transformation of the legal system that was initiated by the Ottoman central administration from the 1840s onwards. By the second half of the century, most of the land disputes

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4 Ibid., 160.

5 It must be added that Hobsbawm invokes the metaphor of horticulture in another context (political symbolism, invention of tradition and politics of democracy), which might also be apt here: “Like horticulture, this development was a mixture of planting from above and growth – or at any rate readiness for planting – from below.” E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914* (New York 1987), 105.

6 Among the most notable recent ones are: R. Gradeva, *Rumeli under the Ottomans, 15th-18th Centuries: Institutions and Communities*, (Istanbul 2004); I. Agmon, *Family and Court: Legal Culture and Modernity in Late Ottoman Palestine*, (New York 2006); H. Canbakal, *Society and Politics in an Ottoman Town: Ayntab in the 17th Century* (Leiden 2007); B. Ergene, *Local Court, Provincial Society, and Justice in the Ottoman Empire: Legal Practice and Dispute Resolution in Çankırı and Kastamonu (1652-1744)* (Leiden 2003); L. Peirce, *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 2003).

came to be settled out of the purview of the old *shari* court system. The new courts that were now authorised to settle property disputes (mostly in the rural areas) were the newly-established *nizamiye* courts. The jurisdiction of the *sharia* courts was drastically curtailed in favour of the local administrative councils and the new court system. Therefore most of the land disputes in the nineteenth century were referred to and seen in these *nizami* courts (and its precursor the local councils).

The new administrative councils institutionalised at different levels of the local administration from the village up to the provincial centre lay at the origins of the *nizami* court system. In addition to the local state functionaries, the councils also incorporated the local notables, who were elected through a two-tier voting system with a limited franchise based on property-ownership.<sup>7</sup> It was then, i.e., from the 1840s onwards, that local administrative councils started to accumulate powers relating to a wide range of local issues. They deliberated on problems and conflicts involving urban and rural property, the distribution of local revenue sources, the burden of taxation among the local population, among other things. The increasing self-assurance of the local councils and their increasing authority and powers were an indication of the expansion of the sphere of local politics, of the increasing power and influence of local elites with substantial interests in urban and rural property. This made for an uneasy and sometimes tense relationship with the central administration. The new local elite both articulated local interest, and at the same time, implemented, adjusted, and translated into the local social and material landscape the rules and regulations of the central state.

The tension surfaced frequently when the jurisdiction of the local administrative councils and the *nizamiye* courts clashed, since the *nizamiye* courts were now not only eroding the jurisdiction of the *shari* courts but also the newly-won jurisdiction of the local councils over property cases. Matters relating to property disputes had fallen under the jurisdiction of *nizamiye* courts since their inception with the Provincial Law of 1864. At the same time, however, the *shari* courts maintained their authority over *vakıf* properties, which covered most urban property. Moreover, the local administrative councils maintained in a limited manner their powers over the settlement of property disputes and, most importantly, in issues relating to property registration, which would prove one of the most important powers of the councils as far as the new property regime was concerned.<sup>8</sup> The problem of the overlapping jurisdictions of the councils, and of the *nizami* and *shari* courts in a legal regime in formation, was replicated in complex ways involving criminal cases and civil disputes too.

7 S.J. Shaw and E. Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Vol. II: *Reform, Revolution and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975* (Cambridge 1977), 76-95; R.H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876* (Princeton 1963), 136-171.

8 For publications based on recent research on different aspects of the *nizamiye* court system, see especially E.B. Ekinçi, *Tanzimat ve Sonrası Osmanlı Mahkemeleri* (İstanbul 2004); S. Bingöl, *Hırsova Kaza Deavi Meclisi Tutanakları, Nizamiye Mahkemeleri Tutanaklarından bir Örnek* (Eskişehir 2002); idem, *Nizamiye Mahkemelerinin Kuruluşu ve İşleyişi, 1840-1876*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Akdeniz University, 1998; A. Rubin, *Ottoman Nizamiye Courts, Law and Modernity* (New York 2011).

The formal presence of local interests in the new legal regime provides historians with a potentially wider window into the local dynamics of social property relations, especially taking into account novelties such as the new powers vested in village headmen as justices of the peace,<sup>9</sup> or in the local land registration offices in property registration. Such a local viewpoint as far as property disputes are concerned made it possible to work with intermediate legal tools and practices which were available to the peasants and cultivators, which they interpreted, understood, and used in many creative ways at a time when both individual and communal property rights were hotly contested in different ways in the rural and urban areas. One such concentrated contestation took place in Niş in the 1840s, usually referred to as the 'Niş uprising'.<sup>10</sup>

Whether or not what took place in the Ottoman province of Niş and other Balkan provinces in the 1840s and later can merely be described as spontaneous 'uprisings' or qualified as a much more radical challenge to the Ottoman regime, and were thus comparable to the 1848 revolutions in Europe in general is an open question. This is not the place to go into the historiography of the events in the Niş countryside which took place in the 1840s and later involving the landowners and the peasants. What I am going to do instead is, through a close examination of the local and central documentation, to attempt to show how the conflict that erupted in the region between the landowners and the peasants, as reflected upon by the local administration, and with the direct involvement of the central administration, can bring to the fore some major bones of contention that directly concerned the foundations of the Ottoman agrarian regime. The terms of the conflict as it emerges from the documentation is such that the peasants, using the vocabulary of the reformers, challenged and contested the Ottoman land regime and hence illuminated the inherent contradictions between the aims of the legal revolution and the local political economy. The terms of the conflict are thus of some importance and go right into the heart of the Ottoman agrarian question<sup>11</sup> in the nineteenth century.

The two *Meclis-i Vala* files I will look at both concern the events at Niş as seen through eyes of the provincial administrative council of the province. In the first of the files there are two reports produced by the Niş provincial council addressed to the *Meclis-i Vala*, both dated 1858, written nearly one after the other, which were filed in Istanbul together as they pertain to the same issue in the region. In these two reports, the provincial council advises the Supreme Court and the main legislative organ of the Empire on the agrarian relations in the region, more specifically, about the agrarian relations in the *çiftlik*s (landed estates)

9 A.Y. Kaya, 'Administering Property Disputes: Institutionalization of Justices of Peace in the Ottoman Empire (1839-1913)', in H. İslamoğlu and S. Saracoğlu (eds), *New Legal History of the Ottoman Empire*, forthcoming.

10 H. İnalçık, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi* (Istanbul 1992); A. Uzun, *Tanzimat ve Sosyal Direnişler: Niş İsyanı Üzerine Ayrıntılı Bir İnceleme (1841)* (Istanbul 2002); H. Şentürk, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Bulgar Meselesi (1850-1875)* (Ankara 1992); M. Pinson, 'Ottoman Bulgaria in the First Tanzimat Period - The Revolts in Nish (1841) and Vidin (1850)', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 11/2 (1975), 103-146.

11 For a history of the concept see H. Bernstein, 'Agrarian Questions Then and Now', *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 24/1 (1996), 22-59.

located within the province. As is conventional in Ottoman bureaucratic correspondence of the period, the council first provides the basic outlines of the issue, elaborates on the relevant prior correspondence and decisions taken, then gives an account of the imminent situation and the reasons for drawing up the present report, and finally declares its final decision, asking for approval from the relevant ministry and/or the *Meclis-i Vala*.

The issue at hand concerns a long-standing conflict between the Christian peasants of some of the districts located within the province and the landholders.<sup>12</sup> The landholders are all Muslims,<sup>13</sup> controlling – at least as far as the present correspondence is concerned – more than 10 *çiflik*s. In the first of the reports in this first file, the issue had been referred to the council upon the petition of six Christian peasants of the names of Trayko, Mihal, Soman Yanko, Cotan, Üstüban, and Kristo, who claimed in their petition, according to the letter of the council, that “the illegal intervention by persons named Hacı Mustafa, Reşid, Mehmed Raşid and Abdullah of their villages in their jointly held (*muş’a ve müşterek mutasarrıf*) and worked fields (*iştiraken ziraat*), held with *tapu* deeds, located within the villages of Kutles and Perstofca in the district of Leskofca, for which they had been paying agricultural taxes, had to be stopped by an imperial order”. In the second report, a very similar demand is registered from a petition directly and in person presented in Istanbul to the *Meclis-i Vala* signed by the Christian peasants named Maylos, Jefko, and Üstüban, who write that: “their fields, held with title deeds, located in the village of Zir Barbeş, in which they also reside, in the district of Niş, which they had been cultivating jointly (*muş’a ve müşterek*) and paying the agricultural taxes due annually, had been subjected to illegal intervention by the notables named Yusuf and Abdullah, and requested that, in line with the law, an imperial order be issued to stop the said intervention”. We have no way of knowing with the available documentary material whether Üstüban and Abdullah, the two names common to the two reports, pertain to the same persons.

On the petitions the council had apparently asked the opinion of the imperial council, which, the council’s report summarises, came up with the following standard response for both of the requests of the peasants: “[...] that if the disputed fields, while being jointly owned and cultivated, had been left uncultivated without a valid reason for a consecutive period of three years and for this reason had become subject to re-allocation, and if the said [Hacı Mustafa, Reşid, Mehmed Raşid, and Abdullah]/[Yusuf and Abdullah] had thus purchased them with the appropriate entry fee in return for title deeds, then their intervention is in line with the law. But if the fact of the matter is not such and that if the aforesaid indeed unlawfully interfered with the petitioners’ fields, while they were jointly holding and cultivating the land and while paying the agricultural taxes on them, then the law stipulates that the said intervention should be stopped.” The case was then referred back to the council to find out the truth of the matter, and to settle the dispute “according to the *sharia* and the relevant laws”.

12 BOA, MVL 884 29.

13 The confessional differentiation between the landlords and the peasants is underlined in the official documentation from the beginning. There are, however, also official accounts which try to break down the confessional divide by primarily focusing on the problem of landownership.

The council in the first report then goes on to elaborate on the facts of the matter: “As a matter of fact, the lands of the said two villages are in the possession, with title deeds, of Hacı Mustafa and his said partners, and the said people are in fact his tenants, who used to pay them land rent in the name of *gospodarlık* [...]” The report thus opens up the nature of the relationship between the peasants in the *çiftlik*s and the *çiftlik*-holders. What emerges is that the legal status of the peasants in the *çiftlik* is not typical of the classic Ottoman peasant household, who in practice and in Ottoman legal understanding had to have hereditary usufruct rights, guaranteed by the state, over the land the peasant household cultivated, in return for which the household paid agricultural taxes to the state known as *öşür* (tithe). This is the meaning of usufruct (*tasarruf*) in Ottoman legal practice, where ideally no intermediary was to come between the patrimonial state and its flock, the *reaya*. In this Ottoman legal fiction, the peasant household, the building block of the Ottoman agrarian system, has a direct relationship with the state (represented by the official tax collector), the ultimate owner of the land (*sahib-i arz*).<sup>14</sup> We know, however, that, since the sixteenth century, when this classic system was said to have been established, in many parts of the Empire local tax collectors and others, including civil and military officialdom, had intruded into and disturbed such an ideal-typical harmonious relationship, with the use of land grants and endowments of different types.

When this broader picture on the ground is taken into account, therefore, the status of the peasants of Leskofca and Niş districts was no exception but merely a deviation – albeit a significant one – from the norm. This is because they appear in the reports of the Niş provincial administrative council to have had no usufruct rights on the land, and are described as ‘tenants’ of landlords who resided in villages within the boundaries of the landed estates owned by the latter. The terminology is revealing: there is no inconsistency in the correspondence (at least as far as the administrative council’s vocabulary is concerned), which referred to them always as ‘the tenants’ (*müstecir*), and never as ‘peasants’ with use rights (*tasarruf*, *mutasarrıf*).<sup>15</sup> The landowners were referred to as both those with use rights proved by title deeds (*mutasarrıf*) and at the same time as owners of the *çiftlik*s (*eshab-ı çiftlikat*). Considering that in Ottoman land law and the conventional understanding of agrarian relations, the owner of the land (*sahib-i arz*) was always the state (or more correctly, the state treasury), the depiction of the *çiftlik*-holders as ‘owners’ was in itself telling as to the nature of the agrarian relations in the region. The content and nature of the rent relationship as it actually existed between the tenant

14 The most elaborate analysis of this is still by Ömer Lütfi Barkan. Among others, especially see Ö. L. Barkan, ‘Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Çiftçi Sınıfların Hukuki Statüsü’, *Türkiye’de Toprak Meselesi* (Istanbul 1980), 725-788; and for the dynamics of change in the agrarian property relations in the nineteenth century see especially H. İslamoğlu, ‘Property as a Contested Domain: A Re-evaluation of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858’, in R. Owen (ed.), *New Perspectives on Property and Land in the Middle East*, (Cambridge, MA., 2000), 3-61; eadem, ‘Politics of Administering Property: Law and Statistics in the 19th-Century Ottoman Empire’, in eadem (ed.), *Constituting Modernity: Private Property in the East and West* (London 2004), 276-318.

15 Although, significantly, they refer to themselves in their petition to the council as peasants holding title deeds to the lands they hold and cultivate in common.



cultivators and the landowners in the region consisted of a basket of obligations the tenants owed to the landholders. The contents of this basket no doubt changed in time and place but what is important is the indication it gives of the feudal nature of the obligations Balkan peasants owed to the landlords. As far as the peasants of Leskofca and Niş were concerned, this basket consisted of one-ninth of the produce payable to the landlord and a host of other obligations such as the obligation on each household to provide between 8-10 days of labour for reaping the grass in the meadows of the landlord and providing one cartload of wood for the landed estate, all falling under the designation 'land rent'. These obligations were over and above the official agricultural tax due to the state, which seems to have been fixed locally at the rate of one-tenth of the produce at this time.<sup>16</sup> This amounted to double taxation and the term '*gospodarlık*' was the local designation of this agrarian practice.<sup>17</sup>

The second report summarised the facts of the matter in the village of Zir Barbeş in the district of Niş as seen from the perspective of the members of the provincial council of Niş:

The fact of the matter is that the demand of the said Christians does not concern merely a couple of fields, they are not in possession of any title deeds in their names, the village in question has the status of a *çiftlik* which has for many years been in the possession of Sabire and Fatma *hanıms*, the wives of the said Yusuf and Abdullah, and the said Christian subjects had been paying as land rent one-ninth of the cereal produce, and each household had been providing 10 men and a cartload of wood. But last year upon the claim on the said Christians, they were persuaded to pay the one-ninth land rent but nothing else, such as the men and the wood, which is in any case against the provisions of the imperial order. However, recently the said people, with the intention of wholly appropriating the lands of the said *çiftlik*, sent representatives to Istanbul, and the matter was asked about by your ministry from us. As will be apparent from the annexed copies of the title deeds, the lands in question belong from old times to the *çiftlik* which had been inherited by the said *hanıms* from their fathers, and is currently in their use/possession (*tasarruf*) with the relevant title deeds. And the said Christians are their tenants and have been paying from old times to the owners of the land (*eshab-ı arazi*) as land rent one-ninth of the cereal produce in addition to 10 men from each household and a cartload of wood. But as was stated earlier, last year it was decided that they would continue to pay the owners of the land the one-ninth but nothing else, and the parties were persuaded to that effect. Now the new demands of the said Christians stem from the intention of appropriating the land altogether, land which is owned on the strength of title deeds. And this is not just. However it should be communicated to us whether the one-ninth land rent on the wheat and hemp should continue to be collected as had been agreed between the parties last year."<sup>18</sup>

The core of the conflict at hand therefore concerned precisely the attempt by the peasants to question the land rent within the vocabulary provided by the declaration of the

16 This rate due to the state also varied from region to region (although the literal meaning of *öşr* is one-tenth) between one-half to one-tenth, but was fixed at one-tenth only in the 1840s.

17 The term '*gospodar*' or '*hospodar*' is a Slavic word, commonly used in the region to designate 'lord' or 'master'.

18 BOA, MVL 884 29.



Tanzimat edict and the ensuing legislation, which promised that all forms of extra-economic obligations (including forced labour [*angarya*]) were to be ended, and the peasant household was to be taxed directly by state officials “in accordance with his property and ability to pay”.<sup>19</sup> The declaration also promised security of property to those who held land (registered with title deeds), and the peasant cultivator full use rights over the land he cultivated, which would be under the protection of the state. It is no coincidence that one of the first projects the reformers embarked on was the registration of landed property throughout the Empire in order to establish landholders’ (peasants’ and others’ alike) rights to land, provide them with appropriate documentation proving title (the new title deed certificate), and hence subsequently to establish a clear tax regime, with a predictable and stable tax base.<sup>20</sup> The promise of the protection of use rights, however, was a double-edged sword, especially in the case at hand. At the heart of the conflict were two opposing claims: on the one hand there was the peasant cultivators’ claim of joint use and cultivation on the strength of title deeds, which they argued proved common use, and on the other, the landowners’ claim of individual use and ownership on the strength of title deeds. The council never recognised the existence of valid title deeds in the possession of the peasant cultivators but fully acknowledged the individual title deeds in the possession of the landowners, an indication of the administrative preference for individual property rights over common use property rights. This was not merely the position of the council but was the tendency in the new legislation regarding land in the Empire initiated by the Land Code of 1858. How this conflict was to be settled therefore had far-reaching repercussions not only for the people concerned but for the land regime in the Empire in general. Perhaps that is what the Niş provincial council intimated when it said: “[...] this matter is not merely about a couple of fields but might end with the confiscation of whole landed estates”.<sup>21</sup>

That is why the local council was categorical in its answer to the question as it definitely interpreted the reform vocabulary in a manner which prioritised individual use rights of the landowners as proved by the title deeds in their possession over the joint and communal use rights of the peasants. From another perspective, however, the case at hand was a challenge for the reformers in Istanbul: it represented a double bind for them in the sense that the principle of security of property as proved by appropriate documentation came head to head with the principle of just taxation, according to which there was to be no obligation on cultivators apart from those owed to the state according to one’s property and ability to pay. The *Meclis-i Vala* came up with a compromise solution: it ruled that the extra-economic obligations of the peasants would be ended, i.e., no more forced labour in the form of the compulsion to provide annually 8-10 days of labour in the meadows of the landowners, and no more provision of one cartload of wood to the landholder. This, however, was far short of the peasants’ demand for the abolition of

19 R. Kaynar, *Mustafa Reşit Paşa ve Tanzimat* (Ankara 1985), 178.

20 A.Y. Kaya and Y. Terzibaşoğlu, ‘Tahrir’den Kadastro’ya: 1874 İstanbul Emlak Tahriri ve Vergisi: Kadastro Tabir Olunur Tahrir-i Emlak’, *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, 9 (2009), 7-56.

21 BOA, MVL 884 29.

the practice known as *gospodarlık* altogether. In other words, the peasants did not want to pay the one-ninth of the produce to the landholders as ground rent, but only the one-tenth to the state as tithe. If the Supreme Council and court accepted this, it would have meant the acknowledgement of the use rights of the peasants over the land, and by implication the denial of the individual ownership rights of the landowners. Thus the principle of individual property overrode the principle of just taxation, and the legal status of the peasants as tenants was upheld by the court in the end. According to the ‘negotiated’ settlement between the parties as initiated by the central administration, a ‘contract’ was signed between them stipulating that the tenant cultivators were to pay the one-ninth of the produce to the landowners (after the payment of one-tenth tithe to the state) as ground rent (*icare-i zemin*).

The ground rent at the rate of one-ninth of the produce did not represent a generalised settlement, applicable for all *çiftlik*s even within the province itself. The terms of the ‘rent contract’ changed from *çiftlik* to *çiftlik* within the province. The flexible nature of peasant obligations is more apparent in the second of the *Meclis-i Vala* files. The second file is also from 1858, similarly concerning some *çiftlik*s, this time from another part of the province. The file contains a petition signed by 94 men, all notables of the district, predominantly Muslims but also including some Christian signatories. The petition claimed that “the subjects who reside as tenants in the *çiftlik*s owned for a long time through inheritance on the strength of title deeds within the borders of our *kaza* and in the surrounding *kazas*, do not in any way have any land or properties in these places and only receive a one-fourth share of what they cultivate as in other *çiftlik*s”.<sup>22</sup> The ground rent at the rate of three-fourths of the produce in these *çiftlik*s is strikingly higher than the one-ninth indicated for the *çiftlik*s in the previous report. One might think it possible that this might be because the peasant cultivators, the subject of the second report, might have been residing within the boundaries of the *çiftlik*, as opposed to the peasant cultivators mentioned in the previous file, who might have been resident in their own villages proper. The assumption that the peasants of the first report, from the villages of Kutles and Perstofca within the district of Leskofca were residing outside the *çiftlik* boundaries is strengthened by the fact that the peasants in their petition (although we do not have the text of the petition; their voice comes through the report of the council when it is referred to in the report) talk as if they were living in villages as ‘free’ peasants, not naming any *çiftlik* as their residence. It is the provincial council of Niş which corrected the wording of the petitioners, and stated that the lands of the said villages were all held by (*tasarruf*) Hacı Mustafa and his partners, and in fact referred in the report to Kutles and Perstofca not as villages but as *çiftlik*s. It is apparent that the status of villages, whether a ‘free’ or *çiftlik* village, had been a major bone of contention for some time, as the report of the Niş council summarised in the second report: “They had claimed unjustly when the former vizier Reşid Paşa was at Velcitren with the imperial army in 1833 that the *çiftlik* owners had been persecuting them. Upon this complaint, the parties were called in and were questioned and the matter was investigated (*muhakeme ve istintak ve tahkik-i madde*).

22 BOA, MVL 885 59.

It was found as a result and by the people's own admission that the said lands had been from old times a *çiftlik*, and that the said people had nothing to do with these lands, and it was consequently decided that the old usage should continue."

Note that the council here invites the parties before the council, conducts a hearing with the objective of passing judgement, interrogates them in due course, and investigates the matter. All these procedural details point to the way the provincial councils acted as courts of law. Indeed, the judgement it passed after the process was that the old usage, i.e., that the *çiftlik* ownership and the form of labour relationship (i.e., tenancy) should continue as before. I will have more to say on the procedural aspects of the council's working methods below. Here what is of significance is that whether the status of a settlement was *çiftlik* or village had important consequences for the residents in terms of their relationship to the land and to the landlords, both legally and economically. The petition of the notables in the second file continues, however, that since there was insufficient storage capacity in the existing warehouses in the district of Niş to store the cereal collected from the peasant cultivators, "for ease and benefit it was decided that they give one-ninth to the owners of the *çiftliks* after the payment of the *shari* tithe" and in return, the *çiftlik* owners were to give the cultivators the required seed together with the necessary agricultural implements. "[U]pon such an agreement and orders issued upon that agreement that the parties were persuaded to go on cultivating the lands like the rest of the subjects." It appears that the aim of changing, with a certain degree of state intervention, the land rent from three-fourths of the produce to one-ninth was a grant of relief to the peasant cultivators for the 'benefit' of all. We do not know the degree of state intervention in brokering this new deal, but it is apparent that the notables pose as if relief was granted to the peasants on their own initiative. It might also have been the case that during the negotiations between the parties, conducted through the council, the notables/landowners just used the old rate as a bargaining position in order to persuade the peasant cultivators into a settlement with the prevalent one-ninth kept intact. Whatever the case, the peasant cultivators did not remain silent and "last year, for whatever reason, some representatives went to Istanbul with the aim of appropriating the said *çiftliks* from their owners and put forward unjust and unfounded claims and refused to pay their share of the produce", the petition informed the authorities. Moreover:

Such behaviour has been distressing for us and we have advised the *mutassarrıf* of Niş likewise, upon which the troubles were happily dismissed. As a result, we live in our lands in peace, Muslim and Christian. However, some troublemakers recently came together with a priest called İstefan and again sent representatives to Istanbul in relation to the said *çiftliks*. Although it is natural that their unjust claims and complaints will be rejected in Istanbul, since the Christian villagers here are quite thick-headed (*ahmak*), some of them being encouraged by the representatives going to Istanbul and by the false words of the said priest, they stopped paying the rent to the *çiftliks* and since then the situation has been spreading to the surrounding districts. We kindly ask you to issue orders for the payment of the said share and rent in order that the troubles may end.<sup>23</sup>

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23 BOA, MVL 885 59.

The letter of the Niş provincial council accompanying the petition is in full support of the demands of the notables:

In fact the *çiftlik*s which had for many years been under the ownership of their possessors through inheritance with title deeds, have, for one and a half years, been subjected to attempts to appropriate them and put them under the possession of the tenants residing within the said villages. For this reason, a lot of troubles have been created especially by the provocations of one priest İstefan, who originally is from the town of Zağra-yı Atik but who later arrived in this place. The tenants refuse to pay rents and scheme. Governor Zeynel Paşa talked with the people and sent the said priest to Istanbul, and thus was able to stop the troubles. But since this location is quite sensitive, the imperial order requested in the annexed letter should be issued about the said *çiftlik*s.

The required order was necessary according to the council “in order to clear the minds of the subjects” and to put forth the message that “the said *çiftlik*s will continue to be owned as they have been owned until today”. The *Meclis-i Vala* did not comment on the matter, but readily approved the recommendation of the council for the issue of an order for the continuation of the status quo. That status quo, however, met with repeated challenges in a wider area well beyond the confines of the above three *çiftlik*s/villages, which rendered the issue much more serious for the authorities, who were unable to settle the dispute over the land in the Niş province and well beyond.

Upon the re-emergence of the dispute with the very same demands in another part of the province between the tenants and the *çiftlik* owners, the central administration ordered an official inquiry into the matter the following year, in 1859.<sup>24</sup> The report resulting from the official inquiry gave an indication of the geographical extent of the dispute: out of the 164 villages located within the district of Niş, in the province of the same name, 60 were villages proper and the Christian inhabitants in these villages were recognised as cultivators (*mutasarrıf*) of *miri* land with their prescriptive rights reserved. They were not asked anything other than the tithe and other treasury taxes. The lands in the remaining 102 [*sic*] villages however “are in the individual and common use (*taht-ı tasarruf*) of Christian and Muslim men and women with old and new *tapu* deeds, and the inhabitants of these regions have the status of tenants. These pay to the *çiftlik* owners, in addition to the tithe due to the treasury, in relation to the use of the land (*taht-ı tasarruf*) a land rent (*icare-i zemin*) of the amount of one-ninth of the grain produce as per custom (*teamülleri uyarınca*).” Then the report went on to describe the old practice of the state land administration according to which the owners of such *miri* lands could only use/possess (*tasarruf*) the land with the permission and transfer (*tefviz*) of *timar*-holders and/or tax farmers and collectors. Since in the old times, the report went on, there were no deeds bearing the signature of the Sultan, the deeds in the possession of the owners were such old deeds as were issued by such *timar*-holders and/or tax farmers and collectors. After the Tanzimat legislation, these deeds pertaining to the lands in Niş were examined by the provincial treasurer (*defterdar*) of the province, and were ratified. Following this initial ratification,

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24 BOA, İ.MMS 14-598.

the report went on, transactions on the land such as escheat (*mahlulat*), transfer (*ferağ*), and inheritance (*intikalat*) were recorded in tables which were subsequently sent to the Finance Ministry in Istanbul, and *tapu* deeds bearing the Sultan's signature were then issued. As such, some deeds in the possession of the owners were new *tapu* deeds, but some, presumably those which did not go through this process, were not renewed. However, the inquiring official wrote, the inquiry proved through general witnessing that even those deeds not bearing the ratification of the provincial treasurer were true deeds and pertained to the lands held by the current possessors who had held the lands for generations. The inquiring official reported that since he found no one possessing any land without appropriate documentation, he prepared a list of owners in a register and attached the copies of the title deeds to the register which was to be dispatched to Istanbul.

The investigating official had this to say regarding the claim that these lands were not old *çiftlik*s but became so only within time memorial, and thus gave a potted history of *çiftlik* formation in the region:

According to the expert witnesses, some of these *çiftlik*s are in the possession for generations of the owners with *tapu* deeds and *hüccet-i şer'iyye*. Some were formed following the occupation and then retreat of the Austrian army from the Niş region, upon which the Christian population left their villages and Muslim villages were similarly dispersed. At the time following the depopulation of the region, the vacant lands reverted to *mahlul* status, and those who were then authorised to transfer these lands transferred them to those willing to cultivate the lands by establishing over them *çiftlik*s. These men brought labourers to the area from other places, distributed to them seed, oxen, and similar agricultural capital and thus started cultivation. Since then some of the lands have remained in the use of the heirs of the owners, some have become vacant, and passed on to the use and possession of others. Some [cultivators] who had use rights over the land, have, either under compulsion or after seeing that the people residing within the *çiftlik*s benefit from the protection of the owners, who save them from all sorts of trouble and even extend cash to strengthen their position, sold the lands in their use by prescriptive right by their free will and with the permission of the *timar*-holder/tax farmer.

The report then explained that this was where the term *gospodar*, which in Bulgarian meant protector and *çiftlik* owner, originated from. The report thus argued that it had established the facts about the claim of the tenants, put forward following the Tanzimat edict, to the effect that their lands were forcibly confiscated, was false and simply the result of 'provocation'.

From among the methods listed in the report as to *çiftlik* formation, the sale of the use rights by peasants to existing *çiftlik* owners for protection and capital is worth further inquiry (notwithstanding the importance of the other ways and means by which the peasants were forced to 'sell' their lands). Where, in the report, the investigating official goes into the specific cases of the individual *çiftlik*s, more information, albeit in a coded form, can be gleaned about the specifics of such sales. It is also in the individual cases that the peasants-cum-tenants' voice is more audible. In one typical case, concerning the village/*çiftlik* in the name of Picenefse, it transpired that the peasants of the village had sold (*fürüht*) the *miri* lands of the village 26 years prior to the date of the report for a total sum 25,000 *guruş* to İsmet Paşa, the governor of Van. How exactly the Ottoman bureau-

crat from Van would have provided protection to the peasants remains ambiguous. The peasants argued, for their part, that the alleged sale was in fact a forced confiscation of their lands in the period before the Tanzimat. As for the communal sale of peasant land for the establishment of *çiftlik*s, the report stated that: “this method is extant here”, mentioning other similar sales which apparently all went to urban-dwelling notables, Muslim and non-Muslim. We do not have more information at present about the exact nature of forced confiscation, i.e., whether it was a result of peasant indebtedness or due to the use or threat of open physical violence, or a combination of the two.

In order to be able to say more about the latter question, one needs to know more about the nature of the relationship between the tenants and *çiftlik* owners, the content of the various obligations owed to the owners, and, lastly, the landscape and land use patterns. It is apparent from the documentation that the relationship between the tenants and owners was regulated by a lease contract, which was not open to renegotiation except at times of crisis (i.e., stubborn peasant resistance) such as that involved. The contract, with local variations, provided for the land rent of one-ninth of the grain produce, as well as, and here there were some local variations, rent on the household gardens and orchards in the possession of the tenants, locally called the *baştina*, and a variety of other obligations such as provision of wood and labour services. The latter, in addition to the exactions and demands of the infamous *subaşı*, the owners’ rent collectors, while on duty (such as asking for free food, verbal and physical abuse of the peasants) were the subject of the most vocal complaints of the tenants at normal times. What also transpired in tenant complaints was how land confiscation had been normalised: the *baştinas*, either in the form of fields and orchards or woods and meadows, as well as lands opened up for cultivation from uncultivated land, were confiscated by the *çiftlik* owners and were then rented out to other cultivator-tenants at substantially higher land rents, at rates reaching as high as one-half or one-third of the produce.

The landscape, landholding, and land use patterns are important because in contesting the claims of private ownership of landed estates covering villages in the Niş province in the middle of the nineteenth century, the peasants argued that they cultivated and possessed the land ‘jointly and in common’ (*muş’a ve müşterek*), and cultivated the land in common (*iştiraken ziraat*). This was a counter-claim that questioned the fundamentals of the existing property relations in the region. The claim is interesting in that it did not counterpose small ownership to large estate ownership but common use against private landed estates. In the context of the agrarian traditions of the region predating the Ottoman regime,<sup>25</sup> the aftermath of the Tanzimat edict which outlawed *corvée*, and in the proximity of the 1848 revolutions, the question is exactly to what type of a land use regime the peasants referred when they claimed common use. Further research focusing on

25 Especially important is how old land use practices were incorporated into the Ottoman legal and fiscal framework. For this reason, the origins and transformation of local agrarian institutional arrangements such as *gospodarlık* (lordship), *baştina* (peasant landholding), *paraspor/salariye* (taxation), etc. as they appear in and are shaped by the old law books (*kanunname*) need tracing in order to make sense of the agrarian traditions and vocabulary of the peasantry.



the geography of land use and agricultural practices of the cultivators should therefore try to contextualise the peasant struggle against the existing political economy of the region in the mid-nineteenth century by drawing on the peasants own understanding of their relationship to the land, which seemed to have been predicated on notions of common use and actual land use and labour relations in an area where sharecropping and tenancy were the order of the day.

In spite of the continuing peasant struggle against the status quo, the tension continued to boil in the Balkan countryside well into the 1870s and beyond, with long-term consequences, and legacies that in many ways shaped the agrarian debates and realities of the region (and not only in Niş, but also elsewhere in places such as Thessaly, Yanya, Vidin, and Bosnia) after independence and well into the twentieth century.<sup>26</sup> In this tense atmosphere in the region, different manifestations of rural crime and how it was dealt with in the local legal regime reflected in a sense the unresolved nature of the agrarian question. The part of the article which follows looks at how the local councils acted as criminal courts within the new administrative framework and in line with the new criminal codes, and on the basis of the initial findings of on-going research on criminality in the nineteenth-century Balkans, will put forward some research questions in the light of the material from the *Meclis-i Vala*.

### *Local Councils as Criminal Courts*

The development of criminal law in the Empire after the proclamation of the Tanzimat edict took place within a general movement of codification. This was the decisive period of the 'etatisation of law',<sup>27</sup> that is, among other things, the codification of elements of the *sharia* into state law.

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26 That the tensions in the Balkan countryside were widespread and general, from Vidin to Bosnia, and were not new to the late 1850s but started earlier and remained unresolved throughout the century emerges from the literature. For example, for the nature of the conflicts around the landed estates in Yanya [Gk. Ioannina] see H. İslamoğlu, 'Property as a Contested Domain', 36-39; in Bosnia see T. Güran and A. Uzun, 'Bosna-Hersek'te Toprak Rejimi: Eshab-ı Alaka ve Çiftçiler Arasındaki İlişkiler (1840-1875)', *Belleten*, 70/259 (2006), 867-902; and in Bulgaria see Y. Köksal, '19. Yüzyılda Kuzeybatı Bulgaristan: Sessiz Toprak Reformu', *Toplumsal Tarih*, 170 (2008), 24-30. The point that needs emphasising here is the unsettled character of the underlying tensions in the Balkan countryside, and the long-term consequences, first for the long nineteenth century and then for the land reform movements in the different nation-states well into the twentieth (and for the second wave of 'land reform' into the twenty-first century). In this sense, and despite comprehensive attempts at a synthesis, most prominently by works such as J.R. Lampe and M.R. Jackson, *Balkan Economic History, 1550-1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations* (Bloomington 1982), and M. Palairat, *The Balkan Economies, c. 1800-1914: Evolution without Development* (Cambridge 1997), the agrarian question and its wider consequences in the Balkans in general is in need of further research aimed at generalisation and synthesis.

27 Zubaida, *Law and Power*.



As far as criminal law is concerned, in traditional Ottoman practice the penal provisions of the *sharia* were largely bypassed in favour of the *kanun*, and penal cases were often dealt with by the police and administrative bodies. The Supreme Council drew up a penal code in 1840. This contained elements of modern penal codes side by side with *sharia* provisions of *kisas* and *diya* (compensation for death or injury). It confirmed the principles of equality, of a fair and impartial trial, and of no punishment without due process of law. In 1858, after the second reform edict, an entirely new penal code was enacted, which was an adaptation of the French code of 1810. Although this was much more modern in form and content, its first article stated that it did not abrogate the penal provisions of the *sharia*, and that its provisions were merely a formalisation of *tazir* and of the rights of the ruler. The code, therefore, retained articles which in effect maintained *kisas* and *diya* provisions. The new code was applied in the secular *nizamiye* courts, but its inclusion of *sharia* provisions made it possible for litigants to take their cases to *sharia* courts. These anomalies were only removed with the partial unification of the court system under the *Divan-ı Ahkâm-ı Adliye*, which, in 1868, became the highest court of the new *nizami* system under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice and outside the control of the *şeyhülislam*.<sup>28</sup> Among the innovations that came with the *nizami* courts was the office of the prosecutor general. While the *sharia* conceived of litigation as a claim by one private party against another, a prosecutor general assumes a public function, on behalf of the state, with the implicit concept of the 'public interest'. As such, the creation of this post constitutes an important step in the 'etatisation of law'.<sup>29</sup>

In the present context the important questions are: how the development of criminal law in the nineteenth century was bound up with the re-definition of property rights, how the categories of the new property regime were translated into criminal categories (either in their observance or in their breach), and how the vocabulary of the new regime criminalised some and legitimated other agrarian practices and customs. Even before the promulgation of the first criminal code of 1840, the Tanzimat edict made this point clear by recognising security of property as one of the pillars of the new regime and tying it in with security of the person, i.e., with his/her personal integrity. In other words, the principle of personal immunity from persecution and undue prosecution was from the start linked with security of property held by persons.<sup>30</sup> The edict stated that it was only if property was held securely, without threat of confiscation by state authorities or interference by third parties, that subjects of the Empire could show due care to their work and thus contribute to the progress and development of the country. In other words, security of property was necessary for 'the rational utilisation of land'. The laying down of this

28 N. Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (London 1964), 165.

29 For the transition from one court to the other and from the *kadı* to the *naib* see the work of J. Akiba, 'A New School for Qadis: Education of the Sharia Judges in the Late Ottoman Empire', *Turcica*, 35 (2003), 125-165, and idem, "From Kadı to Naib: Reorganization of the Ottoman Sharia Judiciary in the Tanzimat Period", in C. Imber, K. Kiyotaki and R. Murphey (eds), *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies: State, Province and the West* (London 2005), 43-60.

30 T. Taner, 'Tanzimat Devrinde Ceza Hukuku', *Tanzimat I* (Istanbul 1999), 223.

principle, however, was not sufficient in itself to provide for that security of property: it was through the ensuing criminal codes which would safeguard the principle by penalising its breach, and by doing so, defining what constituted property as the object of codification and legislation.

The principle of the immunity of the person translated into the criminal principles of no punishment without law, of due process in and out of court, and of individual responsibility for criminal acts (as opposed to communal responsibility). The infamous confiscation practice was thus outlawed as the confiscation of the entire possessions of a person as penalty infringed the property rights of the inheritors and was found to be in breach of the principle of individual responsibility. Also pertinent here is the principle of equality before the law, without rank, distinction, religion, or community. The edict specifically stated that a criminal code should be prepared by the *Meclis-i Vala-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* in order to ensure the observance of this principle.

The first Criminal Code was prepared in the *Meclis* and promulgated on 3 May 1840. It is important to note that the principle of equality before the law was underlined in the opening remarks of the code. In terms of form, it is one of the first law texts of the century which came in the form of a classificatory schema which classified crime and punishment in its 13 chapters with a total of 41 articles. The type of crimes defined and penalised in the law included: crimes against the ruler and the state, murder, conspiracy, bodily injury, verbal assault, crimes against property, bribery, tax avoidance, resistance to officials, threatening behaviour with firearms, and highway robbery. The range of penalties included: the *shari* principle of *kisas*, capital punishment on the order of the Sultan, imprisonment, hard labour, exile, beating, and deposition from office. For our purposes, criminal categories which define infringement of property (*mülkiyete tecavüz*) or crimes against property were defined in Chapter 4, Articles 1 and 2 of the Code thus:

Article 1: Since the Sultan has promised that no goods or properties of the subjects of the state are to be confiscated, every person, high or low in rank, should refrain from illegally attacking or disturbing or interfering with another person's goods or property. And acts such as taking over or selling the same by force either directly or indirectly are forbidden.

Article 2: From now on, in the event of there being persons who dare to act in this forbidden or unwelcome manner, they shall be forbidden and banned from interfering with another person's goods and property. In the event of their appropriating the same in one way or another, then if the appropriated goods or property are found, they shall be returned to the rightful owner in kind, or if they cannot be found then they shall be returned in cash. In addition, because of the unlawful act and daring of the said persons, they will be deposed from office if they hold office, or otherwise shall be exiled from their place of residence for a period of one year.<sup>31</sup>

Strengthening the connection established between crime and property is the penalty defined for highway robbery of from 7 to 10 years' hard labour (Chapter 11) and the obligation to abide by the instructions given to the tax collectors (*muhasıl*) for the collection of taxes in the districts (Chapter 13), although the exact nature of the penalty for failure

31 Kaynar, *Mustafa Reşit Paşa ve Tanzimat*, 306.

to follow the instructions of the tax collectors was not specified. Finally, the 1840 Code established clearly the jurisdiction for criminal cases: criminal cases were to be tried and judged in the provinces by the local administrative councils in the case of crimes that occurred within the boundaries of the province. The *Meclis-i Vala-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* was to serve as a High Court of Appeal for such cases.

The 1851 Criminal Code was promulgated by the *Meclis-i Vala* on 14 July 1851, and was subsequently referred to as the New Criminal Code. It in fact resembled the previous Code in form and content, and made some additions to the range of behaviour deemed criminal, such as committing acts of resistance to the police, indecent assault, drunkenness, gambling, abduction (of girls), fraud and counterfeiting. A new range of penalties included the introduction of shackles and beating; some penalties were made more specific, for example, the penalty of seven years' hard labour for highway robbery was reinforced with the addition of capital punishment if the robbery involved murder. More important among the innovations introduced by the 1851 Code were provisions which defined some persons 'as persons who pose a threat to society' and included provisions related to such persons which amounted to indefinite penalties. Bearing the marks of the then current concerns among criminologists in Europe about recidivism, Article 13 of Chapter 3 of the 1851 Code stated that if persons who posed a threat to society (guilty of breaching public security) are reformed (*ıslah*) after one year imprisonment with shackles and prove so with the testimony of a guarantor, then they would be released, but otherwise such persons were to be kept imprisoned "until it becomes clear that they are reformed".<sup>32</sup>

The most important innovation of the 1851 Code was perhaps its more nuanced classification of crimes against property and against the new taxation rules in the third chapter of the Code. This chapter is also more refined on the administrative and procedural matters arising out of the principle of separation of powers. It starts with the same article pertaining to the protection of property stipulated in the previous Code (1840) and then lists sanctions against those officials entrusted with fiscal affairs who take bribes or payments of that kind, and stipulates measures for the auditing of their affairs, for which the *Meclis-i Vala* was made the highest auditing authority. Article 5 states that: "...because the *Meclis-i Vala-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* shall be the firm guardian of all the established laws and current legislation, all the jurists (*ulema*), ministers (*vükela*) and officials (*memurin*) shall be responsible to it for all their acts and behaviour arising out of their official positions...". And in Article 6: "In all countries the government is composed of three components, the first being the jurists who are the guardians of matters relating to religious and state law. The next consists of officials of the state who are assigned matters of security, peace, and order of the country. And the third consists of the financial officials, whose duty it is to collect, use, and transfer to the Treasury the revenues of the state." The article added that matters of each locality were to be discussed and settled in the respective administrative council in a peaceful manner, without the interference of any one component part of the administration in the affairs of the others. The next article confirmed

32 A. Akgündüz, *Mukayeseli İslam ve Osmanlı Hukuku Külliyyatı* (Diyarbakır 1986), 829.

the principle of equality among the subjects of the Empire and then stipulated that: "... all, high or low in rank, shall pay on time their taxes assessed according to their financial ability and the size of their property, otherwise they shall be penalised with imprisonment". In addition, Article 14 stipulated in relation to the payment and collection of taxes that: "Those who transfer their produce in contravention of the *sharia* with the intention of not paying their tithe ... shall pay twice the amount of the tithe."

One of the most interesting articles of the Code in this context is Article 18, which concerns specifically the relationship between landowners and agricultural labourers in landed estates, and is worth quoting:

ARTICLE EIGHTEEN: Those agricultural labourers who acquire seed by theft shall not be punished in the same manner as those persons [normally] punished for theft, since this will mean the disruption of agriculture. Instead, those agricultural labourers who are proved by the council to have stolen seed from their employers shall only be made to pay for the price of the seed by the deduction of the price of the seed from their wages, so that agricultural production is not disrupted.<sup>33</sup>

An immediate point to be made about the article is the extent to which it attempts to regulate a very specific issue, namely labour relations within the landed estates. As such, it is rather surprising to find such a specific rule in a Code that, by definition, aims at generalisation and attempts a certain level of abstraction of a penal regime to be applicable throughout the Empire. At the same time, however, it is also indicative of the deeply rooted concern of the jurists and administrators for the primacy and urgency of the agrarian question ("so that agricultural production is not disrupted") in the Ottoman countryside.<sup>34</sup>

In order to see some of these principles in action, I am going to explore a file which incorporates the minutes of the 'trials' held before the Edirne 'provisional' council in the 1850s. These minutes are composed both of the reports on the trials held before the council and, importantly, of the transcripts of the interviews with and statements given by the accused before the council involving cases of highway robbery, abduction of children and demands for ransom, and rape, all categorised under the catchword category of 'banditry'. The analysis of the cases presented here opens up a wide variety of issues about Ottoman criminal law, the characteristics of the new administrative grid, as well as about the rural life of the Ottoman Balkans in the nineteenth century, only some of which will be touched upon here.<sup>35</sup>

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33 Ibid., 830.

34 Finally, in 1858, a new Penal Code was promulgated which many legal theorists agree was largely inspired by the Napoleonic Penal Code of 1810 in France. Most of the cases I will be examining in this article pertain to the application of the first two penal codes (1840 and 1851) and not this last one. Therefore I will not discuss the contents and novelty of this last Code in this article. The texts of all the three Penal Codes can be found in Akgündüz, *Mukayeseli İslam ve Osmanlı Hukuku*.

35 The BOA, MVL files spanning a hundred-year period is especially fruitful for research into criminal law. They cover thousands of trials and criminal investigations over a vast geography,

The file containing the criminal cases seen by the Edirne ‘provisional’ council concerns the years 1857 and 1858 (before the promulgation and putting into effect of the 1858 Penal Code). The first case in the file involves abduction of children and worth quoting at length in order to bring out certain issues:

Report of the Provisional Council of Edirne

The provisional council of Edirne conducted the trial of five bandits by the names of Süleyman, son of İbrahim, from the Sarıkaya village of the district of Aydos; Hasan, son of Mustafa, from the Şihcılar village; Cafer, son of Hüseyin, from the Kutlu village; Halil, son of Ali, from the village of Kızıl Pelid; and Seyyid, son of Halil, from the Garibli village of the district of Zağra-yı Cedid, who together had abducted from the field and took to the forest two children by the names of Nikola and his brother Mihal Dimo, from the village of Resve of the district of Aydos, and took 9,500 *guruş*, one pair of silver bracelets, and one pair of belts from Nikola and 900 *guruş*, two pairs of bracelets and two silver necklaces and one silver belt from Dimo, in return for which they later let the children free. They were caught in İslimye and were sent here with a report. The said five bandits were brought to trial and the necessary investigation was carried out before the provisional council. It was understood from the report of the İslimye council and the attached minutes of the interrogation conducted there that although they had denied that they had ever been in the said *kazas*, they were in fact in the said *kazas* and that the silver bracelets were found in their possession, and that therefore they did not have any grounds before the said council to deny their deeds and thus confessed there. The goods stolen, which were found in their possession together with the money, were collected from them according to their share, and were returned to the said Nikola and Dimo. Accordingly, the denial of the

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and are a rich source of information about the lives of ordinary people in rural and urban areas. Through the files the historian has access to the type and nature of crimes, the judicial process through which crimes were prosecuted, and the punishments dispensed. Some of the materials studied include descriptions of life on the streets, and rural roads, in the fields, in taverns, coffee-houses, workplaces and homes, and thus provide opportunities for the reconstruction of the experiences of ordinary people of all ages, classes, and backgrounds. The files of the MVL carry the potential to combine qualitative and quantitative information and thus to bring together a textual and statistical analysis of the case files through an analysis of a variety of information such as the names of the suspects, their place of birth and residence, occupations, etc. In addition, an analysis of the textual narratives especially in the interrogations carried out by the local councils allows the historian not only to assess the evolving meanings of terms such as property and crime in a general sense, but also the narrative strategies used by the poor and the ordinary people in courtroom testimonies, identifying some of the ways in which they attempted to use the new judicial system for their own ends. Some of the ways in which this type of analysis could be beneficial might be a closer look at the differences between the spoken Turkish (and other languages of the region) and the court language incorporating the new legal idiom of the new regime, and the differences in language use according to age, gender, place of origin, and class, among other things. The first-person testimonies contained in the files are indeed a most valuable legal source for the historian: the depositions, and examinations which provide first-person accounts of suspicious, disorderly, and criminal activities, more or less directly in the participants’ or witnesses’ own words. The micro-historical aspect of this type of analysis is obvious. Also pertinent is the possibility of studying the geographical distribution of crime by mapping through visualisation of criminal prosecutions which could make possible new understandings of place and region, local and centre.

said bandits here of any involvement in the matter is not acceptable. It was discovered by our council that they had indeed been to the said *kazas* and that they are from among the bandit types. Therefore it has been found appropriate that the said bandits be confined to penal servitude (*pranga*) for a period of seven years each starting from the date of their arrest, that is from 19 (Ramaza)n [12]72 [1856], and their release thereafter be dependent upon strong surety, according to the Imperial Penal Code. (1857)<sup>36</sup>

The report was signed by nine members of the council, including the clerk, the deputy clerk, and the chairman of the council. The members represented the different communities in the region as the signatories included a rabbi and Greek and Bulgarian names. The report was immediately followed by the transcript of the interview conducted with Hasan:

This day, Monday 7 N 1273

Question: What is your name, and what is your father's name?

Answer: My name is Hasan, my father's Mustafa.

Q: Where are you from?

A: From the Şihcılar villages of the Aydos district.

Q: What is your job?

A: Cultivator.

Q: Why were you sent here?

A: They brought us here accusing us of kidnapping children, taking them to the forest and stealing money, but we have no knowledge of this.

Q: You have abducted Nikola and Dimo from the village of Resve in the district of Aydos, and took 9,500 *guruş* and some silver goods from Nikola and 900 *guruş* and again some silver goods from Dimo. How did this happen?

A: There is Süleyman from Sarıkaya. They have taken him for this. He pointed to us as a friend. Upon this they caught us and took 1,160 *guruş* from me after selling my oxen. I (Hasan, signed) have no involvement in the matter.

The said Süleyman was asked about the matter; he denied involvement but said that in İslimye he was subjected to force (*örf*) and thus had to accept responsibility, and stated that 1,160 *guruş* was collected from him after they had sold his oxen. (signed)

When Cafer, son of Hüseyin, from Kutlu village in the district of Aydos; Halil, son of Ali, from Kızıl Pelid; Seyid, son of Halil, from the Garibli village in the district of Yeni Zağra were interrogated, their statements were found to be in line with the confession of Hasan above. Each paid 1,160 *guruş* after the sale of their animals. (signed, Seyyid, Halil, Cafer)<sup>37</sup>

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36 BOA, MVL 886 74.

37 Ibid.



This example from the proceedings of the Edirne administrative council is instructive as to how the council acted and functioned as a criminal court. Indeed the criminal court was made up of some members of the wider council and was named 'provisional' for this purpose. The proceedings in criminal cases suggest that procedural aspects of the criminal law were duly observed in the proceedings. For example, the council made the point repeatedly about the jurisdiction of the council when trying the accused coming from different areas in the wider region. The accused were first interviewed by the council of the district where they were captured, and were then transported to districts where they were domiciled. The final order about the establishing of the commission of the crime and the appropriate punishment were all dispensed at the location where the accused had his residence. Judging by the contents of the minutes of the interrogations, the second round of interrogation in the council with jurisdiction provided the members of the court with a chance to cross-examine the suspects, having at their disposal the testimonies from the first interrogation. The interrogation also provided the occasion to check other obligations of the suspects, such as military service, as this question is always asked immediately after the name and occupation of the suspect.

What emerges from a general survey of criminal court procedures and trials found among the MVL files is the hybrid nature of the proceedings and the mechanisms by which the council in the new court system reached a decision and framed its order. One of the important aspects of this mechanism involved the importance attached to the general reputation of the suspect in the community. A bad reputation is generally quoted in the order as a significant factor in judging the reliability of a testimony and/or the tendency of the suspect towards criminal behaviour, and hence a good justification for the punishment that followed. A similar practice retained from the old criminal system is the institution of surety, whereby the convict's release is made conditional on the positive testimony and guarantee provided by a reliable person as to the criminal's intentions, repentance, and his future conduct. Most important perhaps is the innovation of the interview as a technique of investigation in the Ottoman criminal procedure system. This was intended to replace obtaining admissions from suspects by use of force, and the transcripts of the interrogations clearly show that suspects were fully aware of the new rules regarding the prohibition of the use of force and torture to get admissions.

What transpires from the analysis of a wider selection of court deliberations and decisions in the region from the archives of the *Meclis-i Vala* is that when we are looking at criminal courts and their workings we are not dealing with petty crime in the sense of *ad hoc* criminal behaviour but a well-organised criminal network of highway robbers who roamed the countryside regularly for prey such as merchants on the way from the market, or planned abduction of children from better-off families, etc. which could only have been carried out with careful prior planning and information gathering. The fact that many of the convicts were not homeless wanderers but had homes and at least declared occupations as cultivators or petty artisans in the villages is an indication of the endemic nature of crime in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Balkans. Therefore, the many cases and incidents that came before the courts in this period cannot simply be dismissed as petty crime but should be more seriously researched and analysed as to their roots and



reasons. For this we need more statistical information regarding whether or not at certain periods in time during the century we witness an upsurge in crime and whether or not at other periods a downturn in criminal activity. In the absence of such criminal statistics for the time being, all we can say will be restricted to the nature of the petty crime scene, and further research will be needed in order for us to be able to relate crime to the wider social transformations in the region.

What can be better seen from the output of the local criminal courts in the Balkan provinces, thought together with the legislation these courts were implementing in the middle of the nineteenth century is more general trends, such as the clear attempt at a re-definition of crime categories and the making of new 'criminals', both through legislation and through court orders. Most important in this regard is the re-designation and definition of earlier communal activities and customs as criminal offences, as was discussed above in relation to Article 18 of the Penal Code of 1851, which rendered keeping part of the harvest as seed for the next cultivation cycle, most probably in the peasant allotments, a traditional practice, a criminal offence for agricultural workers. Other such re-definitions involved either the invention of totally new crime categories such as bribery, or the strengthening and making more comprehensive of old categories such as smuggling, banditry, kidnapping, rape, murder, highway robbery, forgery, and arson. Perhaps the last two categories of crime need more in-depth analysis as they pertain directly to property: destruction of it in the case of arson, and fabrication of it in the case of forgery and counterfeiting.

It is also striking how the centrality of the new tax system to the survival of the new regime was made manifest through making 'non-payment of taxes' a distinct criminal offence with distinct penalties in the new criminal system. In fact, the new tax regime, which was based on the understanding that taxes would be indexed not to revenues but to individual incomes, after having faced fierce resistance, was abandoned in favour of a partial return to communal repartitioning of the tax burden. Similarly, we saw how certain communal aspects of the old criminal system were retained in the codification of the new criminal law. Moreover, the continuation of the system of re-apportioning of taxes assessed by a lump sum on local communities meant that many of the disputes in the mid-century relate to cases which involved complaints of injustice in the re-apportioning of the tax burden among the community, embezzlement of communal funds by community leaders, and misuse of funds kept in the town chest for the payment of taxes. Issues relating to taxation fed into factionalism in the provinces between and among the council members, state officials, and other notables. Many complaints of misuse of funds or 'incompetence' in local affairs were initiated by discontented council members and/or local notables against other notables and/or state officials. One of the frequent requests from the local courts and the court of appeal indeed involved the demand for an independent audit of the local accounts and the '*defters*'.<sup>38</sup> Accusations of 'bribery' entered into general circulation at this time, implying embezzlement of funds, requesting money in return

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38 I will not be discussing the potential for land conflicts to turn into criminal cases and hence be subject to criminal prosecution in this section, although this formed a substantial part in the deliberations of the criminal courts.

for public services by state officials who were supposed to be paid regular salaries from the Treasury, and not direct payments from the public.

The procedural aspects of criminal investigations and trials were another major source of contention. Chief among the complaints directed at the council members were failure to follow due procedure (such as failure to carry out structured interrogations), and the use of force and torture in making the suspects 'admit' to their crimes. It was not uncommon that old *shari* criminal procedures such as *kisas* were carried out before the council, presumably in the presence of the *kadı*. Nevertheless, since *kisas* and some other *shari* principles were retained in the Penal Codes, this comes as no surprise, but at the same time points to the mixed character of the criminal courts and their role in mediating in criminal disputes. Similarly, a survey of the case files shows how the old practice of confiscation of property continued under another guise, that is, the collection, in kind or in cash, of the value of the stolen goods or properties from the convicts. In most cases, since at least part of the things stolen were not found, the properties of the convicts were summarily confiscated, sold at auction, and out of the proceeds the victims were paid the value of their stolen goods. Council members or state officials also remained subject to confiscation of property when they were found to have acted illegally (i.e., misuse or embezzlement of 'public' funds, for example).

Finally, the nature of the legal output of the local councils shows that it is indeed very difficult to make a distinction between social crime and ordinary, petty crime; both categories were enmeshed in the new criminal regime of the nineteenth century. Further research is needed to unlock the meaning of these definitions in the context of the Ottoman legal revolution of the nineteenth century in the Balkans.<sup>39</sup> One thing that can be said at this stage of research with some certainty is that what we observe in the course of the nineteenth century is a trend towards the criminalisation of customary practices of agrarian communities, practices which in legal theory and its ideology had been accepted as customary and legitimate.<sup>40</sup> What needs to be unlocked and established is how in practice and in legal theory new individual property forms were bound up with new definitions of crime, and how those who breached that principle (by custom or otherwise) had come to be categorised as criminals or marginalised as anti-social individuals, who 'posed a threat to society'.

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39 One important attempt in this regard in the context of eighteenth-century England was made in the collected volume: D. Hay *et alii*, *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England* (New York 1975); and in E.P. Thompson, *Whigs and Hunters: The Origin of the Black Act* (New York 1975).

40 Y. Terzibaşoğlu, "'A Very Important Requirement of Social Life': Privatisation of Land, Criminalisation of Custom, and Land Disputes in 19th-Century Anatolia' in V. Guéno and D. Guignard (eds.), *Les acteurs des transformations foncières autour de la Méditerranée au XIXe siècle* (Paris 2013), 25-48.

ON THE *ÇİFTLİK* REGULATION IN TIRHALA  
IN THE MID NINETEENTH CENTURY:  
ECONOMISTS, PASHAS, GOVERNORS, *ÇİFTLİK*-HOLDERS, *SUBAŞIS*,  
AND SHARECROPPERS

Alp Yücel KAYA\*

THE ‘GREAT TRANSFORMATION’ OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, on the way from the dissolution of indeterminate/collective property structures to the institutionalisation of an individual/exclusive property regime, brought about radical economic and social transformations and engendered a long period of restlessness in the Ottoman countryside. There, while some groups succeeded in imposing their interests through this process and so consolidating their ownership rights on land, others failed to articulate their interests and lost their customary land rights.

In her discussion of the Ottoman ‘great transformation’ in the nineteenth century in general and in the Land Code of 1858 in particular, Huri İslamoğlu underlines the tension which emerged between the general and particular categories and practices in the constitution of the new property regime:

General and uniform categories and procedures ... which represented erasures of particularistic interests, were challenged and resisted... The tension between the tendency to make practices universal and uniform on the one hand, and particular on the other, lay at the heart of the drama of state formation in the nineteenth century. It inhabited the different practices; the legal definitions of property formed such a domain.<sup>1</sup>

This paper proposes that the tension created by this transformation was greater in sharecropping regions where social strata were more differentiated. This was the case in

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1 H. İslamoğlu, ‘Property as a Contested Domain: A Re-evaluation of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858’, *Ottoman History as World History* (Istanbul 2007), 210.

the hinterland of the Anatolian commercial cities (e.g., Samsun, Bursa, and Izmir) and especially in the Balkans (e.g., Bosnia, Vidin, Niş, Tırhala [Gk. Trikala], and Yanya [Gk. Ioannina]), where agricultural production was mostly organised around *çiftlik* units and sharecropping regimes, varying from one locality to another, and, depending on particular customary regulations, dominated relations of production. The local customs and customary regulations dominating these regions therefore came to constitute challenging dynamics during the codification of general laws and regulations of the *Tanzimat* period. As part of the ‘different practices’ upon which İslamoğlu lays emphasis, Ottoman governments established special regulatory commissions in these provinces, consisting of local groups who had conflicting interests (sharecroppers, peasants, farm managers, *çiftlik* holders, notables, etc.), under the supervision of an imperial official.<sup>2</sup> The immediate objective was to calm down region-specific social questions based on sharecropping relations which were being aggravated by the *Tanzimat* transformations (labour oppression in *çiftliks*, debt bondage, peasant dispersion, depression in cultivation, brigandage, etc.); the administrative objective which followed the immediate objective was, as İslamoğlu suggests, to mediate between the diverging interest groups of the locality in an institutional body and encourage them to negotiate in order to make the local and particular categories of the local property regime converge with the universal and general ones.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, as this article points out, there was also an economic objective embedded in the administrative one, consisting of the creation of an environment in which *çiftlik* holders could bind sharecroppers to the soil in order to increase stagnating – if not decreasing – production and profit levels.

The work of each commission ended in the production of a legal document, a bylaw (*layiha*, *kararname*, *nizamname*) approved as the local regulation by the central government, by way of regulating and fixing social and economic relations locally. The final result was largely beyond the administrative objective of a locally negotiated settlement aspiring to general laws and regulations; in contrast with a bylaw which “ensures ownership rights of the *çiftliks*’ holders while at the same time limiting them in such a way as to satisfy the demands of tenants [sharecroppers]”<sup>4</sup>, as this article argues, negotiation in such commissions resulted in nothing but the institutionalisation of already existing local social hierarchies and the consolidation of interests of *çiftlik*-holders in general, and some sections of them in particular, at the expense of those of intermediaries located in the *çiftliks*, and property-less sharecroppers.

Such special regulatory commissions were established in the 1840s and 1870s in the provinces (*eyalet*) of Yanya, Vidin, Bosna, and Canik, in the districts (*sancak*) of Niş (in the province of Niş) and Tırhala (Thessaly, in the province of Selânik [Gk. Thessaloniki], in the town of Parga (in the province of Yanya), and in the sub-district of Karaferye (Gk. Veroia, in the province of Selânik). The local regulations produced by these commissions

2 Ibid., 204-210; eadem, ‘Words that Rule: From Bureaucratic “Commissions” to Governing “Boards”’, *Ottoman History As World History* (Istanbul 2007), 247-266.

3 Ibid., 251-252; eadem, ‘Property as a Contested Domain’, 195-203, 208-210.

4 Ibid., 208.

also had a lasting impact on Balkan geography, since they continued to be implemented in spite of the codification of sharecropping relations in the *Mecelle* in 1876,<sup>5</sup> until the implementation of the land reforms of the post-First World War period, in Greece, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia.<sup>6</sup>

In this paper I focus on a sharecropping region par excellence, the district of Tırhala, in the mid-nineteenth century. The district differed qualitatively from other sharecropping regions mentioned above (except for Yanya, Bosna, and Karaferye), owing to the fact that among the *çiftlik*-holders there were not only local *beys* and *ağas* but also absentee *çiftlik*-holder pashas with *çiftlik*s by contract of *Emlâk-ı Hümayun*, namely Mustafa Reşid Paşa, the leading figure of the *Tanzimat*. The issue in question, in a context of a crisis of profitability, concerned not only the relation between *çiftlik*-holders and sharecroppers but also the relation between local and absentee *çiftlik*-holders. On the basis of the documentation existing in the Ottoman Archives of Istanbul (BOA) and news and reports published in the *Journal de Constantinople*, the paper will discuss not only the tension in the sharecropping regime in the district, but also that between *çiftlik*-holders. The

- 5 See articles 1431-1440 of the *Mecelle* on sharecropping (*muzara'a*): A. Akgündüz, *İslam ve Osmanlı Hukuku Külliyyatı, Özel Hukuk-II (Miras, Borçlar, Eşya, Ticaret ve Devletler Hususi Hukuku)*, Vol. 3 (Istanbul 2012), 967-968.
- 6 For successive *çiftlik* regulations of Bosna in 1842, 1849, and 1859, see T. Güran and A. Uzun, 'Bosna-Hersek'te Toprak Rejimi: Eshab-ı Alaka ve Çiftçiler Arasındaki İlişkiler (1840-1875)', *Belleten*, 70/259 (2006), 807-902 and H. İnalçık, 'Bosna'da Tanzimat'ın Tatbikına Ait Vesikalar', *Tarih Vesikaları*, 1/5 (1942), 374-389; for *çiftlik* regulation of Yanya in 1848, see BOA, İ.MVL 115/2777/9 Ra 1264, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 6, 28 Ra 1274; for that of Vidin in 1850, see H. İnalçık, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi* (Istanbul (1992 [1st ed. 1942]), 83-107; for that of Canik in 1855, see C. Şahin, 'Ondokuzuncu Yüzyıl'da Samsun'da Çiftlik Sahibi Hazine-darzadeler ile Kiracı-Köylüler Arasındaki Arazi ve Vergi İhtilafı Üzerine Bazı Gözlemler ve Sorular', *Kebikeç*, 24 (2007), 75-88; for that of Niş in 1859, see M. Hüdai Şentürk, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Bulgar meselesi: 1850-1875* (Ankara 1992), 133-138; Y. Köksal and D. Erkan, *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmet Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, (Istanbul 2007), 252-256, 463-486; and Y. Köksal, '19. Yüzyılda Kuzeybatı Bulgaristan Sessiz Toprak Reformu', *Toplumsal Tarih*, 170 (2008), 24-30; for that of Tırhala in 1862, see C. Evelpidis, *La réforme agraire en Grèce* (Athens 1926) and Ö. L. Barkan, 'Harp Sonu Tarımsal Reform Hareketleri' and 'Türk Toprak Hukuku Tarihinde Tanzimat ve 1274 (1858) Tarihli Arazi Kanunnamesi', *Türkiye'de Toprak Meselesi, Toplu Eserler I* (Istanbul 1980), 50-62, 371 fn. 50; for that of Karaferye in 1865, see BOA, İ.MVL 537/24159/6 B 1282, C.ML 32/1494/1282; C.DH 15/726/18 C 1282; for that of Parga in 1875, see İslamoğlu, 'Property as a Contested Domain', 204-208 and eadem, 'Words that Rule', 252-254. For a discussion on cases of Canik, Vidin, Bosna, and Tırhala, see E. A. Aytekin, 'Land, Rural Classes and Law: Agrarian Conflict and State Regulation in the Ottoman Empire', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York, Binghamton 2006, 12-99. For a general overview and discussion of the agrarian question in the nineteenth-century Balkans, see Cevdet Paşa, *Tezakir 40-Tetimme*, ed. C. Baysun (Ankara 1991), 140-145 (in the context of the Parga affair discussed in İslamoğlu, 'Property as a Contested Domain'); Barkan, 'Harp Sonu'; İnalçık, *Tanzimat*; T. Stoianovich, 'Balkan Peasants and Landlords and the Ottoman State: Familial Economy, Market Economy, and Modernization', *Between East and West: the Balkan and Mediterranean Worlds*, Vol. I: *Economies and Societies, Land, Lords, States and Middlemen* (New Rochelle, N.Y. 1992), 15-38.

first objective is to analyse, from a much broader perspective, the dynamics of the rural economy and the conflicts based on the social differentiation that it embodied during the nineteenth century; the second is to examine the working dynamics of the regulatory commission of Tırhala. To do so, I will first discuss the sharecropping dynamics of *çiftlik* agriculture in mid nineteenth-century Tırhala, by means of reports prepared by an agronomist-economist, Ion Ionescu de la Brad (the first series of reports having been published by him in 1851 as a member of the Council of Public Works, and the second series between 1854-1857, when he was the manager of the *çiftlik*s of Mustafa Reşid Paşa), and by the governor of Tırhala, Mehmed İsmet Paşa (in 1854-1855), who was in close contact with Ion Ionescu de la Brad during his term of office. I will then scrutinise the workings of the Commission between 1857 and 1862, during which period it was under the presidency of Cemal Efendi, Reşid Paşa's *çiftlik* manager, who succeeded Ion Ionescu in Tırhala; in this time, it brought together not only the differentiated local populations but also representatives of the central administration. I will conclude by analysing conflicts as reflected in the regulations of Tırhala (1862).

### *Thessalie agricole telle qu'elle est in 1851*

As professor at the Agricultural School of Ayamama and a member of the Council of Public Works (*Nafia Meclisi*), Ion Ionescu de la Brad (1818-1891)<sup>7</sup> had an official mis-

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7 Between 1838 and 1840 Ion Ionescu studied at the *Ecole agricole de Roville*, which functioned between 1822-1842 not only as an agricultural school but also as an experimental farm, attracting students from all over Europe. The objective of the school, headed by Mathieu de Dombasle, centered on the theoretical and practical education of future capitalist farmers, on the one hand, and on the development of rational techniques of cultivation in order to increase agricultural productivity, on the other. After further studies at the Agricultural School of Auxerre, the Forest School of Sénart, and at the Sorbonne, *Institut de Botanique*, and finally the *Conservatoire des arts et métiers* (all in Paris), Ion Ionescu returned in 1841 to his native land Moldavia, to teach agronomy and political economy at the Academy of Sturdza in Iasi. In the 1840s, he collaborated with the reformist *boyar* class, and in 1848 he became the vice-president of the Property Commission composed of the Moldavian and Wallachian revolutionary landlords and peasants searching for an agrarian reform that would eliminate feudal dues and obligations and distribute land to the peasants. The revolutionaries failed in their objectives, and were then dispersed all over Europe. It was the events of 1848 that occasioned his eight-year stay (1849-1857) in the Ottoman lands. Becoming a *protégé* or a part of the circle of Mustafa Reşid Paşa, he taught as a professor and later as a director at the Agricultural School of Ayamama in Istanbul, became a member of the Ottoman Council of Public Works, and undertook the administration and management of the large estates of Reşid Paşa situated in Tırhala. After several official missions to the Ottoman provinces, he wrote many articles in the *Journal de Constantinople*, later collected in books (*Excursion agricole dans la plaine de la Dobroudja* in 1850; *La Thessalie agricole telle qu'elle est et telle qu'elle peut être* in 1851). A. Y. Kaya, 'Ion Ionescu de la Brad: 19. Yüzyıl Ortasında Osmanlı Tarım Ekonomisi ve Ekonomi Politik', *Kebikeç*, 23 (2007), 95-110; I. Matei, 'Un agronome roumain dans l'Empire ottoman pendant les années 1849-1859', *Studia et Acta Orientalia*, 7 (1968), 295-301; A. Vasiliu and M. Guboglu, 'Contributii la cunoasterea activitatii lui Ion Ionescu de la Brad din timpul exilului in Turica', *Ion Io-*



sion and, in the last months of 1850 and early months of 1851, made a four-month trip to the Tırhala district of the province of Selânik. The results of his fieldwork were published in the *Journal de Constantinople* throughout the year 1851, starting from 29 January, and were then published in a book, *La Thessalie agricole telle qu'elle est et telle qu'elle peut être* (Istanbul 1851). In his articles, which were full of information, Ionescu noted that two types of land tenure existed in Tırhala: small peasant holdings cultivated by individual peasant households in the simple villages (*kefalochoria*), and large estates, *çiftlik*s, cultivated by sharecroppers in the *çiftlik* villages.<sup>8</sup> According to the figures he provided, 187 *kefalochoria* villages and nearly 500 *çiftlik*s existed in the Tırhala district.<sup>9</sup> In the *çiftlik*s, peasants who did not have any land farmed by 'associating' with *çiftlik*-holders on condition of sharing the yield products.<sup>10</sup> In contrast with most nineteenth-century political economists, Ion Ionescu had a positive conception of sharecropping, though he believed, as they did, in capitalist farming; the concept of association, a popular concept in the mid nineteenth-century debates, served him as a tool for abstraction in his analysis of sharecropping:

The capitalist brings into the association its productive capital, land, and money; the labourer provides its resources, health, and time. In the nature itself of amassing the productive resources, the agents of production are associates and are not categorised as the stronger and weaker, as the capitalist and proletarian, as the *boyar* and peasant. This kind of association with differing resources, rejecting qualifications such as master and servant, is opposed to the discourses which feed disturbance in society.<sup>11</sup>

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nescu de la Brad, *Aniversarea a 150 de ani de la naștere, volum omagial*, (Bacău 1968). For a critical edition of Ion Ionescu's articles published in the *Journal de Constantinople*, see Ion Ionescu de la Brad, *Ion Ionescu, un économiste quarante-huitard dans l'Empire ottoman (1849-1857)*, ed. A. Y. Kaya (forthcoming).

- 8 Ion Ionescu, 'L'association des agents de production', *Journal de Constantinople* (thereafter *JdC*), 285, 9 February 1851.
- 9 Ion Ionescu, 'Les avances du propriétaire', *JdC*, 288, 24 February 1851.
- 10 On a discussion of sharecropping in the Ottoman lands, see Ö. L. Barkan, 'XV ve XVIncı Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Toprak İşçiliğinin Organizasyonu Şekilleri I', 'Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Çiftçi Sınıfların Hukuki Statüsü', *Türkiye'de Toprak Meselesi, Toplu Eserler I* (Istanbul 1980); H. İnalçık, 'Servile Labor in the Ottoman Empire', *Studies in Ottoman Social and Economic History* (London 1985), VII, 25-42; Ö. Ergenç, 'XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Anadolu'sunda Tarım Üretiminde Yeni Boyutlar: Muzara'a ve Muraba'a Sözleşmeleri', *Ke-bikeç*, 23 (2007), 129-139; B. McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade, and the Struggle for Land, 1600-1800* (Cambridge 1981), 64, 171; V. P. Moutafchieva, *Agrarian Relations in the Ottoman Empire in the 15th and 16th Centuries* (New York 1988), 111-121; Stoianovich, 'Balkan Peasants and Landlords', 24-28.
- 11 Ion Ionescu, 'L'association' (translation by the author of the paper). For an informative but less sophisticated analysis of agricultural economy in Tırhala of 1880s by an economist/agronomist with a critical approach to sharecropping see François Gos, *L'agriculture en Thessalie, petite étude d'économie rurale et d'agriculture comparée* (Paris 1884). For another contemporary Ottoman account of sharecropping focusing on its functioning in the Rumelia see Sakızlı Ohannes Paşa, *Mebadi-i İlm-i Servet-i Mîlel* (Dersââdet [Istanbul] 1881), 119-120. For a contemporary and balanced evaluation of approaches to sharecropping see John Stuart Mill,



In this district, because the profit from cultivating the land was much higher (from 2 to 7 times) than the rent from uncultivated land, landlords preferred to associate with labourers to invest their capital in land. Ion Ionescu argued that the high land–labour ratio of the region (the population being no greater than half a million souls) resulted in scarce and expensive labour, on the one hand, and available and cheap land, on the other. The landlord engaged therefore in annual advances in fixed and circulating capital: the landlord gave as fixed capital land, pastures, some plots of land for the cultivation of vineyards and fruit orchards; and as the circulating capital, seeds and firewood. And because sharecroppers had neither land nor houses, the landlord also provided rural buildings in which sharecroppers could live. As for advances from the circulating capital necessary for buying and feeding plough animals, paying the wages of day labourers, and household provisions, all these constituted nothing but debts of the sharecroppers, who would pay off advances and interest by their labour.<sup>12</sup> According to Ion Ionescu's calculations, advances from fixed capital constituted in total, on average, 1,330 piastres (p.) per sharecropper household.<sup>13</sup>

The production figures on the basis of a sample of 500 sharecroppers showed that the production of a sharecropper was on average 1,500 p.<sup>14</sup> These production figures showed, however, a social differentiation among sharecroppers: some of them were richer and some of them were poorer.<sup>15</sup> Such a phenomenon, according to Ion Ionescu, depended on the sharecropping organisation practised in Tırhala, since sharing of production concerned only vegetable culture and not livestock breeding. The fact that sharecroppers could profit exclusively from livestock breeding encouraged sharecroppers who had the means to invest in it.<sup>16</sup> Given this differentiation, 'rich sharecroppers' who had livestock

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*Principles of Political Economy, With Some of Their Applications to Social Philosophy*, Vol. 1 (London 1848), 347-367. For an evaluation of treaties on sharecropping see A. Antoine, 'La légende noire du métayage dans l'ouest de la France (XVIIIe-XXe siècles)', in G. Béaur, M. Arnoux and A. Varet-Vitu (eds), *Exploiter la terre: les contrats agraires de l'Antiquité à nos jours* (Rennes 2003).

12 For discussion of 'peonage' in the *çiftlik*s see McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, 66, 72.

13 Ion Ionescu, 'Les avances'; idem, 'La dette', *JdC*, 312, 29 June 1851.

14 In the valley of Karya it was 1,500 p., in the valley of Mitsouni 1,800 p., in the valley of Elasona 1,200 p., in the valley of Domeniko 1,500 p., in Malakasi (Malogouste) 1,600 p., in the valley of Tempi 2,000 p.: Ion Ionescu, 'La production du métayer', *JdC*, 290, 9 March 1851.

15 Ibid.

16 Sophia Laiou also underlines the tension between *çiftlik* agriculture and (nomadic) stock-breeding in Tırhala for the case of the earlier centuries, see S. Laiou, 'Some Considerations regarding *Çiftlik* Formation in the Western Thessaly, Sixteenth-Nineteenth Centuries', in E. Kolovos, Ph. Kotzageorgis, S. Laiou and M. Sariyannis (eds), *The Ottoman Empire, The Balkans, The Greek Lands: Toward A Social and Economic History* (Istanbul 2007), 267, 271. For the importance of animal husbandry in Tırhala, see also S. D. Petmezas, 'Patterns of Protoindustrialization in the Ottoman Empire, the Case of Eastern Thessaly, ca. 1750-1860', *The Journal of European Economic History*, 19/3 (1990), 578-579; idem, 'Rural Macedonia from Ottoman to Greek Rule (1900-1920): Bridging the Gap' in L. Baruh and V. Kehriotis (eds.), *Economy and*

made advances of animals to 'poor sharecroppers' who did not have draught animals. Sharecroppers without livestock shared their production first with the landlord by giving him 1/3 of the annual production; they then shared the remaining 2/3 in equal parts with the rich sharecroppers who had advanced livestock.<sup>17</sup>

Under these conditions, the poor sharecropper found himself unable to pay off the interest and could not even think thereafter of refunding the circulating capital advanced by the landlord. In such a depressed situation, sharecroppers restricted the cultivation of cereals or abandoned it totally. In Tırhala, the large estates consisted therefore of sharecroppers who had a huge debt burden holding back cultivation and sharecroppers without debt yielding higher rent for the land and higher interest on the capital.<sup>18</sup>

As for the account of production among the 'associates', the average production of sharecropper being 1,500 p., the sum to be shared after the deduction of the tithe (*öşr*) (10%) was 1,350 p.; the landlord got 450 p., 1/3 of the production; the sharecropper got 900 p., 2/3 of the production. This meant that the landlord who made an advance of 1,330 p. at the beginning of the production year would lose 880 p. (1,330 minus 450) at the end of each year; in other words, two-thirds of his advances.<sup>19</sup> Landlords, therefore, were living through a crisis of profitability.

What did Ion Ionescu propose by way of restoring the landlords' decreasing profit levels – or, in his own words, by way of establishing equilibrium in the accounts of landlords and sharecroppers? The solution was to triple the production level of sharecroppers.<sup>20</sup> He discussed several strategies designed to increase the production level and solve the problem of indebtedness resulting in low production levels: the supply of oxen to poor sharecroppers;<sup>21</sup> the cancellation of the debts (especially the payment of interest) of the poor sharecroppers;<sup>22</sup> the establishment of an official credit/banking system which could deliver credit at lower interest rates for long-term engagements in order to regularise the credit system functioning in Tırhala as a system of usury;<sup>23</sup> and

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*Society on Both Shores of the Aegean* (Athens 2009), 374-375. This tension was, however, not specific to Tırhala. For an exposition of historical evolution of this tension through the centuries in the Balkans, see F. Adanır, 'Tradition and Rural Change in Southeastern Europe During Ottoman Rule', in Daniel Chirot (ed.), *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe: Economics and Politics from the Middle Ages Until the Early Twentieth Century* (Berkeley 1989), 130-176. For the importance of migratory movements in the Balkans, see the classical work of J. Cvijić, *La péninsule balkanique, géographie humaine* (Paris 1918), 112-152.

17 Ion Ionescu, 'Le partage des produits', *JdC*, 293, 24 March 1851.

18 Ibid. The argument on poverty (and therefore on laziness) of the majority of sharecroppers was also advanced by the landlords who opposed land reform in early twentieth-century Greece, see N. D. Pappos, *Ζητήματα αγροτικής οικονομίας της Θεσσαλίας* (Athens 1907), 37-40. I am grateful to Socrates Petmezas, who pointed out the continuity of this argument in early twentieth-century Greece.

19 Ion Ionescu, 'Le compte de la production', *JdC*, 306, 29 May 1851.

20 Ibid.

21 Ion Ionescu, 'Le partage'.

22 Ion Ionescu, 'La dette'.

23 Ion Ionescu, 'Les éléments du crédit', *JdC*, 316, 19 July 1851.

the introduction of accounting practices and book-keeping with a double-entry system to better administer and supervise advances to sharecroppers, costs of production, and profits, and therefore to 'moralise' the 'association' of sharecropping between the landowner and peasants.<sup>24</sup>

### *Thessalie agricole telle qu'elle est in 1854 and 1855*

In 1853, Ion Ionescu left his office in Istanbul and worked until 1857 as the director/manager of eighteen *Emlâk-ı hümayun çiftliks* held by Mustafa Reşid Paşa in Tırhala.<sup>25</sup> During these years, which were full of tension due to the social dynamics of the region, he continued to publish reform-minded articles in the *Journal de Constantinople* (either as Ion Ionescu or under his pseudonym, Leonidas) and prepare reports to be presented to the local or central administration. Following the argumentation that he had developed in the 1851 reports, he continued to focus on the sharecropping and indebtedness dynamics on large estates, but his analysis became more refined as a result of his living experience in *çiftlik* management. According to the financial report he presented to Reşid Paşa in the columns of *Journal de Constantinople* after a year of experience, he promised that he would establish a harmony of interests between sharecroppers and the Pasha which would result in 'moralisation' and the well-being of the Pasha's sharecroppers, on the one hand, and a considerable increase in the Pasha's income, on the other.<sup>26</sup> As, however, he was thereafter a representative of some sections of landed interests, he privileged the discussion of *subaşı*s over that of sharecroppers; his actual objective as a *çiftlik* manager of Reşid Paşa was to increase production and profits of *çiftliks* within the sharecropping system in general, and in particular to resolve the question of indebtedness and abolish the post of *subaşı*. In his reports of 1854 and 1855, he differentiated three types of landholding and their respective indebtedness patterns in Tırhala:<sup>27</sup> small peasant holdings in *kefalochoria*, the large estate holdings of *beys* and *ağas* of the district, and the large estates of *Emlâk-ı Hümayun* managed by entrepreneurs. In other words, the discussion of large

24 Ion Ionescu, 'Le compte...'; idem, 'La comptabilité', *JdC*, 310, 19 June 1851.

25 Ion Ionescu, 'Compte-rendu de l'administration des domaines de son Altesse Réchid Pacha, depuis le 1<sup>er</sup> mars 1853 jusqu'au 1<sup>er</sup> mai 1854', *JdC*, 521, 9 June 1854; BOA, HR.MKT 71/3/11 Ca 1270. For the Ottoman translation of their contract see BOA, HR.MKT 84/48/3 Z 1270.

26 "Je mettrais l'harmonie entre les intérêts des deux parties, sans quoi l'association entre le métayer et le propriétaire ne peut pas exister; et de cette harmonie sortiront la moralisation et le bien être de vos métayers et un accroissement considérable dans vos revenus." Ion Ionescu, 'Compte-rendu'.

27 In this part, I discuss the report of Ion Ionescu presented in 1854 to the governor of Tırhala, Mehmed İsmet Paşa (BOA, HR.MKT 92/5/6 S 1271), in addition to his articles published in the *Journal de Constantinople* during 1855 under the pseudonym 'Leonidas': Leonidas, 'La Thessalie', *JdC*, 579, 8 March 1855; idem, 'La Thessalie (I) Des terres, et de la manière de les administrer', *JdC*, 583, 22 March 1855; idem, 'La Thessalie (II), Partage des produits entre le propriétaire et les métayers rayas', *JdC*, 587, 5 April 1855; idem, 'La Thessalie (III), Les Soubachlyks', *JdC*, 599, 17 May 1855.

estates was thereafter divided under two headings: the large estates of *beys* and *ağas*, and those of *Emlâk-ı Hümayun*.

### α) Small Peasant Holdings

Small peasant holdings were to be found in the simple villages (*kefalochoria*) in which a peasant population held and cultivated lands while paying nothing but tithe (*öşr*) and *virgü*<sup>28</sup> to the central treasury. Some of them, being Christian, were mountainous villages around Pelio, Agrafa, Olympos, and Ossa, and most of them, being Muslim, were in the plain of Tırhala.<sup>29</sup>

Ion Ionescu called debts of peasants of *kefalochoria mukaddem borç* (previously accumulated debt).<sup>30</sup> It was a debt incurred collectively by peasants from a time even before the *Tanzimat* period, owed to individual moneylenders by the intermediary of primates and *kocabaşıs*, to pay off taxes due to the central administration or contributions to expenses of the community (salaries of school teachers, expenses of tax collection, etc). It was a collective obligation whose apportionment depended not on the peasants' ability to pay but on intercommunity relations within the village. Because the peasants could not make any payment between 1851 and 1855, the interest rate for *mukaddem borç* being 24%, the amount to be paid increased as interest payments accumulated. Twenty-five villages in the Olympos region had in total nearly 1,000,000 p. of *mukaddem borç*; 18 villages in the Ossa region had in total 700,000 p. of *mukaddem borç*; 24 villages in the Pelio region had in total 2,000,000 p. of *mukaddem borç*, and 1,500,000 p. of individual debts; 64 villages in the Agrafa had no *mukaddem borç*.<sup>31</sup>

### b) Çiftlik of Beys and Ağas of the District

Tırhala had some large estates whose holders (*ashab*) were Muslim *beys* and *ağas* from Yenişehir-i Fener (Gk. Larisa) and Tırhala.<sup>32</sup> These *çiftlik*s, 570 in number, were un-

28 *Virgü* was the new tax introduced by the new *Tanzimat* fiscal regime, imposed on the household's income and property, see A. Y. Kaya, 'Les villes ottomanes sous tension fiscale: les enjeux de l'évaluation cadastrale au XIXe siècle', in F. Bourillon and N. Vivier (eds), *La mesure cadastrale: Estimer la valeur du foncier en Europe aux XIXe et XXe siècles* (Rennes 2012), 43-60.

29 BOA, HR.MKT 92/5/6 S 1271.

30 For an excellent study on the local finances of Christian communities of Tırhala, see S. D. Petmezas, 'Christian Communities in Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Greece: Their Fiscal Functions', in M. Greene (ed.), *Minorities in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton 2005), 71-126.

31 Leonidas, 'La Thessalie (I) ...'. Although Ion Ionescu did not observe a *kefalochori* indebted to a *subaşı*, it is interesting to see in 1844 that the inhabitants of Ambelakia, the famous rural manufacturing centre of the eighteenth century, were indebted to *subaşı*s who charged not only interest rates but also monetary payments called *subaşılık* to the sum in question, BOA, C.ML 2555/27 Ra 1260.

32 BOA, HR.MKT 92/5/6 S 1271. Laiou also mentions local *çiftlik*-holders living in the town of

der a sharecropping organisation co-ordinated by a particular managerial system called *subaşılik*. In the case of those of them situated on the lower slopes of the mountains, the *çiftlik*-holder who usually paid half of the expenses of the harvest shared the product in equal parts (1/2) with sharecroppers, after taking the seed already advanced. In those situated on the plain and also in the valley of Tempi and Olympos, the *çiftlik*-holder did not contribute to any of the costs of labour or harvest; he did not give the seed; and he received 1/3 of the production, while the sharecroppers received 2/3 of it.<sup>33</sup>

Their total debt – whose source was nothing but defective administration based on *subaşılik* – amounted to 20,000,000 or 30,000,000 p.: an amount, according to Ion Ionescu, that could not be reimbursed even by selling the *çiftliks*.<sup>34</sup> The *çiftlik*-holder owned the land of the estate and all that depended on it, such as houses, forests, pastures, etc.; the cultivator only owned the agricultural equipment and draught animals. The cultivator was obliged to cultivate the land, prepare and seed it at his own expense; at the time

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- Tırhala and Yenişehir-i Fener in the earlier centuries (Laiou, 'Some Considerations regarding *Çiftlik* Formation', 266). For the development of local *çiftlik*-holders out of *deruhdecis* (local tax-farmers) in the Manastır province, see M. Ursinus, 'The *Çiftlik Sahipleri* of Manastır as a Local Elite, Late Seventeenth to Early Nineteenth Century', in A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Provincial Elites in the Ottoman Empire. Halcyon Days in Crete V, A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 10-12 January 2003* (Rethymno 2005), 247-257, and also McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, 168-170. For the historiographical question on the genesis and the nature of *çiftliks*, see Ö. L. Barkan, 'Çiftlik', *Türkiye'de Toprak Meselesi, Toplu Eserler I* (Istanbul 1980), 789-797; H. İnalcık, 'The Emergence of Big Farms, *Çiftliks*: State, Landlords, and Tenants', in Ç. Keyder and F. Tabak (eds), *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East* (Albany 1991), 17-34; G. Veinstein, 'On the *Çiftlik* Debate', in Keyder and Tabak (eds), *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture*, 35-53; V. Demetriades, 'Problems of Land-Ownning and Population in the Area of Gazi Evrenos Bey's Wakf', *Balkan Studies*, 22 (1981), 43-57; C. Gandev, 'L'apparition des rapports capitalistes dans l'économie rurale de la Bulgarie du nord ouest au cours du XVIIIe s.', *Etudes historiques*, 1 (A l'occasion du XIe Congrès international des sciences historiques, Stockholm, août 1960) (Sofia 1960), 207-217; B. A. Cvetkova, 'L'évolution du régime féodal turc de la fin du XVIe jusqu'au milieu du XVIIIe siècle', *Etudes historiques*, 1 (A l'occasion du XIe Congrès international des sciences historiques, Stockholm, août 1960) (Sofia 1960), 171-206; T. Stoianovich, 'Land Tenure and Related Sectors of the Balkan Economy, 1600-1800', *The Journal of Economic History*, 13/4 (1953), 398-411; Y. Nagata, 'Ayan in Anatolia and the Balkans During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Case Study of the Karaosmanoğlu Family', in Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Provincial Elites*, 269-294; McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*; Adanır, 'Tradition and Rural Change'.
- 33 Leonidas, 'La Thessalie (I)'. For the conditions of sharecropping in Tırhala see also Barkan, 'Harp Sonu', 52-53; Barkan, 'Balkan Memleketlerinin Zirai Reform Tecrübeleri', *Türkiye'de Toprak Meselesi, Toplu Eserler I* (Istanbul 1980), 417-420; R. I. Lawless, 'The Economy and Landscapes of Thessaly During Ottoman Rule', in F. W. Carter (ed.), *An Historical Geography of the Balkans* (London 1977), 516; W. W. McGrew, *Land and Revolution in Modern Greece 1800-1881: The Transition in the Tenure and Exploitation of Land From Ottoman Rule to Independence* (Kent 1985), 32-35; Petmezas, 'Rural Macedonia', 374-377; A. Uzun, 'Tepedelenli Ali Paşa ve Mal Varlığı', *Belleten*, 65/244 (2001), 1063; B. Simonide, 'La question agraire en Grèce', *Revue d'économie politique*, 37 (1923), 778-779; Evelpidis, *La Réforme*, 12-14.
- 34 Leonidas, 'La Thessalie (I)...'.

of harvest, on *çiftlik*s in which the sharing proportion was 1/2, the *çiftlik* holder, or more likely the manager, the *subaşı*, paid half of the expenses incurred for harvesters,<sup>35</sup> and, as cultivator, he had to thresh cereals and transport them, after the sharing, to the stores of the property owner. On *çiftlik*s in which the sharing proportion was 1/3 to 2/3, it was the *subaşı* who advanced annual expenses to cultivators as a credit. The *subaşı* in this mechanism created nothing but a debt burden for the *çiftlik* and cultivators.<sup>36</sup>

### c) Çiftlik of Emlâk-ı Hümayun

According to Ion Ionescu, *çiftlik*s of *Emlâk-ı hümayun* depending on the Imperial Treasury numbered 721; they were sold in return for a down-payment (*muaccel*) and instalments (*müeccel*) to entrepreneurs in order to be managed on the spot by *subaşı*s.<sup>37</sup> In Tırhala, these consisted largely of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa and his sons' *çiftlik*s confiscated by the *Darbhane-i Amire* (Imperial Mint) in 1820.<sup>38</sup> In fact, starting from the second half of the eighteenth century, the Imperial Mint began to take control of more and more *çiftlik*s and *timars* as *mukataas* (tax-farm units); confiscation of *çiftlik*s of deposed *ayan* (local notables) in the early nineteenth century multiplied their number.<sup>39</sup> During the *Tanzimat* period, it was the Imperial Treasury that farmed them out to entrepreneurs, who were generally absentee holders including pashas holding high offices in the central or provincial administration and financiers from Galata.<sup>40</sup>

35 According to the documentation given by Palairêt, in the nineteenth century, harvesters working in the *çiftlik*s were seasonal migrant workers, see M. Palairêt, 'The Migrant Workers of the Balkans and Their Villages (18th Century - World War I)', in K. Roth (ed.), *Handwerk in Mittel-und Südosteuropa, Mobilität, Vermittlung und Wandel im Handwerk des 18. Bis 20. Jahrhunderts*, Im Selbstverlag der Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft (Munich 1987), 23-46, and Cvijić, *La péninsule balkanique*, 136-137. Petmezas mentions also seasonal labour from littoral villages employed on the plains of Tırhala, Petmezas, 'Patterns of Protoindustrialization', 580-581.

36 Leonidas, 'La Thessalie (I)'. For a discussion on the functions of *subaşı*s in Tırhala and their close relationship with the *kocabaşı*s within the *iltizam* system, see Petmezas, 'Christian Communities', 106.

37 Leonidas, 'La Thessalie (I)'.

38 For the confiscation of Tepedelenlis' *çiftlik*s see Uzun, 'Tepedelenli Ali Paşa', 1070-1073 and H. Sezer, 'Tepedelenli Ali Paşa ve Oğullarının Çiftlik ve Gelirlerine İlişkin Yeni Bilgi – Bulgular', *OTAM*, 18 (2005), 334-357.

39 For the seizure and administration of *çiftlik*s by the *Darbhane-i Amire*, see Y. Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım ve Değişim Dönemi: XVIII. Yüzyıldan Tanzimat'a Mali Tarih* (Istanbul, 1986), 102-103, 249, 263, 371. For discussions on the effects of tax-farming on *çiftlik*s, see H. İnalçık, 'Land Problems in Turkish History', *The Ottoman Empire: Conquest, Organization and Economy* (London 1978), 225-227; İnalçık, 'The Emergence of Big Farms', 22-23; Barkan, 'Türk Toprak Hukuku', 369; Veinstein, 'On the Çiftlik Debate', 37-47; Ergenç, 'XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Anadolu'; Laiou, 'Some Considerations regarding Çiftlik Formation', 275.

40 "Quand la Porte eut châtié le pacha rebelle, ses biens furent confisqués et devinrent pour les sultans une réserve d'apanages; ils s'en servirent pour doter de hauts dignitaires... Plusieurs sont restées aux mains des beys musulmans, leurs héritiers; d'autres, comme celle de Zarkos,



In this category, the *çiftlik*-holder gave the necessary seed to each sharecropper, paid half of the expenses of the harvest, and received, after deduction of the tithe (*öşür*) and the next year's seed, half of the production. The sharecropper was obliged to prepare the land for seeding, thresh the wheat, and bring it to the store of the *çiftlik*-holder.<sup>41</sup> Their debt reached 4,000,000 p., since *subaşı*s, instead of ameliorating production conditions in the *çiftlik*s, increased the debt burden of sharecroppers. The sharecropper or 'vassal farmer',<sup>42</sup> as defined by Ion Ionescu, of an estate did not possess any agricultural equipment or draught animals, excepting a few croppers who were rich enough to be able to replace an ox. After a bad harvest year, by way of a loan at 20% interest, the *subaşı* advanced to 'vassals' the wheat that they needed, and he paid their tax, their *cizye* (poll-tax), etc.; all of this constituted the debt of the sharecroppers. Out of 15,000 'vassal families' in *çiftlik*s belonging to individuals, there were very few *çiftlik*s which owed only 10,000 to 20,000 p.<sup>43</sup>

#### d) 'Vassals'

Why did Ion Ionescu call the sharecroppers of Tırhala 'vassals' or 'vassal farmers'? According to the example given by him, a proprietor who in 1855 paid 100,000 p. for a *çiftlik* bought not only agricultural fields, forests, and pastures dependent on it, but also a village consisting of 12 *çifts* and 24 houses (a *çift* consisted of two ploughs, two families, and eight oxen). The *çiftlik* contained additionally a large manor of a semi-Gothic type, granaries, barns, stables, about ten other houses, which were rented, during winter, to *Valaque* nomad shepherds, and last but not least, the individuals born in the *çiftlik*. This last item might appear paradoxical, according to Ion Ionescu,

but it is nonetheless true, that (only) in Thessaly a sharecropper, even if he is not really a slave of the proprietor, cannot leave the village to work anywhere else on pain of imprisonment.<sup>44</sup>

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ont été vendues aux financiers de Galata; le palais a récemment concédé les terres qui lui appartenaient encore à un capitaliste arménien, devenu le plus grand propriétaire de la Thessalie". Eugene-Melchior de Vogüé, 'La Thessalie, Notes de voyage', *Revue des deux mondes*, 3/31-1 (1879), 24. For an analysis on the results of auctions for the *çiftlik*s situated in Tırhala, Yanya, Selânik, and Rumeli in the 1840s, see U. Bayraktar, 'The Political Economy of *Çiftlik*s: The Redistribution of Land and Land Tenure Relations in the Nineteenth Century Provinces of Yanya and Tırhala', unpublished M.A. thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2009, 72-97.

41 Leonidas, 'La Thessalie (I)'.

42 "Le raya ou fermier vassal", *ibid.*

43 *Ibid*; *idem*, 'La Thessalie (II)'. For example, the inhabitants of the Voyvoda *çiftlik* (dependent on the *vakıf* of Valide Sultan in Tırhala) owed to Abdüllatif and Stephan more than 40,000 p., to be paid by instalments consisting of one-third of each year's harvest (BOA, A.MKT.UM 257/59/16 S 1273). For another case of unpaid debt (under written contract) in Tırhala and its splitting into instalments by the provincial council of Selânik, see BOA, MVL 936/34/20 R 1278.

44 "... mais il n'en est pas moins vrai, qu'en Thessalie (seulement) le métayer, s'il n'est pas réel-



Bound to the soil and not to *çiftlik*-holder, such a 'vassal farmer' did not own anything personally; he brought into the 'association' nothing but his limbs, his agricultural knowledge, his health, the work of all of his family, and if he was rich enough to buy them, his equipment and his plough animals.<sup>45</sup> Ion Ionescu concluded therefore that

agriculture brings back nothing to the sharecropper in Tırhala; he works not to obtain from the land what it gives with usury to those who cultivate it, but because he is obliged to do so, because otherwise he receives the title of *parenkende* (parasite) and from that moment, he is overburdened with *corvées*.<sup>46</sup>

The sharecroppers of Tırhala lived therefore in the context of soaring tension between bondage to the soil and dispersion (*perakende*).<sup>47</sup> The dispersed people either fled from the *çiftlik* to the mountain for a nomadic life, or just abandoned cultivation while continuing to live in the *çiftlik*.<sup>48</sup> One of the material impetuses behind this was animal breeding, as already observed to a certain extent by Ion Ionescu during his earlier field work. However, as a manager of *çiftlik*s who had to defend the *çiftlik*-holder's interests, he charac-

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lement l'esclave du propriétaire, ne peut cependant sous peine de prison quitter son village pour aller travailler ailleurs", Leonidas, 'La Thessalie (II)'.

45 Ibid. Following Marc Bloch, who underlined the distinction between serfs bound to their lord and serfs bound to the soil (*serf de la glèbe*) in the evolution of feudalism, it is important to note that cultivators of Tırhala were bound to the soil and not to the *çiftlik*-holder. I propose that in the mid-nineteenth century, depending on the power relations in the district, cultivators were sharecroppers bound to the soil, as their state oscillates between sharecropping and *servage de la glèbe*. M. Bloch, 'Serf de la glèbe, histoire d'une expression toute faite', *Revue historique*, 2 (1921), 220-242; M. Bush, 'Serfdom in Medieval and Modern Europe: A Comparison', in idem (ed.), *Serfdom and Slavery* (London 1996), 199-224. For a theoretical approach underlying power relations in non-linear historical transformation of labour relations see T. Brass, *Towards a Comparative Political Economy of Unfree Labour: Case Studies and Debates* (London 1999), 9-46; Idem, *Labour Regime Change in the Twenty-First Century* (Leiden 2011), 75-103.

46 "L'agriculture ne rapporte rien au métayer raya de la Thessalie ; il travaille, non pour obtenir de la terre ce qu'elle donne avec usure, à ceux qui la cultivent, mais parce qu'on l'oblige à le faire, parce qu'autrement, il reçoit le titre de pérekindès [*perakende*] (parasite) et dès-lors, il est accablé de corvées." Leonidas, 'La Thessalie (III)'.

47 See also Lawless, 'The Economy', 516, 521, 533. Scholars have studied this tension exclusively for the early modern period, see Ö. L. Barkan, 'Tımar', *Türkiye'de Toprak Meselesi, Toplu Eserler I*, (Istanbul 1980), 834-836; Barkan, 'XV ve XVIncı Asırlarda' ; Barkan, 'Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Çiftçi Sınıfların'; H. İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: the Classical Age, 1300-1600*, trans. N. Itzkowitz and C. Imber (London 1973), 111-113; Idem, 'Adaletnameler', *Osmanlı'da Devlet, Hukuk, Adalet* (Istanbul 2000), 120; Y. Özkaya, 'Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda XVIII. Yüzyılda Göç Sorunu', *DTCF Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 14-25 (1981), 171-203; B. A. Cvetkova, 'Problèmes du régime ottoman dans les Balkans du seizième au dix-huitième siècle', in T. Naff and R. Owen (eds), *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History* (Carbondale 1977), 181; Cvetkova, 'L'évolution du régime feudal turc', 201; Gandev, 'L'apparition des rapports capitalistes', 212; Moutafchieva, *Agrarian Relations*, 142-152; Demetriades, 'Problems of Land-Ownning', 49, 54; Stoianovich, 'Land Tenure', 402, 406, 409-410.

48 Ion Ionescu, 'Compte-rendu'.

terised *perakende* (dispersed) people as ‘parasites’, since they did not work for the *çiftlik*-holders and lived at the expense of others. The vital question for *çiftlik*-holders was how to bind these potential ‘parasites’ to the soil and prevent dispersion in such a way that the stability of cultivation and production was assured. In such a context, the cultivators’ indebtedness (to either *çiftlik*-holders or *subaşı*) was to serve as a tool to bind the cultivators to the soil.<sup>49</sup> But such debt bondage, despite its positive effect on bondage to the soil, according to Ion Ionescu’s analysis, apparently served the interests of *subaşı*s and other local intermediaries more than the interests of the *çiftlik*-holders.

### e) Subaşı

On the basis of Ion Ionescu’s discussion, the *subaşı* was like a *deruhdeci* (contractor) or some sort of *mültezim* (tax-farmer) for the cultivators of Tırhala. In fact, whereas the *mültezim* was a person who for a given time shared the product of a *çiftlik* or some piece of land with the *çiftlik*-holder, the *subaşı* was a person who engaged in a contract of indeterminate duration with the *çiftlik*-holder, for an amount that went from 20,000 to 100,000 p., in return for the right of giving credits to the *çiftlik* population and administering them like a self-governing gendarmerie (*zabıta-ı müstakil gibi*).<sup>50</sup> He was neither a farmer nor steward of an estate; he was purely and simply a creditor of ‘vassals’ of a fief, at a charge of 30,000 to 100,000 p. which he advanced as a debt to sharecroppers.<sup>51</sup> He was not, however, a simple creditor; he also engaged with sharecroppers in the *selem* contract: instead of taking interest, he made an arrangement with the cultivator to take his crop at a lower price than its market value at harvest time, thus leading him into debt.<sup>52</sup> if a share-

49 This is a general tendency in the history of sharecropping. Jones, studying *mezzadria* (sharecropping) in Tuscany, points out also that debts and loans were an inseparable condition of *mezzadria*. P. J. Jones, ‘From Manor to Mezzadria, A Tuscan Case-Study in the Medieval Origins of Modern Agrarian Society’, in N. Rubinstein (ed.), *Florentine Studies, Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence* (Evanston 1968). I would like to thank Professor Suraiya Faruqi for guiding me to the studies on *mezzadria*.

50 BOA, HR.MKT 92/5/6 S 1271. According to Laiou, it was from the early eighteenth century onwards that cultivators had to deal with more than one owner of the right of tax-collection: Laiou, ‘Some Considerations regarding *Çiftlik* Formation’, 270. For a theoretical discussion on differentiation of revenue claims on land in the context of the Ottoman accommodative-distributive state of the early modern period and establishment of the single and general taxation claim of the modern state in the context of conflictual institutionalisation of individual ownership of land, see İslamoğlu, ‘Property as a Contested Domain’, 184-195, and eadem, ‘Ottoman and Chinese Modernities Compared: State Transformations and Constitutions of Property in the Qing and Ottoman Empires’, *Ottoman History as World History* (Istanbul 2007), 135-147.

51 Leonidas, ‘La Thessalie’.

52 For the use of the *selem* contract in the Ottoman lands see T. Güran, ‘Zirai Kredi Politikasının Gelişmesi, 1840-1910’, *19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Tarımı* (Istanbul 1998), 136-139; B. Doumani, ‘Le contrat salam et les relations ville-campagne dans la Palestine ottomane’, *Annales HSS*, 61/4 (2006), 901-924; K. M. Cuno, ‘Contrat salam et transformations agricoles en basse Égypte à l’époque ottomane’, *Annales HSS*, 61/4 (2006), 925-940; A. Hadjikyriacou, ‘Society and Econ-

cropper owed 4000 p. to the *subaşı* with an interest payment (20%) of 1000 p., for the reimbursement of his debts he would be forced to sell, before the harvest, his produce of wheat to the *subaşı* below the current price, for example, at 60 p. instead of 100 p.. In other words, by the *selem* contract the *subaşı* charged an additional 40% interest rate on the debt already charged with a 20% interest rate.<sup>53</sup>

In the event of non-payment of debts, there was no way out for the cultivators: the *subaşı* had to demand its reimbursement from the guarantor, who, in his turn, forced cultivators to perform the debt service. In other words, in the running of a business, either the *subaşı* or the *çiftlik*-holder bound cultivators to the soil for the debt service. This was the case for the cultivators of a *çiftlik* in Agrafta: the cultivators' debt was transferred from the previous *subaşı*, who was also a grocer, to the *çiftlik*-holder living in Yenişehir-i Fener.<sup>54</sup>

Ion Ionescu stressed that the *subaşı* was a 'usurer' or a constant bloodsucker (*une sangsue permanente*) who extracted from sharecroppers the very last strand of the product of their sweat.<sup>55</sup> What made the *subaşı* and his entourage bloodsuckers, according to Ion Ionescu, was in fact not only the debt services but also the additional payments based on the debt bondage. Because, in addition to the interest rate, each sharecropper gave to the *subaşı* annually:

- the *paraspor* (*paraspori*), which was all the annual produce of  $\frac{1}{2}$  *kara kile*<sup>56</sup> of wheat sown on the land that the *subaşı* chose (assuming on his own the cost of production);
- 1 *kara kile* of wheat from his annual share as *subaşılık*.  
And he gave to the *yamak* (assistant) of the *subaşı* or *parasubaşı*:
- 1 or 2 *kile* of wheat;
- all of the produce resulting from the cultivation of cotton or sesame on 2-3 *dönüm*s (assuming on his own the cost of production).

Last but not least, in addition to what he gave to the *subaşı* and his *yamak*, he gave  $\frac{1}{2}$  *kile* to the *kocabaşı* who was responsible for the measurement of the produce and  $\frac{1}{2}$  *kile*

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omy on an Ottoman Island: Cyprus in the Eighteenth Century', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, SOAS, University of London, 2011, 205-237. In fact, the *selem* contract functions as the truck system does in other parts of the world: "cash advances and debt incurred by a tenant family as a result of purchases from the company store were repaid in the form of the harvested crop – the basis of the truck system", Brass, *Labour Regime Change*, 185.

53 BOA, HR.MKT 92/5/6 S 1271.

54 BOA, MVL 913/56/13 Za 1276; A.MKT.DV 134/17/26 Ca 1275.

55 Leonidas, 'La Thessalie'.

56 A *kara kile* of the district is equivalent of seven *kara kiles* of Istanbul, *ibid.* One *kile* of Istanbul is equivalent to 18-20 *okka*, depending on the type of cereals, which makes 25 kg. on the average (M. Z. Pakalın, *Osmanlı Tarih Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü*, Vol. II (Istanbul 1971 [2<sup>nd</sup> ed.]), 281.

to the village priest.<sup>57</sup> According to Ion Ionescu, by adding these *corvée* days to the never-ending holidays in the Greek calendar (*aux jours fériés interminables dans le calendrier des Grecs* [!]), out of 365 days of the year, cultivators had barely 50 days to work and seed the fields on which they had the right to half or two-thirds of the harvest.<sup>58</sup> In such a context, the debt burden of ‘vassals’ increased progressively. Comparing his present observations with his previous observations from his first visit six years before, Ion Ionescu stated as an example that the debt of the population of Bacrina (mod. Gyrtoni) village, a *çiftlik* of *Emlâk-ı Hümayun* situated on the plain on the edge of the Pineios River, to its *subaşı* increased from 30,000 p. to 50,000 p. – as the debt of other *çiftlik*s did.<sup>59</sup>

In such conditions, the *subaşı* became wealthier in two or three years and sold his contract to another *subaşı* at a price higher than he had paid.<sup>60</sup> The new *subaşı* generally obtained a loan from the bankers of Yenişehir-i Fener at a charge of 20% to pay 20,000 or 30,000 p., a sum consisting of the totality of the debt of the sharecroppers, in order to sub-contract the management of the *çiftlik*.<sup>61</sup>

Ion Ionescu claimed that the individual called a cultivator (*çiftçi*) was in fact the labour associate of the holder of the *çiftlik*, and both engaged in the product sharing on the basis of the system of association; in Tırhala, however, there was no such association. It was obvious that the cultivator was in a state of corrupted slavery by being subject to innumerable forms of oppression by *subaşı*s<sup>62</sup> because of debts multiplied illegally and enormously by unpaid interest instalments.<sup>63</sup>

According to Ion Ionescu, the district of Tırhala paid 40 million p. of taxes to the Imperial Treasury; he argued that the revenue going to the Treasury could become 100 million p. instead of 40 if and only if the *subaşı*lık was abolished and the *çiftlik*-holder himself governed the *çiftlik*. Such a policy would result first in the cessation of the slavery to which sharecroppers were condemned,<sup>64</sup> secondly in the increase of the production and profit levels, and finally in the growth of the revenues of the Treasury.

57 BOA, HR.MKT 92/5/6 S 1271.

58 Leonidas, ‘La Thessalie (III)’.

59 Leonidas, ‘La Thessalie’.

60 BOA, HR.MKT 92/5/6 S 1271. See also Leonidas, ‘Thessalie (III)’. For a similar ‘carrier’ path of becoming *çiftlik*-holders from *deruhdecis* in Manastır, see Ursinus, ‘The *Çiftlik Sahipleri* of Manastır’.

61 Leonidas, ‘La Thessalie (I)’.

62 “Çiftçi denilen adam çiftlik sahibinin emek şeriki demek olub hasılâtın her yerde çiftlik sahibiyle çiftçi beyrinde usul-ü şirket üzere taksimi hususuna riayet olunur ise de burada böyle olmayub çiftçinin tali esaretten eşer olduğu bedihidir. Reaya-ı çiftlikatın subaşılarından dolayı gördükleri gaddarlıklar yalnız bunlar olmayub manevi güne gün mezalim ve teadiyat vardır ki tafsil yazılması lazım gelse uzun uzadı risaleler tahriri iktiza ider” BOA, HR.MKT 92/5/6 S 1271.

63 Leonidas, ‘La Thessalie’.

64 Ibid.

**Ion Ionescu's example for accounts of a çiftlik in Tırhala:** "With the net share he gets, the sharecropper could eat nothing but dry rye and Indian corn (*kokoroz*)"<sup>65</sup>

	Value (field, pastures, buildings)	Net annual cultivation of wheat (=production - ( <i>öşr</i> + seeds))
<i>Çiftlik</i>	400,000	210,000
<i>Çiftlik</i> -holder's share 1/2		105,000
Pastures in rent		30,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>135,000</b>
<b>30 sharecroppers'</b> <b>total share 1/2</b>		105,000
15% interest payment to <i>subaşı</i> for a debt of 80,000		
12,000		
<i>Subaşılık</i>		
3,700		
<i>Paraspor</i>		
12,000		
<i>Yamak's</i> share		
4,000		
<i>Angarya</i>		
3,000		
<b>Sub-Total or <i>Subaşı's</i> share</b>		
		<b>34,700</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>70,300</b>
<b>A sharecropper's</b> <b>share</b>		<b>2,700</b>
Harvest expenditure		
700		
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,000</b>
<b>Taxes and contributions to be deducted</b>		
<i>Virgü</i>		
<i>Salyane</i>		
<i>Cizye</i>		
For priest and schoolteacher		

All quantities are converted into piastres in the analysis of Ion Ionescu.

Source: BOA, HR.MKT 92/5 (6 S 1271/28-29 October 1854)

65 For other examples of *çiftlik* accounts see Leonidas, 'La Thessalie (II)', and idem, 'La Thessalie (III)'.

Governorship of Mehmed İsmet Paşa: *l'agriculture, telle qu'elle doit être faite en Thessalie*

During the Crimean War, on the opposite side to the fronts, some organised Greek rebels passed over the Greek–Ottoman frontier and caused disturbances in the province of Yanya and in the district of Tırhala. In May 1854 the central government sent troops under the command of Fuad Paşa, who had a special mission to allay the grievances.<sup>66</sup> In order to re-establish “order and morale”,<sup>67</sup> in June 1854 he addressed the Christians of Tırhala: he asked peasants to return to their villages and continue to cultivate the land, primates to collaborate in the local administration, and priests to work for the morale and loyalty of the people.<sup>68</sup>

Such a context of disorder was not only fed by but also further deepened the social distress of a region whose agricultural economy was organised by sharecropping arrangements on large estates. For cultivators who became increasingly bound to the soil in the *çiftlik*s, nomadic life based not only on animal husbandry but also on brigandage was a solution; but such a nomadic life endangered the *çiftlik*'s agricultural economy in terms of both labour and security.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, in the report presented to Reşid Paşa, Ion Ionescu complained particularly of the (historical) tendency to suspend cultivation of fields in favour of animal breeding.<sup>70</sup> According to him, in recent years 44 families had totally abandoned cultivation in the *çiftlik* of Lefterochori; out of 806 families living in the *çiftlik*s of Reşid

66 N. Iorga, *Histoire des États balkaniques jusqu'à 1924* (Paris 1925), 335-337; Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir*, No. 40, ed. C. Baysun (Ankara 1991), 67-68; Ahmed Lütfi, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi Tarihi*, ed. Münir Aktepe (Istanbul 1984), Vol. 9, 102-103. On the mission of Fuad Paşa and the military and security reforms he undertook in Yanya and Tırhala see BOA, İ.MTZ (01) 12/290/5 L 1270; İ.MTZ (01) 12/305/9 M 1271; İ.DH 307/19538/20 Z 1270. For the evolution of the events within the social context of the region, see J. S. Koliopoulos, *Brigands With a Cause: Brigandage and Irredentism in Modern Greece, 1821-1912* (Oxford 1987), 135-166.

67 'L'ordre et le moral' is the title of a movie dated 2011 and directed by Mathieu Kassovitz on the conflict that took place in 1988 during the presidency campaign between local dissidents and French military troops in Nouvelle-Calédonie.

68 "Paysans ! Abandonnez les montagnes et les bois, et venez trouver le repos dans vos villages, au mieux de vos familles, et moissonner vos champs que le Très-Haut, dans sa miséricorde pour vos calamités, a bénis cette année-ci, incomparablement au-dessus de toute autre année.

Primats ! Rejetez toute crainte que vous pourriez avoir, et venez autour de moi, pour me dire les moyens par lesquels nous devons procéder à la guérison des plaies que les ennemis de notre patrie nous ont ouvertes. Prêtres, ministres du culte de Dieu ! Empressez-vous de remplir les devoirs que vous impose la religion. Consolez ceux qui ont souffert, prêchez la paix et expliquez ce grand principe de Jésus, qui dit : "Rendez à César ce qui est à César, et à Dieu ce qui est à Dieu". *JdC*, 528, 14 July 1854.

69 For a discussion on the social and economic dynamics of brigandage in nineteenth-century Greece, see J. S. Koliopoulos, 'Shepherds, Brigands, and Irregulars in Nineteenth Century Greece', *Journal of Hellenic Diaspora*, 8-4 (1981), 41-53.

70 For the historicity of tension and the inverse and exclusive relation between land cultivation and animal raising see Laiou, 'Some Considerations regarding *Çiftlik* Formation', 267, 271; Adanır, 'Tradition and Rural Change'; Cvijić, *La péninsule balkanique*, 133-137.

Paşa, there were only 364 families who cultivated the land; others, as ‘parasites’, raised income from animal husbandry engaged in on lands of the Pasha’s *çiftlik*s without paying rent on pastures or sharing animal products. To push them into cultivation, the manager proposed the imposition of a pasture fee (*otlak parası*). His proposition also found an echo in the *meclis* (council) of the district. As Ion Ionescu estimated that its imposition could result in the collection of nearly 50,000 p., the *meclis* found that pasture fee to be just and in accordance with local customs.<sup>71</sup> Reşid Paşa, facing petitions blaming Ion Ionescu, in July 1854 confirmed the action of his manager in insisting on imposing fees (*rüşumat*) on animal breeding in the *çiftlik*s. Although the Pasha asked for an investigation into the reasons for the petitions, he thought that the cultivators should be warned in order to make them work to fulfil their obligations in agriculture (*emir-i ziraat*).<sup>72</sup>

Leonidas, the correspondent of the *Journal de Constantinople* in Yenişehir-i Fener,<sup>73</sup> reported in February 1855 that disorder still prevailed in the region: harvests were destroyed, herds were abducted; Christian peasants who were deprived of draught animals did not have any bread or refuge and were wandering; they were cluttering the fields of the region, seeking assistance from local authorities.<sup>74</sup>

On 30 June the central government appointed Mehmed İsmet Paşa, the inspector of Anatolia (*Anadolu müfettişi*) in 1851-1852 and an administrator with experience in provinces of high tension such as Niş and Ayvalık and apparently within the circle of Mustafa Reşid Paşa,<sup>75</sup> as the governor (*vali*) of Tırhala after the departure of Fuad Paşa, who

71 Ion Ionescu, ‘Compte-rendu’.

72 BOA, HSD.AFT 2/58/28 L 1270.

73 To judge from the style of reasoning and argumentation to be found in the articles, in addition to the economic and agricultural inclinations evident in the reporting of the events, there is no doubt that the correspondent was Ion Ionescu. Vasiliu and Guboglu also put forward the same argument; see A. Vasiliu and M. Guboglu, ‘Contributii la cunoaşterea activitatii lui Ion Ionescu de la Brad din timpul exilului în Turica’, *Ion Ionescu de la Brad: Aniversarea a 150 de ani de la naştere, volum omagial* (Bacău 1968), 230, fn.6.

74 Leonidas, ‘La Thessalie’.

75 After research in the Ottoman archives, it appears that the first administrative position of Mehmed İsmet Paşa was the deputy-governorship (*kaymakamlık*) of Prizren between 1836/37-1838/39 (1252-1254). He became the official in charge of security (*umur-ı zabtiyeye memur*) in Bursa between 1839/40-1840/41 (1255-1256) and then in Niş in 1841/42 (1257). During his term of office in Bursa, he also became the director of the *muhasıslılık meclisi* of Bursa. He obtained the deputy-governorship of Ayvalık in 1842/43 (1258) before being the sub-governor (*mutasarrıf*) of Ankara between 1843/44-1845 (1259-1261) and the deputy-governor (*kaymakam*) of Midilli (Gk. Mytilene) between 1845/46-1846/47 (1262-1263). Between 1846/47 (1263) and 1847/48 (1264), he was in Istanbul as a member of the Council of Agriculture. He became then the governor (*vali*) of Filibe (Bg. Plovdiv) between 1847/48 (1264) and 1848/49 (1265). He made several excursions into the Anatolia in 1850/51 (1267) and 1851/52 (1268), to prepare reports to the central government as the inspector of Anatolia (*Anadolu müfettişi*) in the third big inspection tour of the *Tanzimat* period (the first being in 1840 and the second in 1844 and 1845). He became the governor (*vali*) of Trabzon in 1852/53 (1269). He was appointed as a governor (*vali*) to Tırhala in 1853/54 (1270), to Kastamonu in 1854/55 (1271), to Silistre in 1856/57 (1273), and finally to Vidin in 1857/58 (1274). He was dismissed from of-



had accomplished his mission. Leonidas reported that after being introduced to what had happened by Fuad Paşa, Mehmed İsmet Paşa attempted to root out the evil and in particular sought solutions to ameliorate the conditions of sharecroppers.<sup>76</sup> In fact, Fuad Paşa was also the intermediary between Ion Ionescu and İsmet Paşa, since Fuad Paşa, who was constantly backed by Reşid Paşa, had visited the *çiftlik* of Perietos, managed by Ion Ionescu, in August 1855.<sup>77</sup> This network of acquaintances was also soon translated into a business contract between İsmet Paşa and Ion Ionescu: the manager of the *çiftlik*s of Reşid Paşa also undertook the management of two *çiftlik*s recently bought in the district by İsmet Paşa. Ion Ionescu presented reports to him discussing not only the economic state of these *çiftlik*s but also the agricultural structure of the district.<sup>78</sup>

On the other hand, Mehmed İsmet Paşa first met with ‘vassal peasants’ of the *beys* and listened to their grievances; he then examined another report, prepared by one of the friends of Leonidas, alias Ion Ionescu, on the workings of *subaşı* system in Tırhala.<sup>79</sup>

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rice in 1859/60 (1276), because of some accusations of corruption practised in several offices he had held, or some political revenge and manoeuvres translated into accusations of corruption, but he gained the office of governorship (*vali*) of Aleppo in 1860/61 (1277). He served there for four years before he died in 1865/66 (1282). For his office in Bursa see E. Satıcı, ‘19. Yüzyılda Hüdavendigâr Eyaleti’, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Ankara University, 2008, 266, 276, 286, 308, 312, 313, 368, and R. Kaynar, *Mustafa Reşit Paşa ve Tanzimat* (Ankara 1985), 246-247; for his term of office in Niş, see Ahmet Uzun, *Tanzimat ve Sosyal Direnişler: Niş İsyamı Üzerine Ayrıntılı Bir İnceleme (1841)* (İstanbul 2002), 65, 77, 78, 79, 80, 84, 85, 92, 109, 122, 126, 129, 130, 131. For his work of inspection in Anatolia, see T. Güran, ‘Zirai Kredi Politikasının Gelişmesi, 1840-1910’, *19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Tarımı* (İstanbul 1998), 132-144. For the appointments see also Ahmed Lütfi, *Vak’a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi Tarihi*, Vol. 9, ed. M. Aktepe (İstanbul 1984), 33, 43, 44, 50, 84, 99, 115, 130, 136, 141, 168, 202; idem, *Vak’a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi Tarihi*, Vols 2-3, trans. A. Hezarfen (İstanbul 1999), 344, 355; idem, *Vak’a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi Tarihi*, Vols 4-5, trans. A. Hezarfen (İstanbul 1999), 710, 713, 716, 808, 888, 924; idem, *Vak’a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi Tarihi*, Vols 6-8, trans. A. Hezarfen (İstanbul 1999), 1104, 1140, 1157, 1214, 1259, 1278.

76 “Izmet pacha était peu connu en Thessalie; les quelques personnes qui l’avaient vu à Aivali [Ayvalık], en disaient beaucoup de bien. Son intégrité, sa fermeté ainsi que ses connaissances, avaient été appréciées par le gouvernement impérial lors de son inspection en Asie Mineure. Izmet pacha vint occuper son poste au moment où on pouvait à peine se débrouiller dans ce chaos insurrectionnel. Mis au fait de ce que s’y passait par Fuad éfendi, il entreprit de couper le mal dans sa racine. Il étudia surtout les moyens d’administrer le raya métayer” (Leonidas, ‘La Thessalie’).

77 BOA, HR.MKT 84/48/3 Z 1270.

78 For the Ottoman translation of the report see BOA, A.DVN 101/81/18 Ca 1271. In fact, Mehmed İsmet Paşa used to invest in rural and urban properties in districts and provinces where he worked as governor; for his entrepreneurial activities in Bursa see BOA, C.IKTS 9/424/1256, for those in Vidin see A.MKT.MVL 111/60/18R 1276, for those in Ayvalık see MVL 709/57/08 M 1282.

79 “.... il se fit expliquer, dans un rapport fait par un de mes amis, les attributions du Souba-chy...” It is clear that the friend in question is Ion Ionescu (Leonidas, ‘La Thessalie’). The report in question is the report to be found among the files sent to the central government by Mehmed İsmet Paşa in 1854 in a translated form under the title “Tırhala Sancağı’nda Subaşılık

After such investigation, he reported to the central government on 10 October 1854 that in each *çiftlik* and village of Tırhala there was a *subaşı* who ruined peasants by means of credits with excessive interest rates. In Tırhala and Yanya, the peasant population of the *çiftlik*s, most of them part of the *Emlâk-ı Hümayun*, had therefore a debt burden amounting to nearly 35,000,000 p.. In such circumstances, peasants became pledged (*rehine-dar*) to the *çiftlik*s where they lived. Chained down by debt bondage as they were, the *subaşı* also imposed on them the *paraspor* (annual cultivation of ½ *kara kile* of grain seeds for the *subaşı*), *subaşılık* (annual imposition of 1 *kara kile* of grain per *çift*), *yemeklik* (imposition of ½ *kara kile* of grain), all forms of *corvées* (*angarya*), and several other payments and services. In such a context, the *subaşı* worked the peasants as if they were his slaves (*köleleri gibi*), since a *subaşı*, having an autonomous position in the *çiftlik*s of the landlords, was none other but “a government in a government” (*hükümet içinde bir hükümet olub*). A nuisance and seizure of properties, on the one hand, and incitation of the peasantry to banditry, in order to free themselves from the oppression of the *subaşı*s, as observed in the rebellion of 1854, on the other, were the inevitable outcomes.<sup>80</sup> Last but not least, under such impositions, peasants who, according to local customs (*usul-ı belediye*), each year had to cultivate seven *kara kile* of seed per *çift*, did not cultivate all of the seven *kara kile* seed but only half of it, because they sold the other half in the markets of other regions to meet their subsistence requirements; agricultural production became depressed, as did the revenues of Imperial treasury,<sup>81</sup> as well as the *çiftlik*-holders’ profits.

In the light of his administrative experience in several provinces of the Empire, Mehmed İsmet Paşa acknowledged that such oppression did not exist either in Anatolia or in Rumelia. What he proposed in his report, following his own experience of the re-organization of the credit market in Bursa in 1839,<sup>82</sup> was to re-organise the sharecroppers’ debts by fixing a rate of interest at 12% and deducting from the total amount of debt the imposition of *paraspor*, *subaşılık*, and *yemeklik*.<sup>83</sup> Such a reform would undermine the basis of extreme indebtedness on which the *subaşılık* was built. The Prime Minister’s Of-

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maddesine dair elçi ve konsoloslar taraflarına fransevi el ibare tevarrüd eden bir kıta müzakere-nin tercümesidir” (BOA, HR.MKT 92/5/6 S 1271). For an analysis of the report see the above section.

80 BOA, HR.MKT 92/5/6 S 1271.

81 BOA, İ.MVL 324/13848/Ca 1271.

82 In the file in which we found the correspondence of Mehmed İsmet Paşa, there was also a copy of the firman of 1839 that the Pasha mentioned on the re-organisation of credit markets in the Province of Hüdavendigâr and documents attached to it, see BOA, HR.MKT 92/5/6 S 1271. The *firman* ordered the fixing of the rate of interest at 12% and that the debt repayments should be in five instalments. In fact, such a local reform would engender the registration of the indebted population, their debts and creditors; we suppose that the registers of Mihaliç and Kirmasti which Atilla Aytekin worked on were the registers prepared for the reform of the credit market of the province, see A. Aytekin, ‘XIX. Yüzyılda İki Batı Anadolu Kazasında Kırsal Borçluluk’, *Kebikeç*, 23 (2007), 141-156; idem, ‘Cultivators, Creditors and the State: Rural Indebtedness in the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Empire’, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 35/2 (2008), 292-313.

83 BOA, HR.MKT 92/5/6 S 1271.

fice approved the proposal on condition of the immediate setting up of a local commission (*komisyon*) in which the local population would negotiate the question.<sup>84</sup> Mehmed İsmet Paşa thought, however, that the members appointed to the commission should be either *çiftlik*-holders associated with *subaşı*s, or *çiftlik*-holders who themselves were *subaşı*s. Such a commission would not therefore approve a decision that would destabilise the *subaşılık*.<sup>85</sup> As Leonidas reported, following this argument, in the district council he abruptly abolished the *subaşılık* and declared that any *çiftlik*-holder who continued to “torture” ‘vassals’ would be punished.<sup>86</sup>

The Pasha insisted thereafter on his proposal of the establishment of a credit system which would eliminate the conditions by which the *subaşılık* was fed: the calculation of the peasants’ real debt (*düyun-ı sahihe*) and the re-organisation of its payment by means of an appropriate number of instalments.<sup>87</sup> Immediately after the Pasha’s *de facto* abolition of the *subaşılık*, a commission started to work on the revision of accounts between the sharecroppers and *subaşı*s.<sup>88</sup> However, members of the *Meclis-i Vala-ı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* also thought that the elimination of *subaşı*s would not solve the problem, since the peasants would continue to borrow money to meet their obligations; other entrepreneurs could easily replace the *subaşı*s to continue the oppression. In this context, the *Meclis-i Vala* also welcomed the proposal of Mehmed İsmet Paşa regarding the creation of a local fund/bank in order to reach a more substantive solution to the peasants’ indebtedness and distress.<sup>89</sup>

Mehmed İsmet Paşa went to Istanbul in late January or in early February to present to the *Meclis-i Vala* and the Prime Minister, Mustafa Reşid Paşa, a report consisting of five articles on other future reforms to be undertaken. The Pasha, while searching for ways of increasing production and profit levels, did not question labour organisation (or social hierarchy) based on sharecropping, but only the factors hindering it; he therefore put emphasis on the oppression of *subaşı*s and the indebtedness and dispersion of the peasantry.<sup>90</sup>

84 BOA, A.MKT.UM 175/57/ 5 R 1271; İ.MVL 324/13848/19 Ca 1271.

85 BOA, İ.MVL 324/13848/Ca 1271.

86 Leonidas, ‘La Thessalie’.

87 BOA, İ.MVL 324/13848/Ca 1271.

88 Leonidas, ‘La Thessalie’.

89 BOA, İ.MVL 324/13848/ 19 Ca 1271; *JdC*, 579, 8 March 1855. The source of inspiration for the creation of a local fund/bank whose capital would be accumulated by the collection of a part of the grain previously given to the *subaşı* must be Ion Ionescu, given his articles in the *JdC* on the need for local banks, see Ion Ionescu, ‘Les éléments’; idem, ‘Les systèmes de crédit’, *JdC*, 318, 29 July 1851; Leonidas, ‘La Thessalie’.

90 BOA, İ.MVL 324/13848/1271 and A.MKT.MVL 71/9/19 C 1271. Signs of the close relationship between Ion Ionescu, Mehmed İsmet Paşa, and Mustafa Reşid Paşa could be found in the columns of *Journal de Constantinople*. Leonidas noted that “İzmet pacha demanda un congé d’un mois à son gouvernement; il vint à Constantinople, il présenta un rapport à S. A. Réchid pacha et donna connaissance à ce haut et éclairé fonctionnaire des mesures et se fit un devoir de les déposer aux pieds de S. M. Impériale, qui y donna sa pleine et entière adhésion” (Leonidas, ‘La Thessalie’).

a) Oppression and transgression (*zulm ve taadiyat*) of *subaşı*s were the primary causes of the underdevelopment of agriculture and the dispersion of peasants (*reaya ... perakende olmakta*) in the province. The peasants who did not see any profit from agricultural production could not stand such oppression any more, abandoned the land, and became dispersed (*perakende*). Because this dispersion negatively affected agricultural production, first, the *subaşı*lık should be abolished and, secondly, the *çiftlik*-holders should provide the dispersed peasants with seed and animals in order to absorb them into agriculture (*ziraatle meşgul ettirildiği*).

b) The Imperial Treasury farmed out *çiftlik*s of the *Emlâk-ı Hümayun* to tax-farmers, who in their turn farmed them out to local (Albanian) sub-contractors. Two levels of sub-contracting were obstructing effective control mechanisms and this acted mercilessly on the population of *çiftlik*s; cultivators (*taife-i zürra*) did not seek ways to achieve economic prosperity; they worked for nothing but their own subsistence and personal interests (*menafi-i zatiyyeleri*). Oppression therefore caused a wider dispersion of peasants in this category of *çiftlik*s than in others; for example, a *çiftlik* consisting of 40 *çift* 40 years ago had been transformed into a *çiftlik* of 20 *çift* because of such a process of dispersion. The main proposal was to appoint *çiftlik* directors to manage and administer such *çiftlik*s, on the one hand, and to invest capital of some 100,000 or 200,000 p. to revive the cultivation, on the other. Sale of these *çiftlik*s to individual entrepreneurs could be another solution to promote an increase in production levels and in the revenues of the tithe (*öşr*) in the longer term.

c) In the district, cultivators were located either in the *çiftlik*s or in the villages; those living in the villages (*kefalochoria*) possessed land and buildings and lived on agriculture like peasants in other regions of the Empire. Since *subaşı*s were also present and engaged in oppression in these villages, these peasants had also been dispersed. After being deprived of agriculture, some of them, being honest (*namusluca*), worked as labourers (*hizmetkar*) and/or herdsmen (*sığırtmacılık*); some of them, being corrupt (*namussuz*), in order to feed their family, fled and engaged in banditry (*haydutluk*). As solutions, first, the *subaşı*lık should also be abolished in those villages and, secondly, the dispersed peasants (*perakende reaya*) should be provided with animals and seed to make them settle on the land; such measures would serve to increase the revenues of the *vergi* and *öşr*, eliminate the grounds for banditry (*haydutluk bilyesi*), and promote the prosperity of the peasants in the district.

d) A lot of land in the district on which agricultural production took place was subject to flooding by rivers in springtime due to the inefficient maintenance of watercourses. The land area for cultivation diminished each year, thus reducing the production levels. Specific measures should be undertaken to overcome this damage, and to increase production levels and the revenues of the Treasury.

e) The measures proposed in the third and fourth articles required a monetary investment amounting to between 500,000 and 1,000,000 p.. Such an investment would bear fruit in the near future in terms of increased agricultural production levels and therefore the revenues of the Treasury. Now that all the other impositions were being abolished, however, it was possible to finance it by collecting from the peasants of the region, for

three years, the *subaşılik* previously given to the *subaşı*; 8,000 cultivators (*çiftçi*) of the district would provide annually 70,000 *Istanbul kile* of grain whose unit price was 20 p.. An agricultural co-operative fund (*kasa*) whose capital would consist of peasants' marketed grain could be established in the central town of the district to lend money to the cultivators at an interest rate of 8%. The income resulting from interest payments could be spent on investments and repairing the damage mentioned above and on the maintenance of roads.<sup>91</sup>

Concerning these articles, the members of the *Meclis-i Vala* argued above all that the setting up of a local commission to negotiate the question of the *subaşılik* could not solve the problem; it would inevitably continue to favour the interests of *subaşı*s because of its composition. They estimated also that the governor's twin proposals – abolition of the *subaşılik* and absorption of dispersed peasants by the *çiftlik*-holders – were appropriate. Secondly, as for the question of sale of the *çiftlik*s of the *Emlâk-ı Hümayun*, the members noted that the issue had already been discussed in the *Meclis-i Vala*, and the proposal had been accepted on condition that they were sold to Muslims and not to non-Muslims, because of the location of the province on the frontier with Greece. Thirdly, the members approved the establishment of an agricultural co-operative fund (*kasa*), even if the interest rate proposed was lower than the official rate, which was 12%. Nevertheless, they asserted that such a fund would need specific regulations prescribing the conditions for the collection of and lending of money.<sup>92</sup> Following this request, Mehmed İsmet Paşa immediately presented regulations for the fund, apparently already prepared with the help of or indeed directly by Ion Ionescu. The *Meclis-i Vala* discussed and approved them in the session of 12 March 1855; the Sultan approved them, with minor changes in the debt payment procedures, as an imperial decree, on 26 March.<sup>93</sup>

Nevertheless, Mehmed İsmet Paşa was appointed as governor to Bursa on 21 March 1855.<sup>94</sup> Mustafa Reşid Paşa, who backed the reform package and its proponents, resigned from his office of Prime Minister on 4 May 1855.<sup>95</sup> The package to be applied in

91 For the details of this last article see also Leonidas, 'La Thessalie'.

92 Another important issue discussed by the *Meclis-i Vala* – but which we will not deal with in this article – concerns the working of *derbents* (mountain pass stations) and the question of banditry and security in the province, see BOA, İ.MVL 324/13848/1271 and A.MKT.MVL 71/9/19 C 1271.

93 For the regulations and the comments of the *Meclis-i Vala* on it see BOA, İ.MVL 328/14022/7 B 1271. In fact, the articles of Ionescu written in 1851 and the article of Leonidas written on 14 February but published on 8 March in the *Journal de Constantinople* gave beforehand items that would be included in the regulations of the fund, such as the establishment of a school of agriculture that would be financed by the fund; compare Article 11 of the regulations and Leonidas, 'La Thessalie'.

94 *JdC*, 584, 26 March 1855, 4. Mehmed İsmet Paşa exchanged the governorship position of Bursa with that of Kastamonu on 19 April 1855 (BOA, A.MKT.MHM 68/10/14 B 1271; A.MKT.MHM 69/5/01 Ş 1271).

95 B. Kodaman and A. T. Alkan, 'Tanzimat'ın Öncüsü Mustafa Reşid Paşa', in H. D. Yıldız (ed.), *150. Yılında Tanzimat* (Ankara 1992), 7.

Tırhala, including the abolition of the *subaşılık*, therefore fell into desuetude.<sup>96</sup> Finally, after an article published on 17 May on the *subaşılık*, Leonidas abruptly stopped his reform-minded pedagogical activity of writing articles in the *Journal de Constantinople* on the dynamics of the sharecropping economy of Tırhala. In spite of the announcement of a fourth and final article on “what is to be done” to increase production and profit levels in Tırhala, the signature of Leonidas did not appear again in the *Journal*.<sup>97</sup>

### *Nouvelles diverses de l'intérieur*

It is possible, however, to follow the evolution of events in Tırhala from the column “*Nouvelles diverses de l'intérieur*” published in the *Journal de Constantinople*, consisting of news from the Ottoman provinces. An anonymous correspondent from Yenişehir-i Fener, who eventually proved to be Ion Ionescu, appeared therein from July 1855 to August 1857, writing succinct paragraphs on daily events. The report of 19 June 1855 showed that nothing had changed in the region: in the *çiftlik* of *Soffo-bachi*, three hours from Yenişehir-i Fener, a *parasoubachi* (*subaşı yamağı*) killed two men and a young girl for the alleged reason that a woman had not carried out a *corvée*.<sup>98</sup> The report of 7 August announced that during the harvests, the *subaşı*s continued as always to impose *par-aspör*, *subaşılık*, and other excessive payments, and that some sharecroppers had gone to Yenişehir-i Fener to present their complaints to the local authorities.<sup>99</sup>

An article entitled “*les plaintes des cultivateurs*” (complaints of cultivators), published on 28 January 1856 – and the first written by Ion Ionescu under his own signature since this article of June 1854 concerning the financial accounts of Reşid Paşa’s *çiftliks*, – and announced that discontent reigned in Tırhala and that the cultivators were complaining: rich people in the villages were oppressing the poor, *subaşı*s were taking their money, landlords taking their foodstuffs, the agents of justice were not listening to them, the *derbend-ağas* were ill-treating them, thieves were slaughtering them, and roads were in a bad condition; and the village mayor, *subaşı*, collector of the tithe (*öşür*), landlord,

96 It is interesting, however, that the idea of establishing a co-operative fund in Tırhala came well before that of Mithad Paşa, who is known as the founding father of provincial funds (*memleket sandıkları*). The funds started to function first in Niş, where Mithad Paşa was governor, then in Tırhala, before being generalised empire-wide after the promulgation of the regulation of provincial funds in 1867, see T. Güran, ‘Zirai Kredi Politikasının Gelişmesi, 1840-1910’, *19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Tarımı* (Istanbul 1998), 150-151. For the establishment of the fund in Tırhala in 1865, see BOA, İ.MVL 536/24064/4 Ra 1282.

97 “... je me permettrai, dans une quatrième et dernière partie, d’énoncer quelques observations générales sur l’agriculture, telle qu’elle doit être faite en Thessalie, et sur la manière qu’on doit employer, dans l’exploitation des terres, pour que ces belles et fertiles terres nourrissent ceux qui la cultivent et enrichissent le propriétaire et le trésor imperial.” Leonidas, ‘La Thessalie (III)’.

98 *JdC*, 613, 5 July 1855.

99 *JdC*, 624, 13 August 1855.



*kadı*, *molla*, gendarme, administration, priest, bishop, religion and nature were represented individually and/or collectively as the cause of their misfortune.<sup>100</sup>

In addition to the information on the continuation of discontent, the news report of 14 January 1856 presented another cause for the cancellation of the reforms envisaged in 1854 and 1855: the resistance of the members of the district council (*meclis*). According to the correspondent, *beys* and *ağas*, landlords (*derebeys* of the past), representing the majority on the district council, imposed what they wanted and obstructed any action by governors to reform the sharecropping regime of the district.<sup>101</sup> It is within such a context that in July 1856 the deputy-governor (*kaymakam*) of Tırhala, Hüsnü Paşa,<sup>102</sup> re-organised the council of the sub-district, mostly because of disturbances caused particularly by “a member who would like to become richer at the expense of others”.<sup>103</sup> A letter transmitted to the British Consulate at Yenişehir-i Fener confirmed the action of the Pasha against the member representing the populations of 25 villages of the district:<sup>104</sup>

The members of the Medjlis of Larissa, whose local influence [was] exercised for corrupt purposes and for their own benefit, affected by the impartial and firm course pursued by Husni [Hüsnü] Pasha, endeavoured to cause petitions to be addressed against him [to] the governor general, the chief purport of which was to complain of the Pasha's irritability of temper and of its leading to arbitrary acts on his part.<sup>105</sup>

The news from Tırhala and Yenişehir-i Fener, from the summer of 1856 to the summer of 1857, exclusively concerned the increase in brigandage in the province and the ac-

100 Ion Ionescu, ‘Les plaintes des cultivateurs’, *JdC*, 671, 28 January 1856. Ion Ionescu reiterated his proposal for credit market reform and added two new ones: the re-organisation of public education, including agricultural education, and that of tribunals. In another article, published on 14 January, he also suggests the abolition of tax-farming in the collection of the tithe (*öşr*), Ion Ionescu, ‘Les dîmes en Turquie’, *JdC*, 667, 14 January 1856.

101 “... les beys et agas de la Province, propriétaires du sol, sont encore ici dans un état bien arriéré : se sont les Déré-beys d'autrefois. Ce sont eux qui composent la majorité dans le medjlis, et ils font trop souvent ce qu'ils veulent...” *JdC*, 670, 24 January 1856.

102 Hüsnü Paşa temporarily occupied the post of governor after the departure of the governor Mehmed Emin Paşa to Yanya in the end of April 1856 (*JdC*, 700, 8 May 1856).

103 *JdC*, 725, 7 August 1856. This version of the event was contested in an anonymous petition sent from Yenişehir-i Fener on behalf of Hüsnü Paşa: “Dernièrement s'est réfugié à Constantinople un autre des Primats chrétiens de Thessalie, membre du Conseil de Tricala, nommé Nicolas Castaniotes, persécuté ... systématiquement par Housni Pacha, parce qu'il a osé quelquefois lui adresser des observations incompatibles avec l'humeur arrogante de celui-ci qui par conséquent a pris la tâche de consommer son anéantissement au moyen de toute espèce d'avanies et de calomnies. Ce Nicolas Castaniotes ... a toujours fait preuve d'un grand zèle à l'application des ordres du gouvernement Impérial... en poursuivant les brigands et les perversisseurs de l'esprit public en toute circonstance par le sacrifice des ses propres intérêts et de sa fortune” (BOA, HR.TO 426/41/14.02.1856). For the attitude of Hüsnü Paşa vis-à-vis council members see also *JdC*, 787, 12 March 1857. For the urgent appeal of the correspondent for a re-organisation of the councils, see *JdC*, 674, 7 February 1856.

104 *JdC*, 722, 24 July 1856.

105 BOA, HR.TO 227/44/26 June 1857.



tions of local governors,<sup>106</sup> especially the *kaymakam*, Hüsni Paşa, who also became the president of the provisional criminal court of Tırhala (*meclis-ı muvakkat*) in November 1856<sup>107</sup> and was awarded the rank of *Rumeli Beylerbeyi* in January 1857.<sup>108</sup> Additionally, as the letter above stated, petitions of local notables criticising Hüsni Paşa, especially for forcing Christian peasants to act against the brigands, flourished in the district between 1856 and 1858.<sup>109</sup>

### *Komisyon-ı Mahsus and Layiha*

In such a tense context of social and economic crisis in the district, in the second half of 1857 Hüsni Paşa established a special commission (*komisyon-ı mahsus*) composed of notables (*vücut*), *çiftlik*-holders (*ashab-ı çiftlikat*), and esteemed members of the agricultural and Christian population (*mu'teberat-ı ahali-ı hristiyan ve zira'a*), in spite of previous doubts on the part of the administration as to the capabilities of such a commission. Its task, to all appearances, was to negotiate the ways in which conditions of oppression and indebtedness that cultivators of *çiftlik*s suffered were to be relieved; its task, in actual fact, was to negotiate the ways in which the post of *subaşı* was to be abolished and the sharecroppers' dispersion was to be prevented, in order to increase production and profit levels in the *çiftlik*s. In such a context, the Pasha nominated as president of the Commission Giritli Cemal Efendi,<sup>110</sup> who in June 1857 replaced Ion Ionescu in the post of the manager of the *çiftlik*s of Reşid Paşa.<sup>111</sup> The Commission, whose composition became biased towards absentee pashas, discussed the social question predominating in the district, in the absence of Ion Ionescu but in the hegemonic environment of his reformist ideas, seeking to promote agricultural productivity and profitability within the sharecropping relations. It therefore negotiated a draft bylaw (*layiha*) of 22 articles

106 *JdC*, 682, 5 March 1856; 705, 26 May 1856; 708, 5 June 1856; 712, 19 June 1856; 717, 7 July 1856; 725, 7 August 1856; 729, 21 August 1856; 750, 3 November 1856; 763, 18 December 1856; 801, 30 April 1857. See also BOA, HR.MKT 170/43/20 R 1273; HR.MKT 174/97/28 Ca 1273; HR.MKT 310/28/23 Ra 1276; MVL 902/67/26 M 1276; İ.DH 457/30369/4 Z 1276.

107 *JdC*, 750, 3 November 1856.

108 BOA, A.DVN 119/100/15 Ca 1273.

109 For an anonymous letter of petition written in French see BOA, HR.TO 426/41/14.02.1856; for the petition of the Metropolitan of Yenişehir-i Fener, see A.DVN 135/51/6 Ra 1275.

110 Replaced in March 1860 by Mehmed Ali Efendi, previously Director of the Imperial Stable (*İstabl-ı Amire*), he was no longer *çiftlik* manager of Reşid Paşa (BOA, A.MKTUM 402/4/8 N 1276). Apart from his Cretan origin, because of which he was called Giritli Cemal Efendi, we do not have any other information on him.

111 V. Slavescu, *Correspondenta Intre Ion Ionescu de la Brad și Ion Ghica, 1846-1874* (Bucharest 1943), 157-158. Ion Ionescu returns to his country, Moldavia, in June 1857, after having official permission from the *kaymakams* of Moldavia and Wallachia, as did other refugees of 1848, to return to the country (*JdC*, 828, 1 August 1857). The last article by Ion Ionescu in the *Journal de Constantinople* was published on 5 February 1857 on the issue of forestry exploitation, and the last news from the correspondent from Yenişehir-i Fener appeared on 16 April 1857. After that date, we do not have any news from Yenişehir-i Fener in the columns of *Journal*.

abolishing the post of *subaşı* in the *çiftlik*s, on the one hand, and fixing relations of production between sharecroppers and *çiftlik*-holders without changing the social differentiation already existing between them, on the other.<sup>112</sup> Tayyib Paşa, the deputy-governor of Tırhala, argued in a report sent to the *Sadaret* that Christians from the *çiftlik*s had petitioned in favour of both the old regime and the new regime: cultivators with lots of animals and mulberry trees asked for the continuation of the old regime, poor ones for the new regime, while some others were divided between old and new.<sup>113</sup> The draft by-law was passed to the *Meclis-i Vala* on 22 December 1857. Because it did not include the signatures of the members of the Commission, the *Meclis-i Vala* considered it null and void in its session of 14 May 1858. Hüsnü Pasha noted that as the commission came close to setting up an arrangement, covert agitation (*el altından vukubulan tahrik*) on the part of some members resulted in the breakdown of the agreement: the work of the Commission was impaired and the Bylaw became stuck at a draft stage in the absence of an *irade-i seniyye* approving it.<sup>114</sup>

In October 1859, Hüsnü Paşa became the governor of Selânik, on which the district of Tırhala depended.<sup>115</sup> He summoned all parties for another meeting of the Commission. In spite of the constant opposition of some members, Hüsnü Paşa's resolute or authoritarian statement on the necessity of reform resulted in decisive negotiations among the members of the commission, and finally, on 10 June 1860, in the signing of a bill. This new bill contained 26 articles; four additional articles qualifying and even revising already existing ones were added to the earlier draft, whose 22 articles did not change.<sup>116</sup> The Pasha, who faced growing local tension and discontent, also made the Bylaw known to the local population, to buy, as he stressed, the contentment of the local population and especially the Christian cultivators.<sup>117</sup>

Starting in November 1860, the *Meclis-i Vala*, as a legislative council, discussed the bill sent by Hüsnü Paşa. In December 1861, Tayyib Paşa, the deputy-governor of Tırhala, sent a report on the bill, criticising regulations friendly to *çiftlik*-holders and asking for some revisions in favour of the oppressed population.<sup>118</sup> Giritli Cemal Efen-

112 BOA, MVL 887/44/30 N 1274.

113 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 13, 22 C 1277. For the importance of cocoon production, in spite of the relative decay of silk industries, in mid nineteenth-century Tırhala, see Petmezas, 'Patterns of Protoindustrialization', 598.

114 BOA, A.MKT.UM 306/3/10 C 1274; İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 9, 27 Ca 1276.

115 Hüsnü Paşa was appointed to the governorship of Yanya in the summer of 1858, that of Crete at the beginning of 1859, and that of Selânik in October 1859 (BOA, İ.DH 408/27015/08 Za 1274; A.MKT.UM 323/69/19 M 1275; A.AMD 90/53/15 C 1275; A.MKT.NZD 292/37/09 Ra 1276).

116 The 22nd article of the earlier bylaw became the 23rd article in the new version, as a new article was inserted after the 21st article (BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 5).

117 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 9, 27 Ca 1276. For the incomplete draft bill see MVL 887/44/30 N 1274. For the collective letters of the Christian population to express their contentment with the measures introduced by Hüsnü Paşa, see BOA, İ.DH 459/30492/7 M 1277.

118 We do not have much information on Tayyib Paşa (Abdülkerim Efendizade Seyyid Tayyib). He apparently had a modest career; he worked as deputy-governor (first as *kaymakam* then as

di also sent a report responding to the critics of Tayyib Paşa and defending the work of the Commission.<sup>119</sup> The *Meclis* forwarded the bill to the Ministry of Finance (*Maliye Nezareti*) as well as asking for it to be checked by the Land Registry Department (*Defter Emaneti*) of the Treasury (*Hazine*) with respect to its accordance with the Land Code of 1858.<sup>120</sup> The *Meclis* decided in February 1862 in favour of the bill's approval on condition of the revision of some articles. Revisions by the *Meclis* referring largely to the critics of Tayyib Paşa were written into the Bill as postscripts to the articles. The final version included both the articles of the Commission as they were and the postscripts of the *Meclis-i Vala*. The 26th article of the Bylaw, however, represented the only exception in the revising and approval process. The *Meclis* resolved in the final step on its exclusion from the bill, in spite of the existence of a postscript attached to it. Finally, on 7 April 1862, the *irade-i seniyye* officially approving the bill was signed by the Sultan, and accordingly the Bylaw, consisting of 25 articles, was not only to be inscribed in the registers of *Divan-ı Hümayun* and the Treasury, but also published in 1,000 Turkish and 3,000 Greek copies in order to be distributed in the district.<sup>121</sup> The final copy of the bill was also signed on 20 May 1862 by 48 *çiftlik*-holders, 43 notables (members of local councils of the *kazas* of Tırhala, Çatalca (Gk. Farsala), Alasona (Gk. Elasona), Ermiye (Gk. Almyros), Katrin (Gk. Katerini), Velestin (Gk. Velestino), Kardice/Ağrafa (Gk. Karditsa/Agrafa), and in the *nahiyes* of Yenice (Gk. Neochori Karditsas), Baba (Gk. Tempi), and Tırnova (Gk. Tyrnavos), including seven *çiftlik*-holders) and 112 *muhtars* (headmen), in addition to 11 members of the Commission (Cemal Efendi, the president; Esseyid Ahmed Abdülhamid, the *müfti* of the region (*belde*); İsmail Şefik Bey, member [in Istanbul]; Mehmed Şefik Bey, member [in Istanbul]; Ali Abdullah, the director of agriculture; Galib Ahmed, member; the director of the *evkaf* [no name mentioned]; İstefanos, *metropolid* of Yenişehir-i Fener; Yorgi Yanul, member; Panayot Merkuri, member; member [no name mentioned]).<sup>122</sup>

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*mutasarrıf*) throughout his life. He was appointed to the deputy-governorship (*kaymakamlık*) of Selânik in 1853, that of Menteşe in 1856, and that of Manisa in 1858. His deputy-governorship (*mutasarrıflık*) at Tırhala started in May 1859 and ended in June 1862. He went then as deputy-governor (*mutasarrıf*) to Urfa, where he served until 1865. The last office in which he served was the deputy-governorship (*mutasarrıflık*) of Cyprus (BOA, HAT 1630/64/29 Z 1255; A.MKT.NZD. 79/74/20 Ş 1269; A.MKT.MVL. 80/64/13 Za 1272; MVL 570/80/12 L 1274; A.MKT.MVL 105/92/12 Ş 1275; A.DVN 140/98/12 L 1275; A.DVN.MHM 34/5/1278; İ.DH 477/32030/26 S 1278; MVL 939/42/29 Ca 1278; İ.MMS 25/1083/22 Z 1278; A.MKT.MHM 263/67/28 Za 1279; İ.MMS 29/1237/28 R 1281).

119 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 12, 5 C 1277; lef 15, 26 Ş 1278. For the report of Tayyib Paşa see İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 3; for that of Cemal Efendi see İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 4.

120 For the report of the Land Registry, see BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 14, 18 Ş 1278.

121 For a copy, which includes articles and postscripts but excludes article 26, to be distributed in booklet form, see BOA, C.ML 32/1452/1278.

122 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 8.

### *Layiha (the Bylaw)*

The first two articles of the Bylaw<sup>123</sup> described the general characteristics of the regional economy and made statutory the customary sharecropping principles without any changes. Like the reports of Leonidas published in 1855, they defined two modalities of sharecropping in the region. In the western part of the district (Hass [Gk. Chassia] and Bayırlar [Gk. Mpairia] region), where cultivation of summer crops was limited, if the major cultivated crops consisted of wheat and barley, seed was to be delivered by the *çiftlik*-holder (*ashab-ı çiftlik/çiftlik mutassarıfı*) and the sharing proportion was half and half between the cultivators (*çiftçiyan*) and the *çiftlik*-holder, after deducting the tithe (*öşr*) from the harvested product; if the major crops consisted of rye, oats, and vetch, it was the cultivators who provided the seed and the sharing proportion was one-third for *çiftlik*-holder and two-thirds for the cultivator after deducting tithe (*öşr*) and 3.5 Istanbul *kile* of vetch for each oxen from the harvested product (Art. 1). In the eastern part of the district, where the cultivation of wheat and barley was limited and summer crops such as corn, sesame, cotton, tobacco, and chickpeas, etc. were dominant, seed was provided by the cultivators and the sharing proportion was one-third for the *çiftlik*-holder and two-thirds for the cultivator (Art. 2).

### *a) Abolition of the Subaşılık and Revision of the Obligations in the Çiftlik*

As to the issue most promoted by representatives of the central government under Mustafa Reşid Paşa in Tırhala in the 1850s, just as it had been in Vidin in the 1840s,<sup>124</sup> the Bylaw decreed the abolition of the post of *subaşı* and the enforced cultivation imposed by them under different titles (*subaşılık*, *ağalık*, *kethüdalık*), including *paraspor* (Art.s 3, 4, 7, 17). *Subaşı*s were to be replaced by *çiftlik* directors who were to be appointed by decision of the *çiftlik*-holder and with the cultivators' agreement; the directors' salary and cost of accommodation were to be shared between the parties (Art. 7). Tayyib Paşa, however, warned the *Meclis-i Vala* that such an imposition on the cultivators would cause the *subaşılık* to continue, they should pay nothing to the directors.<sup>125</sup> Cemal Efendi defended the idea that the directors should work not only for the *çiftlik*-holder but also for the cultivators. They were to accompany the *kocabaşı*s as mediators to hear minor disputes among cultivators and encourage agricultural production as the servants (*hizmet-kâr*) of both the *çiftlik*-holder and the cultivators. Cemal Efendi stated, moreover, that the Commission had concluded with a large majority in favour of the sharing of the di-

123 For the final version of the bill including postscripts of the *Meclis-i Vala* see BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 8. For the Greek translation, see D. K. Tsopotis, 'Το Σουλτανικόν φερμάνιον και ο περιβόητος τουρκικός κανονισμός των γεωργικών εν Θεσσαλία σχέσεων [The Sultanian Decree and the Notorious Turkish Regulation of Agricultural Relations in Thessaly]', *Επετηρίς Φιλολογικού Συλλόγου Παρνασσός*, 10 (1914), 64-93. I would like to thank to Socrates Petmezas for sharing and discussing the Greek version of the bill with me. For a discussion on the bill, see Aytekin, 'Land, Rural Classes and Law', 78-85.

124 H. İnalçık, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*, 95, 99.

125 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 3.

rector's payment.<sup>126</sup> In spite of Tayyib Paşa's warning, the *Meclis-i Vala* only fixed the proportions in the payment of the directors: according to the postscript to the 7th article, the salary and cost of accommodation of the directors were to be met in the proportion of one-third by the cultivator and two-thirds by the *çiftlik*-holder. Additionally, cultivators were never to give gratis eggs, chickens, and cheese either to the *çiftlik* director or to *çiftlik*-holder (Art. 17).

After the abolition of the *subaşılık*, obligations in the life of the *çiftlik* were also revised by the Commission. Payments to the guard (*bekçi*) and, if employed, labourers (*ırgadiye*) were thereafter to be shared, depending on the sharing principles of the locality; fees to pay the smith (*demirci*) and the head elder (*protoyero*) were, however, to be paid by the cultivators because these payments concerned nobody but them (Art. 3); payments to employees in charge of sharing and conservation of the harvest were no longer to be paid by the cultivators but by the *çiftlik*-holder (Art. 4).

Cultivators were no longer to transport gratis fodder obtained from wheat and barley to the house of *çiftlik*-holder located in the town; fodder was to be shared between the parties, depending on the sharing principle of the locality, after the deduction of the necessary amount for feeding the cultivator's plough animals; but cultivators were to transport the *çiftlik*-holder's share to the *çiftlik*'s store (Art. 5). In his report, Tayyib Paşa opposed the sharing of fodder between the parties on the grounds that under the old regime, *çiftlik*-holders did not get any share of the fodder. Nonetheless, under such a regulation, where cultivators needed more fodder for their animals, they had to pay for it. However, such a commerce in fodder existed nowhere in Rumelia.<sup>127</sup> The *Meclis-i Vala* disregarded this point of view and contented itself by recording in the postscript that animals raised for commercial ends besides those to be used in cultivation were to have a pasture fee (*otlakiye*) imposed on them.

On the other hand, the addendum in the revised version of the Bylaw decreed that the cultivator's transporting of construction materials needed for maintenance and renovation of the director's house, granary (*ambar*), etc. was no longer to be enforced and gratis, but should be paid for reasonably (Art. 22); the postscript of the *Meclis-i Vala* stressed, however, that the fee to be paid to the cultivators was to be calculated taking into consideration the wage levels among local craftsmen.

As for the inter-communal obligations, according to the Commission, expenses for community institutions, such as the school, church, and metropolitan, were to be apportioned by the *kocabaşı* and elders of the *çiftlik* village, without being subject to any intervention of the *çiftlik*-holder or the director (Art. 20). In the postscript to this article, however, the *Meclis-i Vala* gave notice that such a decision was suspended until the promulgation of a general regulation applicable all over the Empire on the administration of community expenses.<sup>128</sup>

126 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 4.

127 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 3.

128 Preliminary observations of the *Meclis-i Vala* on the Bylaw highlight, in fact, straightforwardly the impossibility of putting Article 20 into force, see BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 7, 4 Ca 1277.

### b) *Regulation of the Credit Market*

The second issue prioritised by the local governors and Ion Ionescu during the 1850s was the regulation of the credit market. The Bylaw did not, however, put forward a radical solution, as Ion Ionescu and Mehmed İsmet Paşa planned in 1855, through the creation of a local co-operative fund (Art.s 9, 10). The Commission, in search of ways to undermine the *subaşı*'s economic and social power, decided upon nothing other than diverting the credit market from the *subaşı* and the groups associated with them, to the *çiftlik*-holders; this meant the transfer of the cultivators' debt bondage to the *çiftlik*-holders. The Bylaw decreed that if cultivators needed credit for tools and animals to be used in cultivation (*çifte mütealîk hayvanat ve edevat*), it was the *çiftlik*-holder who was to advance what was needful, without charging interest, to be paid off from production (Art.s 9, 10); if cultivators needed money for their personal expenditure and income, they could also borrow from the *çiftlik*-holder, or, with his approval, from another creditor (*gezüşteci*) at the official interest rate (12%), as also underlined by the *Meclis-i Vala* in the postscript of Article 10. In fact, by fixing interest rates, the postscript reflected the warnings of the deputy-governor of Tırhala, Tayyib Paşa, on the eventual continuation of excessive rates of interest and *selem* contracts.<sup>129</sup>

### c) *Restrictions on Animal Husbandry*

The tone of the Bylaw becomes more apparent when one considers the several articles (Art.s 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 16, 24), though contested, on the restriction of animal husbandry in order to make cultivators bound to the land and cultivation. According to the reasoning of the Commission, despite the fact that the desired system was based on the development of agriculture, some cultivators were engaged in commerce (*ticarete düşerek*) by raising sheep and mares (*koyun ve kısrak beslemek*), selling wood and coal, and working as carriers (*odun ve kömürcülük ve kiracılık işlemek*). In order to push them into agriculture (*ziraate teşvik*), the Commission decreed the imposition of a pasture fee (*otlâkiye*) to be paid to the *çiftlik*-holder for animals raised for the market in addition to animals raised for subsistence needs and used in cultivation (*çifte mütealîk olan ve zaruret-i nefis için*): three *guruş* per sheep and goat, 20 *guruş* per horse and mare raised on pastures suitable or unsuitable for agriculture. Otherwise, animals other than those for subsistence and agricultural requirements were to be sold in order to buy oxen and tools for land cultivation (Art. 9). The Commission made a similar statement concerning pig (*canavar*) raising: because for quite some time cultivators had increasingly been raising pigs for personal income, and those pigs were damaging fields, cultivators raising such destructive animals were to keep them in a pigsty and not to let them out; if they damaged fields, the cultivators were to pay double the cost of the damage to the *çiftlik*-holder (Art. 16).

Tayyib Paşa argued, rather ironically, that the imposition of a pasture fee would not free cultivators from oppression. He reminded the *Meclis-i Vala* that from the time of

129 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/İef 13, 22 C 1277; İef 15, 26 Ş 1278.



the conquest, every village used to have a pasture (*mera*) that could not be appropriated by *çiftlik*-holders, as it was its certified land (*tapulu arazi*).<sup>130</sup> Imposition of a pasture fee would not therefore be just, and would result in the oppression of cultivators and cause many complaints on their part. Nonetheless, forcing cultivators to sell their animals would cause their bankruptcy and ruin (*iflas ve perişanîyet*). Last but not least, in an Empire where subjects could possess as many animals as they could, forcing the Christian cultivators of Tırhala to sell their animals would not be a convincing and legitimate measure.<sup>131</sup> Opposing these critics, Cemal Efendi argued openly that the *çiftlik*-holders saw no benefit from the additional mares and herds (*kısrak ve hergele*) that the cultivators raised, and such animal breeding caused nothing but the dispersion of cultivators and the suspension of cultivation. Accordingly, he pointed out that in view of these considerations, the Commission had decided by a great majority (*ittifak-ı ara*) to limit the number of animals to be raised (Art. 9).<sup>132</sup>

In fact, in spite of the criticisms advanced by Tayyib Paşa, the *Meclis-i Vala* approved (in the postscript of Art. 5) that raising animals other than for subsistence and agricultural requirements was to be taxed by a pasture fee, even if it was not going to go to the Treasury but into the pocket of *çiftlik*-holders. It added the reservation was that there was to be no imposition on cows additionally raised. Limits on the number of animals to be raised were set by the commission as follows: two ploughs being equivalent to one *çift*, the cultivator cultivating with one plough was to raise up to 15 sheep, one cow, and one donkey; with two *çifts* up to 30 sheep, two cows, and two donkeys; any other animals besides them were to be subject to a pasture fee (Art. 11). Tayyib Paşa, however, criticised these limits by arguing that the cultivators needed more animals (20 to 25 sheep) for their subsistence requirements (wool, milk, yoghurt, and meat), on the one hand, and that the size of families was not always proportional to the number of *çifts* on the other.<sup>133</sup> The limits were revised following Tayyib Paşa's criticism, which voiced the demands of cultivators; the additional article in the first version of the bill decreed therefore that the cultivators were to raise, without paying a pasture fee, 25 sheep or goats, two cows, and

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130 Süleyman Sudi underlined that the pasture fee (*otlakiyye resmi*) used to be imposed by the *sipahis* on animals pasturing on *miri* forests, summer pastures (*yaylak*) and winter quarters (*kışlak*), given the fact that those animals held for subsistence and pasturing on the pastures (*mera*) of the villages were exempted from taxation. Nevertheless, as the pasture fee became subject to tax-farming, tax-farmers enlarged the burden of its imposition on animals pasturing in pastures (*mera*) depending on villages in such a way that this practice became a custom (*te'amül*); see Süleyman Sudi, *Defter-i Muktesid, Osmanlı Vergi Düzeni*, ed. M. A. Ünal (İsparta 1996), 106. For the regulations on *otlakiyye resmi* or *resm-i otlak* in the Tırhala of the early modern period, see J. C. Alexander, *Toward A History of Post-Byzantine Greece: the Ottoman Kanunnames for the Greek Lands circa 1500-circa 1650* (Athens 1985), 478-479. For disputes on pastures in the Balkans, see McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, 144-145 and B. A. Cvetkova, *Les institutions ottomans en Europe* (Wiesbaden 1978), 90.

131 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 3.

132 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 4.

133 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 3.



one donkey per plough (Art. 24). The *çiftlik*-holder was to provide pasture, a shed (*ahır*) and barn (*samanlık*) for the animals used in cultivation (Art.s 6, 12), but if the cultivators needed more space for their additional animals, they were to rent it from the *çiftlik*-holder (Art. 12).

#### d) *Perakende Peasants*

The Commission's insistence on binding labour to the soil concerned not only the cultivators who wanted to escape from bondage by animal raising, but also dispersed peasants (*perakende*), or 'parasites' as Ion Ionescu called them, who did not engage in agriculture (*çift işlemeyen*) or had abandoned cultivation (*çiftten çıkmış*) but continued to live in the *çiftlik*. Accordingly, they were to be urged into land cultivation: on the one hand, they were to pay 50 *guruş* in rent for their habitation, and, if they had animals, 5 *guruş* pasture fee per sheep and goat, and 25 *guruş* per cow and mare that they raised, on the other (Art. 18). *Perakendes* consisting of old people and widows were to pay 25 *guruş* in rent for their habitation and pasture fee if they raised more than 25 animals (Art.s 18, 25).<sup>134</sup> Although Tayyib Paşa discarded such a measure on the basis of the subsistence requirement of cultivators,<sup>135</sup> the *Meclis* did not record any reservations for the concerned articles.

#### e) *Redefinition of Property and Customary Rights*

The Bylaw also issued decrees on the rights of property in *çiftlik*s by differentiating income sources and their taxation: the *çiftlik*-holder was to pay the taxes (*virgü*) imposed on income-yielding real estate situated in the *çiftlik*, such as the mill (*değirmen*), the inn (*han*), the shop (*dükkan*), and the winter quarters (*kışlak*); cultivators were to pay the taxes on income from additional animals that they raised besides animals for cultivation; the *çiftlik*-holder and the cultivators were to share taxes imposed on income resulting from agricultural produce in accordance with the sharing principle of the locality (Art. 8); the accommodation and rations of tax collectors and the gendarmerie accompanying them were to be provided by the *çiftlik* community, and they were to be included in the tax to be paid (Art. 19). Since it was also the *çiftlik*-holder who was to provide and maintain the houses in which the cultivators lived, and the shed and the barn that they were using, and finally it was he who received the rent for the additional space required by the cultivators (Art. 12), it was clear that the commission certified real property situated in the *çiftlik*s as that of the *çiftlik*-holders. The Bylaw in fact refined the 1858 Land Code's loose claims already favouring *çiftlik*-holders on *çiftlik*-holding (Art. 131) by means of precise and firm claims.<sup>136</sup> Cultivators had thereafter nothing in terms of immovable property but

<sup>134</sup> Because there was no mention of rent payment and pasture fees for old people in the previous version of the Bylaw, in the revised version, Article 25 stated that rates for widows also became applicable for them, BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 8.

<sup>135</sup> BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 3.

<sup>136</sup> On the property rights within the *çiftlik*, Article 131 states: "... beyne'n-nas çiftlik dedikleri

only, if they were able, movable property: animals.<sup>137</sup> In the context of the Parga affair in 1875, Cevdet Paşa noted that the application of the Land Code in its entirety was frankly impossible in Rumelia since it confirmed the *çiftlik*-holders' interests in the *çiftlik*s at the expense of the cultivators.<sup>138</sup> However, in Tırhala, contrary to the Pasha's worries, the Bylaw produced by the Commission went further than the Land Code without encountering any serious reaction from the local population.

The attestation of property rights over land and buildings went together with the conservation of some of the cultivators' customary rights based on their subsistence needs, but with certain reservations as to the soul of the Bylaw: the *çiftlik*-holder was to provide pasture for the cultivators, but only for animals for cultivation (Art. 6); although the cultivators were to cut and collect wood from the forest (*orman*) and scrub (*pırnarlık*) in the *çiftlik*, for their subsistence needs, excepting trees suitable for timber, any additional cutting for commercial purposes without the *çiftlik*-holder's permission was not allowed (Art. 13). The *çiftlik*-holder was to let gardens (*bahçe*) of one or two *dönüm* in which each cultivator household cultivated vineyards and/or orchards, but any additional land for vineyards and orchards was not allowed without the permission of the *çiftlik*-holder and a signed contract with him (Art. 14); cultivators were to cultivate mulberry trees in front of their houses and within their vineyards only if they did not suspend their agricultural obligations (*emr-i ziraat*); any additional mulberry trees situated in the *çiftlik* were to be at the disposal of the *çiftlik*-holder (Art. 15); cultivators were to raise pigs only in enclosed places and without letting them damage the fields of the *çiftlik* (Art. 16). To sum up, in contrast with the Land Code of 1858, which did not claim to be precise as to the relationship between the *çiftlik*-holders and cultivators, the Bylaw did not shrink from imposing mutual obligations, despite its tendency to limit cultivators' customary rights in favour of those of *çiftlik*-holders.<sup>139</sup>

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*bir takım araziyi ziraat ve hırsat zımında inşa ve tedarik olunmuş olan ebniye ve hayvanat ve tohum ve edevat-ı çift ve müstemilat-ı saire ile ol araziden ibaretdir. Bu makule çiftlikat ahabından biri, asla varisi ve hakk-ı tapu ahabından kimsesi olmadığı halde vefat ederse çiftliği canib-i miriden bi'l-müzayede talibine verilir..."* (Akgündüz, *Özel Hukuk*, 917). For a discussion of the articles on *çiftlik*s (Arts 129, 130, 131) see Barkan, 'Türk Toprak Hukuku', 367-371.

137 For a discussion on the differentiation between movable and immovable property in the case of the *çiftlik*s of Parga and of the problems of the *mülk* category of land, see İslamoğlu, 'Property as a Contested Domain', 195-203.

138 Cevdet Paşa argued that in such a case "*Rumeli alt-üst olur*" (Rumelia would be upside down), Cevdet Paşa, *Tezahir* 40, 143. For a discussion of the Pasha's argument see İslamoğlu, 'Property as a Contested Domain', 204-208.

139 For the silence of the Code see Barkan, 'Türk Toprak Hukuku', 369 and M. Kenanoğlu, '1858 Arazi Kanunnamesi ve Uygulanması', *Türk Hukuk Tarihi Araştırmaları*, 1 (2006), 124-125, 136. In fact it was the *Mecelle*, as a code of obligations, that devoted particular attention to sharecropping relations, See Articles 1431-1440 of the *Mecelle* on sharecropping (*muzara'a*), Akgündüz, *İslam ve Osmanlı Hukuku*, 967-968.

### f) *Bondage to the Soil*

By direct statements on bondage to the soil, the Commission further reinforced the *çiftlik*-holders' property rights and their determination to bind cultivators to the soil and to agriculture. First, following Ionescu's and Mehmed İsmet Paşa's observations, Article 21 of the Bylaw discussed the conditions in which cultivators cut back cultivation: in the Hass and Bayırlar region and in some parts of the plain cultivators used to cultivate 10 to 12 *kara kile* of wheat seed, 3 *kara kile* of barley seed, and a few seeds of other cereals; some of them, though they did not leave the land fallow, did not cultivate all of the seed and caused loss to the *çiftlik*-holder by cultivating less than the average production level. In such cases, the *çiftlik*-holder was to bring the issue to the Council of Agriculture (*meclis-i ziraat*) to obtain a judgment (*muhakeme*) to indemnify lawfully (*mücazetten*) half of *çiftlik*-holder's share in the first year. In the event of recurrence, the cultivator was to indemnify the *çiftlik*-holder in proportion to the damage he had caused. The same procedure was to be applied in favour of the cultivators in the event of damage caused by the *çiftlik*-holder. On the other hand, the *çiftlik*-holder and the director were to warn and advise a cultivator who harmed agriculture; if the cultivator did not accept the accusations, he was to address himself to the local government (*hükümet*), from which the case was to be sent to the local Council of Agriculture for judgment. If the cultivator was at fault, the local government was, on the first occurrence, to warn him, and on the second occurrence, to punish him; on the third occurrence, they were to expel him from cultivation to the class of *perakende* (*çiften ihraç ile perakende sınıfına nakl*). The bondage of cultivators to the soil became therefore possible by the collaboration of *çiftlik*-holders with the local administrative authority. The Bylaw provided, moreover, for the election of four additional representatives, two from among the *çiftlik*-holders and two from among the cultivators to the local Council of Agriculture, which was already composed of *çiftlik*-holders and people "competent" in agriculture (Art. 23, Art. 22 in the previous version of the Bylaw).<sup>140</sup> Nonetheless, according to Article 21, the Council of Agriculture, by acquiring judiciary power over rural disputes, served in this context as a manorial court in favour

140 In the 1850s, there were no local councils of agriculture (*meclis-i ziraat*) functioning in the Empire. The Council of Agriculture was created in 1843 as a higher council depending upon the central administration. In 1844, in order to create an institutional infrastructure for agricultural development, it decided to nominate directors of agriculture to be elected from local notables in each sub-district (*kaza*) and, in 1845, to create Councils of Public Works (*imar meclisleri*) consisting of local notables of the provinces; T. Güran, 'Zirai Politika ve Ziraatte Gelişmeler 1839-1876', 19. *Yüzyılda Osmanlı Tarımı* (İstanbul 1998), 45-46. Although Councils of Public Works did not continue to function in the 1850s, it was very probable that the institutional context of the vanished Councils of Public Works and still functioning Directors of Agriculture gave birth in Tırhala to a Council of Agriculture consisting of *çiftlik*-holders and local notables and functioning not only as an advisory and executive but also as a 'judicial' council following local customary regulations. The local Councils of Agriculture that were to discuss ways and conditions of agricultural development were to be created nearly 20 years later, in 1876. Birinci Köy ve Ziraat Kalkınma Kongresi, *Türk Ziraat Tarihine Bir Bakış* (İstanbul 1938), 200.

of the *çiftlik*-holders' interests. The Bylaw therefore legitimised the *çiftlik*-holders' appropriation of not only local administrative but also local judicial authority.

In his report, however, Tayyib Paşa argued that even if such policing (*zabıta*) was appropriate for agricultural development, it would cause the imposition of additional shares from uncultivated fields and therefore lead to great tyranny (*mezalim*) for the cultivators. The application of such a measure had no precedent in the Empire, and nor was it possible to apply such a punishment (*mücazat*) in a region as sensitive and important (*neza- ket ve ehemmiyet*) as Tırhala.<sup>141</sup> But, according to Cemal Efendi, these measures would lead both cultivators and *çiftlik*-holders to rationalise cultivation. Cultivators would leave fields fallow and sow seed in time; *çiftlik*-holders would give seed and change oxen in time and keep fields productive. He argued that the commission had voted for the article by a large majority in order to 'whip' the cultivators' efforts (*gayretlerine bir kamçı ol- mak için*).<sup>142</sup> The postscript of the *Meclis-i Vala* referring to the report sent by the Land Registry Department did not change the essence of Article 21, because the Land Code of 1858 already provided that those who possessed land were not to keep it uncultivated for three years in succession.<sup>143</sup> It decreed therefore that if the cultivators did not cultivate the land, they were to indemnify, on a first occurrence, half of the *çiftlik*-holder's share. If in the second year the same thing occurred, the cultivators were to indemnify the *çiftlik*-holder's entire share. If in the third year, the cultivators continued not to cultivate it, the *çiftlik*-holder had the right to expel them from the *çiftlik*. If it was the *çiftlik*-holder who caused an interruption in the cultivation of the land, he was to give the cultivators in the first year half of their share; in the second year their entire share; and in the third year double their share. The *çiftlik*-holder did not have the power to ask the cultivators for any produce in years of drought and natural disaster.

In addition to Article 21, which already existed, the last addendum to the first version of the Bylaw made clearer the condition of bondage to the soil in Tırhala (Art. 26): a cultivator who was born and grew up in a *çiftlik*, who was of native ancestry, could not be expelled by the *çiftlik*-holder unless he was at fault; on the other hand, according to the settlement conditions and regulations (*iskan şurut ve nizamı*), he/she could never leave the country (*terk-i vatan*). A cultivator who was brought from another locality by the *çiftlik*-holder or who entered the *çiftlik* by him/herself could be expelled by the *çiftlik*-holder and/or was allowed to leave the *çiftlik* him/herself.<sup>144</sup> The postscript inserted by the

141 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 3.

142 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 4.

143 See Articles 9, 68-76, 84, 85, and 103 of the Land Code of 1858 (Akgündüz, *Özel Hukuk*, 896, 907-909, 912).

144 "Bir çiftlikde doğmuş ve büyümiş olan yani cedden yerlisinden bulunanlar balada beyan olunduğu vechle nihayet-i derecede müttehim olmadıkça sahib-i çiftlik tarafından tard olunmak caiz olamayacağı misillü bu makuleler kendileri dahi iskan şurut ve nizamı iktizasınca hiç bir vakitte terk-i vatan edemeyecek ise de bu kabilden olmayub da ya sahib-i alaka marifetiyle başka bir mehalden getirilmiş veyahud kendüleri gelib bir mahalde çiftçiliğe girmiş ise bunlar hakkında gerek sahib-i alaka canibinden çıkarılmak ve gerek kendüleri istedikleri zamanda gidebilmek maddeleri karin-i mesag olması" (BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 8).

*Meclis-i Vala* did not really challenge the Commission's statement. Accordingly, even if it was appropriate on the basis of the settlement condition (*iskân şartı*) that natives could not leave the *çiftlik* they depended on, in the event of their being oppressed by the *çiftlik*-holder, such a condition would not be just and right. On the other hand, if they left the *çiftlik*, the cultivation would be abandoned in such a way that it would damage the *çiftlik*'s agriculture; therefore the case of oppression had to be examined in order to prevent desertion by cultivators and a decision would be reached accordingly. Although Article 26 was eventually excluded from the final version of the Bylaw by the *irade* decreeing it, it clearly reflected the heavy atmosphere prevailing in the *çiftlik*s of Tırhala in the mid nineteenth century.<sup>145</sup>

### Conclusion

In the light of an examination of the *Meclis-i Vala*, some clauses (especially the principles of sharing the annual produce between parties) of the Bylaw fell within the field of the 1847 regulation (*nizam*) of the *çiftlik*s of Yanya, some clauses concerned the historically established local system and the relations (of production), and some concerned disputes and contention arising between the *çiftlik*-holders (*ashab-ı alaka*) and the cultivators (*çiftçiler*).<sup>146</sup> Its regulations therefore were consistent with the local customs and conditions of the sharecropping economy of the district. According to Cemal Efendi, in the last analysis (*el-hasıl*), after the Bylaw came into force, the cultivators were no longer to work for *corvées* (*angarya*) or be subject to forced cultivation (such as *subaşılık*, *ağalık*, *kethüdalık*, *paraspori*, etc.), or pay all the burden of taxation. According to the new principles in the administration of *çiftlik*s, the central government was to know the relations of *çiftlik*-holders and cultivators as both of them knew their obligations to each other.<sup>147</sup> However, according to Tayyib Paşa, it was impossible to generalise the measures introduced by the Bylaw and apply them in the other regions of the Empire; it was imperfect and brought no drastic change to the established order of Tırhala, which was so prejudicial to cultivators. It was therefore necessary to amend articles by the re-establishment of a new commission composed of both *çiftlik*-holders and cultivators.<sup>148</sup>

The Bylaw established, in fact, the power of absentee *çiftlik*-holders over local *çiftlik*-holders, on the one hand, and the power of *çiftlik*-holders (whether absentee or lo-

145 For desertion from *çiftlik*s in the Balkans see also Cvijić, *La péninsule balkanique*, 136.

146 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 7, 4 Ca 1277; lef 15, 26 Ş 1278. The *Meclis* reasoned from the point of view not only of the regulation of Yanya (1848) (BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 6), but also, without any direct references, that of Bosna (İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 2), which was concluded in the *Meclis-i Ali-i Tanzimat* the year before, in 1859 (İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 7, 4 Ca 1277; lef 11, 4 C 1277). Although included in the file of the *irade* of the *Meclis-i Vala* in the Ottoman archives was the regulation of Yanya, which was not known in the secondary literature, as well as that of Bosna, the best known *çiftlik* regulations in the Balkans, there was no mention of other regulations on *çiftlik*s and sharecropping.

147 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 4.

148 BOA, İ.MVL 463/20920/lef 3, no date.

cal) over sharecroppers, on the other. The abolition of the *subaşılik* and the related impositions based on it were to serve to undermine the institutional power-base of the local *çiftlik*-holders, because they had close relations with the *subaşı*s, who were themselves mostly on the way to becoming *çiftlik*-holders. The appointment of *çiftlik* directors as direct representatives reflected the firm decision of absentee holders to appropriate the local power structure. Nonetheless, the clauses of the Bylaw aimed at increasing the control of *çiftlik*-holders over credit markets by directing credit sources of cultivators from local power networks to *çiftlik*-holders in general, absentee holders in particular. Indeed, the high-finance circles of Galata, who pursued their own war in the credit markets, were also backing up absentee holders in undermining the power base of local landholding interests.<sup>149</sup>

In his report to Reşid Paşa, Ion Ionescu in fact underlined the strong tensions and harsh conflicts between absentee and local power groups:

The lawsuit with adventurers of Fteri who seized your [Reşid Paşa's] property in Maathia has concluded with the restitution of the property to its real proprietor... Moreover, Hacı Hüseyin Pasha [a local *çiftlik*-holder who was the minister of mountain-pass stations (*derbend nazırı*) in Tırhala<sup>150</sup>] who caused major damage to your forests and disregarded compensation for this has been ordered to pay 169,151 p., amounting to only half of the cost of the damage.<sup>151</sup>

In this context of fierce competition, the Bylaw strengthened the loose connection between absentee pashas and the district.

In spite of their competition, the motivation of the *çiftlik*-holders, both absentee and local, to achieve an increase in agricultural production and profitability, if not outright stability, led them to collaborate in order to increase labour control in the district. The historical dynamics of an inverse and exclusive relationship between settled agricultural activity asymptotic to bondage to the soil and nomadic animal husbandry asymptotic to both mobility and brigandage shaped the economic and social life in the district. Cultiva-

149 Ion Ionescu mentioned the Abbot brothers of Thessaloniki and Jacques Alléon as financial intermediaries of Reşid Paşa, see Ion Ionescu, 'Compte-rendu'; Slavescu, *Correspondenta*, 138-139. Nonetheless, Mkrdich Cezayirliyan, one of the most important financiers of the 1850s, was not only creditor but also a *protégé* of Reşid Paşa, see M. E. Kabadayı, 'The Sharp Rise and the Sudden Fall of an Ottoman Entrepreneur: The Case of Mkrdich Cezayirliyan', in S. Faroqi and G. Veinstein (eds), *Merchants in the Ottoman Empire* (Leuven 2008), 286-287, 289, 296.

150 BOA, A.MKT.NZD 197/66/15 S 1273; MVL 150/82/17 C 1270.

151 "Parmi les résultats obtenus cette année, je puis compter l'étude des forêts et celle des délimitations de vos propriétés envahies par les voisins. On a terminé le procès avec les aventuriers de Fteri qui s'étaient emparés de votre propriété de Maathia que la justice a enfin restitué à son véritable propriétaire. Je remarque cependant des charlatans qui s'interposent entre ces aventuriers et la justice, et promettent de casser les décisions de l'autorité supérieure de l'Empire pour vous dépouiller de ce qui vous appartient et le partager entr'eux. On a instruit aussi le procès de Hadji Hussein pacha qui a causé de grands dommages à vos forêts et a négligé les réparations : aussi a-t-il été condamné à vous payer 169151 piastres, ce qui n'est cependant que la moitié des pertes qu'il vous a causées.", Ion Ionescu, 'Compte-rendu'.



tors were living through a dilemma of being either cultivators bound to the soil or *perakendes* (dispersed), wandering in search of subsistence. İnalçık argued that the high costs of maintaining agriculture and labour shortage led *çiftlik*-holders to convert their farms into cattle ranches or dairy farms supplying oxen for the regional economy.<sup>152</sup> Such a transitional development did not, however, take place in Tırhala, where these two activities competed with and excluded each other. Even before İon İonescu, Derviş Paşa, inspector of the *çiftlik*s of the *Emlâk-ı Hümayun*, reported in 1850 on the strong tendency of cultivators to abandon cultivation in favour of animal raising and herding, woodcutting and working as labourers (*aylakçı*).<sup>153</sup> In this context, it is interesting also to observe that on the initiative of İon İonescu, the Ottoman government, alias the Prime Minister, Reşid Paşa, decided in 1857 to settle Polish immigrants from the Crimean War as sharecropping ‘colons’ in the *çiftlik*s of Reşid Paşa in Tırhala.<sup>154</sup>

The regulation of the Bylaw on sharecropping labour was, then, two-fold. At first, the *çiftlik*-holders introduced indirect measures to bind the cultivators to the soil and cultivation, such as the imposition of rents on the use of *çiftlik* properties, the imposition of a pasture fee, and a limitation on animals to be raised in the *çiftlik*. The decision of the Commission to let *çiftlik*-holders impose on their own account pasture fees on cultivators and its approval by the central government threw light, in fact, on the driving force of the Bylaw: the *çiftlik*-holders’ exclusive material interest at the expense of the cultivators’ customary subsistence rights. Such official support for landed interests was not, however, sporadic in the nineteenth-century Balkans. The right of imposition of a pasture fee (*otlâkiye ve kışlak resmi*), in addition to limitations imposed on cultivators as to animal raising, was given once again to the *çiftlik*-holders in Louros, a sub-district of the province of Yanya, in 1902.<sup>155</sup>

The measures were also reinforced by the allotment of a certain judiciary power to the *çiftlik*-holders by the central government. Despite its contingent character during the *Tanzimat* period, when centralisation and bureaucratisation of the judiciary power im-

152 İnalçık, ‘The Emergence of Big Farms’, 22, 27-28.

153 BOA, C.ML 2189/1266. To overcome labour shortage in the *çiftlik*s, the Pasha proposed as a solution transporting and settlement (*nakil ve iskân*) of cultivators. Indeed, such a policy was followed by the Ottoman government in 1844 to supply agricultural labour on the plains of Dobrudja, see M. E. Kabadayı, ‘Mobility and Resistance in the Light of the Ottoman Settlement Policies in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century: the Transfer of Agricultural Labourers from Syria to Dobrudja’, M. Afifi *et alii* (eds), *Sociétés rurales ottomans/Ottoman Rural Societies* (Cairo 2005).

154 The settlement resulted in both a general regulation on the colonisation of uncultivated lands in the Ottoman Empire and a specific regulation on colonisation in the *çiftlik*s of Reşid Paşa, see BOA, İ.MMS 8/322/16 S 1273; *JdC*, 786, 9 March 1857; *JdC*, 794, 6 April 1857; *JdC*, 797, 16 April 1857. According to Roderic Davison, epidemics and emigration destroyed in two years the community settled in the *çiftlik*s, see R. H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876* (Princeton, N.J. 1963), 76.

155 Barkan, ‘Türk Toprak Hukuku’, 371 fn. 50. For the text that Barkan is referring see S. Karakoç, *Tahşiyeli Kavanin I. Cilt* (Istanbul 1925), 304.



posed itself on the administrative transformation,<sup>156</sup> the power to adjudicate cases of cultivators who abstained from cultivation in the local council of agriculture consisting of predominantly of *çiftlik*-holders increased nothing but the dominance of landed interests over those of cultivators. If, following Mehmed İsmet Paşa, *subaşı*s constituted a government within government (*hükümet içinde hükümet*), after the *çiftlik*-holder obtained the right of imposition and adjudication over cultivators from the central government, governments no longer differed in Tırhala; there was one amalgamated government located in the body of the *çiftlik*-holders, whether absentee or local.

Secondly, the regulation of the Bylaw on sharecropping labour in Tırhala brought about direct measures to bind cultivators to the soil. In order to create the conditions for stability in land cultivation, the *çiftlik*-holders gained support for their action from the Land Code of 1858. More particularly, the articles of the Code on dispossession in the case of lands that remained uncultivated for three consecutive years without any legitimate reason, were adopted into the Bylaw. But the adoption brought about additional impositions on cultivators who did not cultivate the land, such as progressive indemnities for each year of interruption in cultivation. Such instrumental adoption was to serve the *çiftlik*-holders as another particular judicial tool in binding sharecroppers to the soil and cultivation. Insisting on the central administration's tendency to generalise particular categories of land disposal, İslamoğlu proposed that local commissions should formulate different claims on land in the light of the categories of the Land Code.<sup>157</sup> The work of the commission in Tırhala confirmed such an argument, but as particular categories took over from general ones, it further proposed the instrumental use of the Code in favour of the *çiftlik*-holders' interests.<sup>158</sup>

156 S. Bingöl, *Tanzimat Devrinde Osmanlı'da Yargı Reformu, Nizamiyye Mahkemeleri'nin Kuruluşu ve İşleyişi 1840-1876* (Eskişehir 2004); F. Demirel, *Adliye Nezareti: Kuruluşu ve Faaliyetleri (1876-1914)* (İstanbul 2008); A. Rubin, *Ottoman Nizamiye Courts: Law and Modernity* (New York 2011).

157 "Numerous *komisyons* were established on the local level to mediate the different claims on land as these began to be formulated in the light of the categories of the new Code", İslamoğlu, 'Words that Rule', 252.

158 Indeed, the fact that the articles of the Land Code that the Bylaw refers to contain more elements of the old land regime than the new land regime facilitates such a use. Provincial *kanunnames* from the fifteenth century and the *kanunname-i cedid* from the seventeenth century onwards had already set conditions of land dispossession in cases of non-cultivation and desertion reflected in the Land Code of 1858. See Barkan, 'Tımar', 834-836; idem, 'Türk Toprak Hukuku', 300-301; İnalçık, 'Land Problems', 222; idem, 'Islamization of Ottoman Laws on Land and Land Tax', *Essays in Ottoman History* (İstanbul 1998), 158-159; idem, *The Ottoman Empire*, 111-113; Alexander, *Toward a History of Post-Byzantine Greece*, 438-441; and A. Akgündüz, *İslam ve Osmanlı Hukuku Külliyyatı: Kamu Hukuku (Anayasa - İdare - Ceza - Usul - Vergi - Devletler Umumi)*, Vol. I (İstanbul 2011), 786-787. This case reveals, on the other hand, the contested character of the Land Code, codified in such a way as to establish an individual property regime. For an excellent discussion of the contested character of the Code see İslamoğlu, 'Property as a Contested Domain'.

The final coup of the bill, despite its exclusion from the final version, was Article 26, which directly decreed bondage to the soil in Tırhala. The commission prepared this article in an environment where articles discussing and supporting the emancipation of serfs in Russia or in Wallachia, in addition to those promoting the interests of absentee *çiftlik*-holders in Tırhala, were being published in the *Journal de Constantinople*.<sup>159</sup> On the other hand, Ahmed Sermed Paşa, an absentee *çiftlik*-holder, as a member of the Council of Fiscal Accounts (*Meclis-i Muhasebe-i Maliye*) in the Ottoman capital, in 1857 requested the repatriation of some sharecroppers who had left his *çiftlik*s in Vardar-ı Kebir and Sagir, near Selânik, for their immemorial shelters (*meva-ı kadimelerine iadeleri*). Meanwhile, the settlement of Polish emigrants in Reşid Paşa's *çiftlik* was concluded, and the *Meclis-i Vala* (with the approval of the *Meclis-i Muhasabe-i Maliye*) decided, in conformity with the request, on repatriation. The basis of the decision was the old regulation on settlement (*iskân hakkında şerait-i atike*) which determined the village in which anyone had resided (*ikamet eylediği*) for at least ten years to be his native village and decreed the repatriation of deserters (*perakende*) to their native villages within ten years by force of the gendarmerie (*zabtiye*).<sup>160</sup>

The *çiftlik*-holders of another province, those of Edirne, also sent petitions in 1857 concerning the flight of sharecroppers (*yarıcı*) and labourers (*hizmetkâr*) from their *çiftlik*s to other *çiftlik*s. Changing its tone of interpretation, the *Meclis-i Vala* reported that they asked for the bondage of their immemorial cultivators (*kadim reaya*) to the soil of

159 Nestor Tréter de Lubomir, 'Les serfs et les seigneurs en Russie I', *JdC*, 682, 5 March 1856; idem, 'Les serfs et les seigneurs en Russie II', *JdC*, 685, 17 March 1856; 'Etat de la propriété dans les Principautés valaques I', *JdC*, 692, 10 Avril 1856; 'Etat de la propriété dans les Principautés valaques II', *JdC*, 693, 14 Avril 1856.

160 BOA, A.MKT.MVL 87/81/7 L 1273. These conditions are found in the *kanunnames* of the early modern period under the title of 'migration' (*celay-ı or cılay-ı vatan*), see Barkan, *XV ve XVIncı Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Ziraî Ekonominin Hukukî ve Malî Esasları*, Vol. 1: *Kanunlar* (Istanbul 1943), 60, 72, 77, 317, 331; McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, 51-54; Alexander, *Toward a History of Post-Byzantine Greece*, 133, 139-140, 153, 156, 440-441; Akgündüz, *Kamu Hukuku*, 806-807. For migration and repatriation of peasants in the earlier centuries, see Y. Halaçoğlu, *XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İskan Siyaseti ve Aşiretlerin Yerleştirilmesi* (Ankara 1991), 77-94; A. Matkovski, 'La résistance des paysans macédoniens contre l'attachement à la glèbe pendant la domination ottomane', *Actes du premier congrès international des études balkaniques et sud-est européennes*, Sofia, 26 août-1 septembre 1966, tome III, *histoire (Ve-XVe ss.; XVIe-XVIIe ss.)* (Sofia, 1969), 703-708; B. Cvetkova, 'Mouvements antiféodaux dans les terres bulgares sous domination ottomane du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle', *Etudes historiques*, 2 (A l'occasion du XIIe Congrès international des sciences historiques, Vienne, août 1965) (Sofia 1965), 152-154; Moutafchieva, *Agrarian Relations*, 142-152; McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe*, 132-134, 139-141, 145-146, 169; Demetriades, 'Problems of Land-Ownning', 54; Özkaya, 'Göç'. For the question of *celay-ı vatan* in the early modern period, I have benefited greatly from F. G. Karagöz, '17. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Devleti'nde Tarımsal Üretimin Hukukî Olarak Korunması', in F. Gedikli (ed.), *1. Türk Hukuk Tarihi Kongresi Bildirileri (21-22 December 2012, İstanbul Üniversitesi)* (İstanbul, 2014).

*çiftlik*s in order to employ them as if they were their slaves (*esirleri gibi istihdam*).<sup>161</sup> The motive of sharecroppers and labourers was, however, to free themselves (relative-ly) from oppression and *corvées*. The *Meclis-i Vala* decided, in contrast with the case above, that the sharecroppers were free to leave the *çiftlik*s, but on condition that they did not leave the sub-district (*kaza*) where they were living and that the new *çiftlik*-holder registered them with the local fiscal office (*mal müdürlüğü*). The administrative point was based, however, on the integrity of fiscal units and stability in agricultural production on the district level. The *Meclis-i Vala* also sent this decision to the provinces of Vidin, Yanya, Edirne, Selânik, Silistre, Rumeli, and to the district of Tırhala where *çiftlik* and sharecropping agriculture dominated the regional economy.<sup>162</sup> In 1860, during the preparation of the Bylaw, the central government decided in the same manner on a case of flight of a sharecropper from the account of one *çiftlik*-holder to another, but within the same (co-operated) *çiftlik* situated in Tırhala, on the freedom of desertion, though limited.<sup>163</sup>

While the *Meclis-i Vala* approved the request of Ahmed Sermed Paşa on repatriation in 1857, it did not approve others in the subsequent three years. What made the difference in the decisions of the *Meclis-i Vala* in such a short span of time? The difference depended, in fact, on the degree of interference of absentee pashas holding high offices in the central administration or government in the cases of repatriation: all the cases that were not approved were related to local *çiftlik*-holders.<sup>164</sup> Derviş Paşa, inspector of the *çiftlik*s of the *Emlâk-ı Hümayun*, reported in 1850 that while some *çiftlik*s did not have enough labour for cultivation, some had more than enough.<sup>165</sup> The competition in acquiring and binding a labour force was evident in such a context. Although absentee and local *çiftlik*-holders collaborated, on the theoretical level, in the preparation of the Tırhala bill, they competed ferociously, on the practical level, in the labour market. In the event of a confrontation between an absentee and a local holder over the bondage of the labour force to the soil, absentee holders were in a more advantageous position, thanks to their political leverage in the Ottoman capital.

161 The formula “as if they are their slaves” (*esirleri gibi*) is used frequently in the Balkans, see İnalçık, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*, 10, 98; Güran and Uzun, ‘Bosna-Hersek’te’, 882.

162 BOA, A.MKT.UM 290/24/29 Z 1273; A.MKT.UM 290/45/29 Z 1273. For a discussion of these documents in the Bosnian context, see Güran and Uzun, ‘Bosna-Hersek’te’, 881. Such an administrative and fiscal rationale has a long and conflictual history in the pre-*Tanzimat* period; for the relationship between *çiftlik*s and the taxation system in the eighteenth century, see B. McGowan, ‘The Study of Land and Agriculture in the Ottoman Provinces Within the Context of An Expanding World Economy in the 17th and 18th Centuries’, *IJTS* 2-1 (1981), 60-62 and Cvetkova, ‘Problems’, 181.

163 BOA, A.MKT.UM 393/43/7 B 1276.

164 It is also important to note that Mustafa Reşid Paşa was the Prime Minister heading the government in May 1857 when the *Meclis-i Vala* approved Ahmed Sermed Paşa’s request and was not in office in August 1857, when the Council rejected other requests (Kodaman and Alkan, ‘Tanzimat’ın Öncüsü’, 7).

165 BOA, C.ML 2189/1266.

However, whether the *Meclis-i Vala* approved repatriation or not, local *çiftlik*-holders who wanted to impose bondage to the soil on their sharecroppers or labourers made use of local councils. Local councils composed of local landholders adjudicated in cases of flight on the repatriation of deserters to the *çiftlik*s to which they were bound. The council of the sub-district of Tikveş decided in this way on the flight of eight sharecropper families (*yarıcı*) from a *çiftlik* in Tikveş in the district of Manastır (mod. Bitola) to another *çiftlik* in the *nahiye* of Vardar-ı Kebir in the sub-district of Selânik. The *Meclis-i Vala* did not approve the decision of the local council, though it referred to Article 26 of the Tırhala bill. Because the sharecropper families had already been repatriated to Tikveş following the decision of the local council, in December 1861, a few months before the approval of the Bylaw, the *Meclis* asked only for an investigation on the *çiftlik*-holder's mistreatment of the sharecroppers.<sup>166</sup> Such a case of repatriation by the decision of a local council in fact concealed the competition going on among local *çiftlik*-holders. The *çiftlik*-holder of Vardar-ı Kebir, in search for a labour force, took families of deserters who were searching for refuge by means of simply taking over their debts to the *çiftlik*-holder of Tikveş. As the families were repatriated to Tikveş, the case was reported by the *çiftlik*-holder of Vardar-ı Kebir to the central government: he petitioned for their settlement in his *çiftlik*.<sup>167</sup> To sum up, the cultivators' bondage to the soil was essential for the *çiftlik*-holder, whether absentee or local. But the quest for bound labour meant competition between absentee and local *çiftlik*-holders on the first level, and among local *çiftlik*-holders on the second. In such a context, the working of local councils and commissions, as well as that of the *Meclis-i Vala*, depended on this differentiated competition between *çiftlik*-holders.

Barkan, while denying the existence of serfdom in the Ottoman Empire, listed restrictions imposed on cultivators in the early modern period: cultivation of the soil was an obligation hereditary from father to son; any peasant registered in the fiscal registers as the possessor of a *çift* had no right to desert his land to migrate to cities or another *timar*. The *timar*-holder had the right to repatriate fugitive cultivators in a ten-year time-span; those who deserted agriculture for another occupation were to pay an indemnity called *çift bozan* equivalent to the *timar*-holder's lost produce.<sup>168</sup>

Under such restrictions on labour, İnalcık differentiated three modes of labour use during the formation of large estates in the Balkans during the eighteenth century: on estates which were established on unused land, peasants who had deserted their own lands worked for wages as farm labourers (*ırgad*); on *vakıf* estates established by transforming land status, work was done by slave labour and fugitive peasants who became bound to the soil; on estates rented by the Treasury under the *mukataa* system, cultivators worked while paying rent and various dues to landholders (in a situation tangential to sharecropping).<sup>169</sup>

166 BOA, A.MKT.UM 526/10/15 C 1278.

167 BOA, MVL 403/48/12 Ca 1279; MVL 413/12/11 L 1279.

168 Ö. L. Barkan, 'Le servage existait-il en Turquie?', *Annales, Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 11/1 (1956), 60.

169 H. İnalcık, 'The Ottoman Decline and Its Effects Upon the Reaya', *The Ottoman Empire: Conquest, Organization and Economy* (London 1978), 350-352.

In spite of such a differentiated evolution, Stoianovich underlined the continuity of bondage to the soil in the agrarian history of the Balkans: the agricultural economy developed at the expense of the pastoral economy by transferring the labour force; because of flights, bondage to the soil (subjection to the *glèbe*) was the solution for a stable labour force. Demographic trends, domestic and foreign trade, and, last but not least, banditry, reinforced the labour force's bondage to the soil, on the one hand, and economic and social transformation resulted in the development of a landholding class keen on its economic resources, namely, landed estates, on the other.<sup>170</sup>

The history of sharecropping in mid nineteenth-century Tırhala reveals that labour bondage to the soil, as regulated within the *timar* system by the *kanunnames* of the early modern period and as reinforced in the context of the economic and social transformation of Ottoman society, survived well into the mid nineteenth century. Following Brass, the *çiftlik*-holders' quest for agricultural profitability did not exclude labour bondage to the soil; it even reinforced it in a period of social and economic crisis,<sup>171</sup> as observed in mid nineteenth-century Tırhala. As absentee and local *çiftlik*-holders forced the Commission of Tırhala to issue regulations on the cultivators' bondage to the soil, the central government did not resist such defiant and passionate demands, or resisted only to a certain extent. The final version of the Bylaw prepared by the Commission and approved by the *Meclis-i Vala* showed that bondage to the soil was primordial, but with certain reservations: indirect measures to bind cultivators to the soil, more than direct ones, therefore set the conditions of life in the *çiftlik*s.

İslamoğlu notes that "local commissions established throughout the empire in the second half of the nineteenth century to settle land disputes and to register land, property, and population – became grounds for discursive constitutions of the government of the Ottoman central bureaucracy."<sup>172</sup> The Commission of Tırhala functioned as such; but the government of the constitution for which it became the grounds was a government of *çiftlik*-holders' interests in general, and the government of absentee *çiftlik*-holder pashas in particular.

After all, what was the situation in Tırhala? On 5 May 1862, just before the final signing of the Bylaw in the Commission on 20 May 1862, Abdi Paşa, the deputy-governor (*mutasarrıf*) and commandant-in-chief of İşkodra (mod. Shkodër), sent a report forwarding the complaints of the "local population" of Tırhala from Tayyib Paşa. According to the Pasha, because Tayyib Paşa had a malicious and rancorous character (*garez ve nefsanîyet ahabı*), he behaved towards everybody in a cold and violent manner (*muamele-i barid ve şiddet göstermekte*), and the population who felt an aversion for him cried out and complained about his behaviour.<sup>173</sup> In fact, Tayyib Paşa had been awarded the

170 Stoianovich, 'Land Tenure', 409-410.

171 Brass, *Towards a Comparative Political Economy of Unfree Labour*, 9-46; Idem, *Labour Regime Change*, 75-103.

172 İslamoğlu, 'Words that Rule', 251.

173 BOA, İ.MMS 25/1083/lef 2, 6 Za 1278. In fact, in 1861 more serious unrest took place in İşkodra where public agitation targeted nobody but Abdi Paşa. According to Cevdet Paşa, it was

*Mecidiye* Order for his services in September 1861;<sup>174</sup> the Greek Patriarch had also confirmed in December 1862 the contentment of the Greek population of Tırhala with his government.<sup>175</sup> This cross-conflicting correspondence showed in fact that Abdi Paşa was translating the demands of *çiftlik*-holders, and the Patriarch those of Christian cultivators working in the *çiftliks*. Not only in Tırhala but also in Istanbul the balance of power, as also transcribed into the Bylaw, inclined towards the *çiftlik*-holders, in spite of intra-group conflicts of their own. The *Meclis-i Mahsus*, adjudicating the case of Tayyib Paşa, concluded in such a context that even if he had not been guilty for years of maladministration (*sui-idare*), as opposition between him and the population was apparent, a change in office was needed in order to conserve the balance in the local administration. Since the district was situated in a delicate and important region on the Greek frontier, the *Meclis* found more appropriate the appointment of an official from the rank of vizier, İsmail Rahmi Paşa, cognisant and informed about the locality, in addition to his quality of being a descendant of a dignified and reputed family (*familyasının haysiyet ve şöhreti dahi ilave-i esbab*).

But who was this İsmail Rahmi Paşa? He was none other than Tepedelenizade İsmail Rahmi Paşa, the grandson of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa and the son of Tepedelenli Veli Paşa; from the 1840s to the 1860s he had served the Ottoman administration as governor in Yanya, Tırhala, and Selânik, in the provinces where his grandfather reigned 50 years before, as well as in several other high-status provinces.<sup>176</sup> In spite of the fact that his parents were decapitated for rebellion in 1822, the government of that time reasoned tactically that İsmail Rahmi Bey, as a descendant of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, could serve the administration especially in calming down revolts in the Morea.<sup>177</sup> He then came under administrative protection, becoming first chief chamberlain (*kapıcıbaşı*) in 1828, deputy-governor (*mutasarrıf*) in 1848, and then governor (*vali*) in 1848. Although the Ottoman government seized his grandfather's, father's, and uncle's *çiftliks* in the 1820s, from May 1826 onwards he started to receive a salary of 5,000 p. from the Imperial Mint (*Darbhane-i Amire*), on which the *çiftliks* of *Emlâk-ı hümayun* depended.<sup>178</sup> Nonethe-

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his rambling military character, far removed from social and political realities, that caused the sedition, see C. Baysun, 'Cevdet Paşa'nın İşkodra'ya Memuriyetine Aid Vesikalar', *İstanbul Üniversitesi Tarih Dergisi*, 16/21 (1966), 41-56 and Cevdet Paşa, *Tezahir 13-20* (Ankara 1991), 157-164.

174 BOA, İ.DH 477/32030/26 S 1278.

175 BOA, MVL 939/42/29 Ca 1278.

176 Born in 1806, he was integrated into the Ottoman administration in 1828 as *kapıcıbaşı*; he then served as deputy-governor (*mutasarrıf*) in Tırhala (1848), as governor (*vali*) in Trabzon (1848), Edirne (1848), Yanya (1849), the Archipelago (*Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid*) (1852), Aleppo (1854), again Edirne (1856), Silistre (1857), Selânik (1859), Crete (1860), Tırhala (1862), Kastamonu (1866), and Prizren (1869). He finally became a member of Council of State (*Şura-ı Devlet*) in 1871 and of the Commission of Reform (*Islahat Komisyonu*) in 1872, before his death in 1875. M. Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani, Osmanlı Ünlüleri*, ed. N. Akbayar, trans. S. A. Kahraman (İstanbul 1996), 837.

177 H. S. Feyzioğlu, 'Sons of Tepedelenli Ali Pasha', *ArchOtt*, 25 (2008), 173-183, 181-182.

178 The *Meclis-i Mahsus* appointed him as the governor (*vali*) of Tırhala by increasing the salary



less, his sister Fatma Hanım, the daughter of the deceased Veli Paşa, also held a *çiftlik* of the *Emlâk-ı hümayun* in Yenişehir-i Fener; as an absentee *çiftlik*-holder, in 1859 she was in trouble with her *subaşı*, as were others.<sup>179</sup> İsmail Rahmi Paşa, being an interest holder (*ashab-ı alaka*, as the Ottoman administration uses the term literally in its documents) both in a material and spiritual sense in the *çiftlik*s of the *Emlâk-ı hümayun* located in Tırhala, became the official representative of the absentee *çiftlik*-holding pashas in the district.

The reign of absentee pashas continued in the district until the annexation of Thessaly to Greece in 1881. Given the political, and then economic, uncertainty and instability, within three years, from 1878 (the Berlin Treaty) to 1881 (the Treaty of Istanbul), the pashas sold all the *çiftlik*s they held to major financiers of the Greek Diaspora (settled in Galata or in other financial centres). The social question in Thessaly concerning the sharecropping system was thereafter called in Greece ‘the *çiftlik* question’ and survived, replete with social, economic and political conflicts and contradictions, at least until the post–World War I agrarian reforms.<sup>180</sup>

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of the deputy-governorship of Tırhala from 19,000 p. to 25,000 p. Nevertheless, it gave notice that there was no need to give to him an extra salary because of recent kindly grants of his *çiftlik*s to him (*merhameten çiftlikleri kendine ihsan ve inayet buyurulmak*); see BOA, İ.MMS 25/1083/lef 3, 22 Z 1278 and also Ahmed Lütfi, *Vak'a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi Tarihi*, Vol. 10, ed. M. Aktepe (Istanbul 1988), 16. The grants in question must be the salary of 5,000 p. accorded by the *Darbhane-i Amire* starting from 1826 (C.ML 81/3726/05 L 1241). For the *Darbhane-i Amire*'s administration of *çiftlik*s belonging to the *emlâk-ı hümayun*, see Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım*, 102-103, 249, 263.

179 BOA, A.MKT.UM 372/4/19 Ra 1276.

180 K. Vergopoulos, *Le capitalisme difforme et la nouvelle question agraire: l'exemple de la Grèce moderne* (Paris 1977), 88-124; Simonide, ‘La question’; Evelpidis, *La réforme*; Barkan, ‘Harp Sonu’, 50-62; Barkan, ‘Balkan Memleketlerinin Zirai Reform Tecrübeleri’, 417-420.





# MODERNISATION IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE: THE 1858 LAND CODE AND PROPERTY REGIMES FROM A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Meltem TOKSÖZ\*

“ANY MONEY SAVED OR GAINED IS AT ONCE INVESTED IN LAND...”, reported the Adana Acting Vice-Consul of the British Empire in 1908.<sup>1</sup> Adana was, after 1867, the provincial centre of what was known as the *Adana Ovası* (Adana Plain) to the Ottomans. But the crescent-shaped south-eastern Anatolian area surrounded by chains of mountains on the northern, western, and eastern sides, opening up to the Mediterranean in the south, was a much larger entity than the earlier Çukurova or today’s Çukurova, which I treat as a historical region. For I see this nineteenth century story of the making of an Ottoman region as a regional development in which it is “constituted as an effect of analysis”.<sup>2</sup>

A look at the 1858 Land Code and its meaning for such an area of the Ottoman Empire necessitates such a regional perspective, as much as such a regional perspective opens up many questions having to do with the reform age of the Tanzimat. Indeed, the Tanzimat allowed for concessions, forms of local government, equality before the law in the age of world-wide commercial expansion, and established a framework outside the absolutist prerogatives of the central state. Such reforms accommodated the world economy and freed the provincial notables, councils, and municipalities to take part in the process of commercialisation. The reforms also spurred on the maturation of an agrarian bureaucracy. Thus, Ottoman Çukurova gained access to economic incentives, commercial mechanisms, infrastructural improvements in the second half of the nineteenth century.

## *Some Thoughts on the Ottoman Nineteenth Century – the Age of Modernisation*

A cursory look at the historiography of late Ottoman society shows the remarkable persistence of one rather old but important issue: the question of whether the Ottoman Em-

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1 Accounts and Papers (hereafter AP), Parliamentary Papers, Public Records Office, Foreign Office Archives, London. Report by Acting Vice-Consul on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908. 3.

2 D. Massey, ‘Regionalism: Some Current Issues’, *Capital and Class*, 6 (1978), 106–125.

pire was, in part or as a whole, moving in the direction of a 'modern' capitalist framework before its final demise.

There is a major consensus on the 'modern' in the nineteenth-century Ottoman world; what is still debated revolves around the mechanisms through which modernisation was instigated and to whom, or rather to which corners and communities of the Empire, it extended and to what degree. Both issues lay open one fundamental question: whose modernisation?

No doubt Ottoman modernisation had a realm of its own, culminating from both the practices of the state and the experiences of the inhabitants of each of its regions. Ottoman imperial notions of its past, present, and future glory, together with the modernisation model of the age, constituted the ideological framework of the Tanzimat: the Tanzimat set up a coherent system of rule within this framework, which began to have lives of its own, *per se*, since reform entailed a variety of processes of change depending on the spatial and historical dynamics of any one corner of the Empire. Because the Ottoman realm of modernisation did not consist simply of an imperial project imposed on the people but also licensed the people – and not just the elite or only in Istanbul, but the whole of society at all levels and in all corners of the Empire – to usurp the same rule of law. Any divergence from uniform application or a coherent system of rule did not necessarily indicate the weakness of the state or the reforms. Rather, such differentiation stemmed from the separate historical and spatial dynamics of each region in the Ottoman Empire.

The question of modernisation, then, becomes about configuring change in a specific geography in a specific time-frame. Such configuration clearly shows that modernisation in the Empire was a culmination of many different processes, only one of which was the implementation of the Tanzimat reforms. Therefore, in this paper, I analyse the making of a region around a single reform: the Land Code, which paved the way for property ownership – deemed most important for a modern state and society – in the age of transformation, as an attempt to re-conceive the metamorphosis of the Ottoman Empire in spatial terms.

The regional developments in Ottoman Çukurova show the extent of provincial change during the nineteenth century. The reforms provided an unprecedented framework for these changes, which restructured local authority in such a way as to give the region and its inhabitants the very locus of power. Indeed, political and legal re-organisation established a new infrastructure of governance within the framework of a 'benign' – as opposed to absolutist – central state. In other words, not all the administrative reforms aimed at the establishment of a central state which threatened liberal economic logic. However, this is not to suggest that the new power-holders in the region questioned the legitimacy of Ottoman rule. On the contrary, they acted as active participants in the moulding of this new political landscape, perfectly well aware that this was to their benefit. Reforms, then, meant a new level of interaction between provinces and Istanbul that could very well be unthinkable considering the region's historical geography as almost a no-man's land prior to the nineteenth century. Last but not least, any overall treatment of Ottoman modernisation overwhelmingly ignores the very alterations in the overarching modernisation agenda, which itself is still seen through "the optics of the inevitable

unfolding of the destiny of the nation".<sup>3</sup> Modernisation, as an on-going process in the nineteenth century, left autonomies room to manoeuvre in regional construction and politics through appropriation by the regional populace. In other words, multiple agendas informed anomalous regional processes against single-paradigm explanations of state modernisation from empire to the nation-state. Yet anomalies can be potentially productive, and regions can flourish without simply replicating their criteria. And complexity and unevenness of Ottoman governance were the order of the day in the nineteenth century, shaped by multiple arrangements among international, central, regional, and local agendas of the evolving political, social, and economic circuits they managed.

### *A Brief History of Modernisation in Çukurova*

In the second half of the nineteenth century, however, when Çukurova became an Ottoman province, much of its land mass which had not previously shown signs of being an integrated social or political space turned into a major region of cotton production and export, capable of holding its own in the Eastern Mediterranean competition, and of integrating into an increasingly global world. The making of this landscape as such a region was both an artefact and agent of a multitude of negotiations between the imperial centre, the urban municipal and provincial governments, and global forces in the nineteenth century. That is to say, the process entailed a completely new mapping of the circuitry of production and exchange which resulted from the continual intersection and confrontation of layers of world commercial-political-cultural trends with Ottoman imperial, regional, and local powers: cotton became a much-sought-after commodity in world trade, the reforms reset the organisation of political and commercial networks so as to allow for such economic manoeuvring, and regional powers seized on this dual opportunity to turn into capitalist entrepreneurs. As this trio of changes worked their way through the landscape, the Çukurova region was radically redefined in political, economic, and social terms.

But in many ways, the Tanzimat had not reached Çukurova until the 1860s. In 1862, the most important state action for the region was economic. A special decree stipulated that land previously uncultivated would be transferable free of charge, the produce exempt from tax for five years, the import of machinery would be without dues, and free cotton seed would be distributed.<sup>4</sup>

However, before the nineteenth century, most of Çukurova was simply a marshland where thinly settled Armenian and scattered Turcoman nomadic populaces cohabited. Çukurova presented an extreme case of the long-familiar Ottoman Anatolian striving to balance sparse populations in abundant lands. As such, Çukurova first and foremost needed a settled population that would engage in commercial cotton cultivation. The di-

3 Ç. Keyder, 'Peripheral Port-Cities and Politics on the Eve of the Great War', *NPT*, 20 (1998), 27.

4 BOA, Iradeler, Dahiliye, 26 Receb 1278 (27 January 1862). The same year vegetable and fruit production on newly reclaimed lands was also exempted from the tithe. BOA, Maliye Nezareti, Maliye, 1722, 1277 (1862).

verse tribal background of the region, made up of Turcoman, Kurdish, and Arab populates, posed an important obstacle to every settlement effort of the central state. The 1860s brought yet another dimension to Çukurova which eventually greatly affected the human geography of the region: the Muslim immigrants settled following the Crimean War needed constant security from tribal attacks.<sup>5</sup> The next wave of migration of Circassians from the Caucasus, as of 1862-1863, accelerated moves towards a far more deliberate determination in further sedentarisation (*iskân*) of the nomadic populace, namely the Forced Settlement (*Fırka-ı Islahiye*) in 1865.<sup>6</sup> However, sedentarisation proved rather an unexpectedly arduous process for all concerned: settlement only became the pattern after 'the region' began to take shape, also inviting in different ethnic communities such as Arab Christians and Greeks.

The next step was the establishment of provincial administration in Çukurova (1867-*Adana Vilayeti*), which provided the governor with the power to control tax-collection. New institutions, such as district and township committees, created at sub-provincial levels, presented the local powers with new political mechanisms. These committees in the towns consisted of tax-officials, the *kadı*, police chief, and Muslim and non-Muslim members of the local community.<sup>7</sup> Through this provincial administrative restructuring, the reforms instituted local empowerment mechanisms which were among the reasons behind the rise of local authority.

All in all, when the settlers were equipped with more than the framework of modernisation, a new regional configuration became possible. In other words, the 1858 Land Code, as well as the 1864 Provincial Law, coupled with the 1865 settlement efforts, paid off only when commercialisation set off the development of a port-city. Thus Mersin, Çukurova's new port-town, founded within the 20 years between the 1850s and the 1870s by immigrants coming from different parts of the Empire such as Beirut, Syria, Central Anatolia, Cyprus, and the Aegean Islands became the cosmopolitan space of the region and formed both the backbone of the regional economy and the milieu behind its social conflicts. Regional sources and regional development held these conflicts at bay as long as the region could preserve its relative autonomy vis-à-vis the Empire. These included dynamic municipal administrations in an increasingly urbanising southern Çukurova, infrastructural improvements in the port-town as well as telecommunication and transport networks, including the opening of the railway between Adana and Mersin in 1886.<sup>8</sup> The subsequent springing up of branches of the Ottoman Bank marked the pinnacle of the

5 BOA, Cevdet Dahiliye, 2899, 1277 (1853).

6 The *Fırka-ı Islahiye* literally means the Reform Division. I prefer 'Forced Settlement' as a translation because it elucidates the purpose of the state.

7 *Devlet-i Aliye, Düstur*, Vol I, Istanbul, 1289 (1873), 608-624. Also see M. Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Anadolu Kentlerinin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapıları* (Ankara 1991); D. Quataert, 'Ottoman Reform and Agriculture in Anatolia, 1876-1908', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, UCLA, 1976.

8 Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Quai d'Orsay, Nouvelle Serie, Turquie, Paris. Correspondence Commerciale, Tarsous, 1875-1897, Tome III, Vice Consulat a Tarsous, Mersine et Adana, 15 June 1896.

accumulation of local revenue and power in the region.<sup>9</sup> By the first decade of the twentieth century, these factors had combined and interrelated to produce an economy that sustained growth.

The history of this regional economy reveals a multi-spatial process not the least of which is that of the exchange between the commercial centres of Adana and Mersin and the vast hinterland. Their histories, not completely and neatly tied to either that of the imperial centre or the development of the world economy, helped to distinguish a different constitution of a region.<sup>10</sup> At the centre of this distinction were the different social groups of tribes and merchants, landholders and industrialists, whose accumulations of agricultural production, commerce, and industry happened to revolve around a most important commodity: cotton. Yet the commercialisation of cotton agriculture in Çukurova did not depend solely on the world's growing need for cotton. Neither did the resultant regional economy, based on large holdings of cotton cultivation and the textile industry, arise as a single outcome of nineteenth century Ottoman reforms through which private property was constituted. Instead, the story of cotton production in a landscape like Çukurova was very much a multilevel regional history of capitalist transformation.

### *The 1858 Land Code*

The inhabitants of Çukurova, coming from very different backgrounds, not simply in terms of origin and ethno-religious identity, once settled, shared more than they differed in because of their common experience of settlement in the region. And space opened up in Çukurova for such sharing through one of the milestones of legal reforms: the 1858 Land Code (*Arazi Kanunnamesi*),<sup>11</sup> which changed agrarian regimes in the direction of registering property and individuation of tax payments.<sup>12</sup>

Çukurova had no *ancien regime*, that is to say, a discernible property regime based on long-established power groups did not exist.<sup>13</sup> Even the once mighty Ramazonoğulları and their *vakıf* at Adana had faded so that they had little input in the making of the region

9 Edhem Eldem, *A History of the Ottoman Bank* (Istanbul 1999).

10 Karen E. Wigen discusses the distinctive processes of such regional histories in the case of Japan as the centre with its own peripheries. See her *The Making of a Japanese Periphery, 1750–1920* (Berkeley 1995).

11 For the Code itself, see S. Fisher, *Ottoman Land Laws Containing the Ottoman Land Code and Later Legislation Affecting Land* (London 1919).

12 E. Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850–1921* (London 1999), 13. Faced with problems of Bedouin settlement and agricultural decline, Transjordan, for instance, went through a process of individuation made possible by the new bureaucratic methods. Accordingly, Rogan argues, the 1858 Land Code gave individuals title to their holdings, thus establishing 'personal responsibility' for tax payments. However, if the issue was to ensure tax payment by individuals, it must have come to Cyprus and Kayseri, for example, much earlier than the 1844 income tax regulation, the 1858 Code, or the 1864 Provincial Code.

13 See my larger treatment of this specificity of Çukurova in M. Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Making of the Adana-Mersin Region, 1850–1908* (Leiden 2010).

in the nineteenth century. Indeed, when İbrahim Pasha of Egypt conquered Çukurova in 1832, all the resistance he met with came from already feuding tribal leaders whom he successfully co-opted while using them against one another. The Ottoman state in Adana was attempting to do the same through the post and person of Hüseyin Paşa as the new military officer. The *muhasıl* Mehmed Sadık Paşa had also just been appointed to Adana to clear it of tribal powers, and found himself completely powerless against them and the Egyptians.<sup>14</sup> When the Egyptians left eight short years later, they had set an example of commercial cotton cultivation and proved the potential. But it took decades for imperial-central, provincial-local, and global forces to shape the potential towards a new property regime of cotton farming. For the making of the region to produce such a regime, the turning-point came in the last quarter of the nineteenth century with registration of land. Registration began in the 1870s but accelerated in the 1890s as cotton production intersected with property rights through a process of accommodation and appropriation between commercial interests and administrative practices that were just being moulded. That is to say, the practice of establishing property rights very much meshed with the very process through which these rights were formed as administrative practices. These administrative practices helped mould new 'power fields'<sup>15</sup> through law and cadastral surveys, which included the local populace who translated these practices into their own power fields. Commercial production on the land to be registered placed local entrepreneurs directly in these power struggles, at the "intersection of law, administration and production".<sup>16</sup>

For the cadastre years, the 1870s marked the beginning of a new period in Çukurova, particularly as the Forced Settlement and settlement of migrants began to pay off. Cotton cultivation began to increase to levels never seen before. Throughout this last quarter of the nineteenth century, the increase in production was related to the registration of land. So, land registration, one of the key purposes of the 1858 Land Code did not mean much in Çukurova before this process, which can, by period, be divided into three sets: in the 1870s the regional property regime began to take shape and registrations accelerated in the 1880s, turning the region into a socio-economic whole by the end of the 1890s through estate formation. These periods also have a geographical direction: the 1870s registrations strongly portray a bias toward the Adana-Tarsus sub-region, that is, southern Çukurova, where commercial cotton cultivation had first intensified as the first affected by the multiple processes mentioned above, from clearing of swamps to complete sedentarisation and to administrative practices. In fact, in the first area to change in the 1870s, the Adana-Tarsus sub-region, two-fifths of arable land was already under cultivation, and it was with this that the registrars began.<sup>17</sup> There were, of course, many issues before the

14 See *ibid.*, 41-46.

15 H. İslamoğlu, 'Property as a Contested Domain: A Reevaluation of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858', in R. Owen (ed.), *New Perspectives on Property and Land in the Middle East* (Boston 2000), 39.

16 M. Mundy and R.S. Smith, *Governing Property, Making the Modern State: Law, Administration and Production in Ottoman Syria* (London 2007), 4.

17 AP Report, Consul Skene, Province of Adana, 1874, pp. 1706-1707. The British consular official noted that this "marvelously productive" land yielded 300 pounds of cotton per acre, which



registrars stemming from the 1860s, when the province had not yet been established and there was no cadastral registration, some of which can be observed by means of the *Mec-lis-i Vala* documents.

The 1870s were also the years in which in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region many examples of cases involving multiple claims over property appeared before the *Şura-yı Devlet*.<sup>18</sup> Most such cases concern those who claimed that land previously used by them had been registered by others or vice versa. What is asked of the high court authorities is the determination of ownership in order to annul the registration by another and hence gain the right to register the said property. To my mind, it is no surprise to see many such cases before the supreme courts of the Ottoman sort during the first registration wave in the first registration sub-region: now that there is the opportunity of ownership, claimants multiply. One such case is intriguing and provides an example of the ways in which such claims were settled by the *Şura-yı Devlet*: the court resolved the case between Bekir Bey and Kirkor Efendi's family revolving around 45 hectares in three different towns in the district of Adana in 1872, finally finding for Kirkor Efendi – a deceased insurance agent, or rather his heirs. Kirkor Efendi's inheritance prompted the proceedings, which were handled by an attorney, one Mr Edward, because there was another claim to the same land by a Bekir Bey who had been cultivating the land and hence claimed ownership, arguing that it was he who worked the land at great cost to himself and that the land had been leased to his family by the previous owner, Bogos Efendi. The attorney for the family of Kirkor Efendi presented the court with written documentation issued by the *mutassarrıflık* of Adana at the time, in 1865, that Bogos Efendi had sold the lands in question to Kirkor Efendi before he left for Silistre, where he had died. Mr Edward also provided the documentation of the local investigation of a few years later which was undertaken by the local authorities, at the request of the heirs of Bogos Efendi, that had deemed the sale between Kirkor and Bogos valid. This ultimately disproved the claims of Bekir Bey, whose usufruct of the land did not bring about a favourable verdict.<sup>19</sup>

Such cases also demonstrate that cadastral survey was not the only recourse for property ownership claims and that surveys were subject to change. Thus, it was not until the 1880s that large holdings became prevalent in the same sub-region, the Adana-Tarsus sub-region, as there remained no cultivated land left unregistered. Finally, in the 1890s, northern Çukurova, the Ceyhan sub-region, joined in cotton cultivation at unprecedented levels and this became the area of large estates. Land registration records ratified this contemporary situation of settled agriculture rather than creating a new land regime dictated by the Land Code.<sup>20</sup>

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greatly motivated title deed registrations. It was also in 1874 that the sub-region received much needed seasonal labour from famine-stricken central Anatolia.

18 For instance BOA, MVL 1041/5, 27 M 1282 (22 June 1865), 711/23, 10 S 1282 (5 July 1865), 682/7, 21 S 1281 (26 July 1864), 428/12, 5 R 1280 (13 February 1864), and BOA, ŞD, 2114/17, 4 R 1300 (9 July 1883), 2117/38, 4 R 1300 (9 July 1883), 2428/25, 11 Ş 1297 (18 July 1880).

19 BOA, ŞD 2394/17, 16 S 1288 (7 May 1871)

20 Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-u Kadim, Arazi Atik Defterleri. A total of

If the Land Code meant registration of already existent land grants, those granted to the tribes by Cevdet Paşa in the 1865 Forced Settlement would be present in the records.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, some of these grants were actually registered in the name of the receiving tribe only after the Republic. Sometimes when the original grant was reflected in the first title acquired, for example, in the case of the Bozdoğanlı tribe, who had acquired the deed of a vast area from Adana to Karataş in 1871, the land became divided. The land was leased to multiple holders some of whose claims ended up annulling the Ottoman title deed. The family of Mehmet Saka, originally from the Bozdoğanlı tribe, ended up with only 3,000 *dönüms* near Karataş at the end of the legal procedure that began with the registration of the vast land to the tribe and ended up with it being divided among leasing parties, including this family from the tribe.<sup>22</sup> Thus the land's original title-holders, like the tribal family here, happy to have leased it or simply let it be used by farmer families who had already settled there, had to share with new title-holders after 1924, as in the case of the Sabancı farm, and a state farm (*Devlet Üretme Çiftliği*) on some 6,500 *dönüms* 15 miles south of Adana en route to Karataş. Such division, first observable in the 1880s registrations, paved the way for much later claims, indeed as late as the Republican period.<sup>23</sup>

Another example of the property regime comes from the area to the west of Adana, again one of the areas settled first: the land of the original settlement of the Ramazanoğulları. The once mighty family could not adapt to the new economic structure based on agricultural surplus and began to lose money and power. Their *vakıf* was under threat of losing these to the *Evkaf-ı Hümayun*.<sup>24</sup> By the 1880s, newly settled families emerged and engaged in a struggle over registering the land in their name, and the area was divided up into several large holdings shared by such families as Çamurdanoğlu, Karafakızade, Koçandarlar.<sup>25</sup> Another example of a large holding in the same sub-region portrays a practice of granting land to bureaucrats for the purpose of 'reviving and improving' cotton cultivation: the Governor of Adana between 1881 and 1885, Abidin Paşa received a grant for 20,000 *dönüms* around Yumurtalık beginning from the coast up to Misis. A later governor, Hasan Paşa, reported to the Sublime Porte about the sale of

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six sets of registers (*defter*) begins with the town of Adana (Nos 3052-3056) as early as 1847 (1264), when the Office of Land Registration (*Defterhane-i Amire*) was established.

21 A. G. Gould, 'Pasha and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1973, 182-184.

22 My thanks to Mehmet Saka for showing me the original title deed and pointing me to the legal procedure.

23 Ankara, Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-u Kadim, Arazi Atik Defterleri. Nos 3244 and 3245, 1297-1300 (1882-1885).

24 BOA, Şura-yı Devlet, 2118/12, 26 Cemaziyelahir 1295 (27 June 1878)

25 BOA, Şura-yı Devlet, 2120/9, 27 Zilhice 1296 (12 December 1879). See also the observation of the British expert on the 3,000 acres and larger farms in the immediate vicinity of Adana, mostly owned by "Muslim Pashas": AP Report by Wyndham Dunstan entitled 'Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation', Vol. 107, May 1908, p. 12.

some of these lands by the former governor to a French citizen and asked that the land be transferred to the *Emlâk-ı Hûmayun* on account of Abidin Paşa's debt over the value of the land assessed at some 800,000 *guruş*, effectively to prevent the sale of the land. Hasan Paşa also warned that the land for sale with the title deed originally registered as 20,000 *dönüms* was actually almost 100,000 *dönüms*, including the port area. In the end, if Abidin Paşa did not pay what he owed, the land would be confiscated by the authorities.<sup>26</sup> Unfortunately we do not know how this land was divided later on, but no confiscation record was found either.

The last examples of large holdings come from the later registrations in the Ceyhan region in the upper plain, where settlement and cultivation changed the area as late as the 1890s, as mentioned above, in the three sets of cadastral process in the region. There are not many registrations in the early phases of the cadastre, that is, the examples of the 1870s and 1880s, in this sub-region, as settlements already cultivated were few. They are also considerably smaller in size: small farmers in the foothills received offers to register land in the vicinity of old locations; for example, those in Haçin, a commercial town en route to Konya and Kayseri, could settle in Kadirli and register farms in their names. Apparently some Armenians of Haçin did so as early as the 1870s.<sup>27</sup> A second small land registration campaign in this sub-region took place again in an already settled Sis (Kozan), where Armenian natives of the town registered farms.<sup>28</sup> There still remained much unregistered land in this area, in the Anavarza plain, at the time. Other registrations in the Ceyhan sub-region before the 1890s involved settlements of Circassian refugees, to whom the state afforded many incentives, from credit (from *Menafi Sandığı*, public funds) to exemption from the tithe, a rare and late case of direct state involvement in settlement and cotton cultivation.<sup>29</sup> One of the largest estates was formed in this sub-region, beginning in the last period of registrations and continuing all the way into the first decades of the twentieth century. In other words, this last phase, when Ceyhan's large areas of land turned into farms completed regional transformation. Indeed, in the sub-region, most of the title deeds were for land of 500 *dönüms* and larger<sup>30</sup>, with only a few farms smaller than 250 *dönüms*, according to the registrations that ended in 1895.<sup>31</sup> The German geologist Brück even calculated that one-third of the area where cotton was cultivated in the Çukurova of the 1900s consisted of farms of between 1,000-5,000 hectares,

26 BOA, Yıldız Mütenevvi Maruzat, 29/21, 23 Rebiulevvel 1305 (9 December 1887). The information on Abidin Paşa's large holdings is also shared by the British Military Consul, Consul Bennet, who mentioned other such large farms of Abidin Paşa's to the west of this area: FO 424/132, Bennet to Dufferin, Adana, 6 February 1882, p. 65.

27 BOA, Şura-yı Devlet, 2115/39, 18 Cemaziyelahir 1288 (15 August 1871)

28 Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim, Arazi Atık Defterleri, Defter No. 3201 for Kozan and Sis, mali 1287 (1871), p. 31.

29 BOA, Şura-yı Devlet, 2118/41, 12 Rebiulahir 1296 (5 April 1879)

30 Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim, Arazi Atık Defteri Nos 3244 ve 3245, 1297-1300 (1882-1885).

31 Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim, Arazi Atık Defteri, Nos 3245, 1308 (1893).

while two-thirds consisted of farms averaging at 500 hectares.<sup>32</sup> Another document amply demonstrates the scope of estate formation as an endeavour shared between local, regional, and global forces: in 1915, c. 4,000 *dönüms* of agricultural land near Ceyhan, in the Upper Plain of Çukurova, presented the German Levantine Cotton Company with an excellent opportunity. Heavily occupied with finding a suitable area for their *Muster-farm*, the Germans first explained the choice of Ceyhan over Adana, or of the Upper Plain over the Lower Plain. Around Adana, in the Lower Plain, there were already too many farms and no available large landholding. The acquisition of land near Ceyhan, on the other hand, necessitated a set of intricate transactions among different people scattered around Çukurova. The land belonged to the Sursock, a Beirut family living in Adana. The title deed was registered to Aziz Sursock, who at the time resided in Tarsus. Because foreigners could no longer own land in the Ottoman Empire, a rental lease that included the up-front payment of the land's tax arrears was prepared for five years between Nejib Toueni and Selim Boutros, the German representatives, and Aziz Sursock. Then, two neighbouring farms, of c. 5,000 *dönüms*, belonging to one Aleybeyzade Mahmud, and of 2,000 *dönüms* to Boghos Khoubesserian, were also leased for two years to the same representatives of the Germans.

This ordeal of acquiring land for an estate farm during World War I and the story of large tracts belonging to different families in a corner of the region that had begun producing cotton just a quarter of a century earlier, becoming a German model farm is very much about multiple forces negotiating into a property regime whose centrally ordered legal framework is only one side of the Ottoman story of modernisation. By a process almost bordering on manipulation, local entrepreneurs together with world commercial forces marked Çukurova's modernity, which was not imposed upon it by either the reforming central state or world trade powers. This does not mean that Çukurova's transformation was non-confrontational, as a new kind of space was created with multiple communities establishing conditions for their material relations. Because of these multiple communities and their confrontations, this new space could and did operate within a regional socio-economic autonomy. This is very evident when one looks at certain land transactions: in 1883 and 1884 alone, 2,700 people, including 50 foreigners ranging from Greeks to Austrians, British, French, Americans, Italians, Iranians, were involved in land transactions of a total of 47 thousand *dönüms* with title deeds of a value of some 50,000 pounds.<sup>33</sup> In the Adana-Tarsus sub-region, from 1885 onwards, the areas already covered in the registrations were re-registered in new books. These new *defter*s reflected many more entries with plots of a size of 1,000 *dönüms* and/or larger, and even as large as 10,000 *dönüms*.<sup>34</sup> Surveying the actual status of cultivation once again reflected the

32 W.F. Brück, *Baumwoll-Erzeugung und-Verbrauch der Türkei* (Berlin 1917), 15-16.

33 BOA, Yıldız Esas, 21/140-16, Section 36, 1301 (1883-1884). These transactions included all kinds of immovable property including vineyards, mills, and vegetable gardens, some 1,300 of which involved lands for cotton cultivation.

34 Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim, Arazi Atık Defterleri. Registers Nos 3067, 1300-1305 (1885-1890) and No. 3076, 1310-1311 (1895-1896).

maintenance of large holdings and ended any remaining confusion, resulting in the registration of some of the largest holdings in the sub-region: around Tarsus alone some 280,000 *dönüms* were registered as cotton farms.<sup>35</sup> In addition, the number of transactions, together with people and amounts involved, showed a certain and steady increase within a decade: in 1896-1897, some 62,000 *dönüms* of cultivated land changed hands among some 7,000 people.<sup>36</sup> These, together with re-registrations in the most fertile and fully cultivated sub-region, once again show the stability and confidence in the regional economy marking the pattern of large landholdings of the region.

### *Conclusion*

Settling nomads, Armenians, many other migrants such as Arabs, and Greeks turned this difficult geography of mountains, swamps, and marshes into both an agricultural and an industrial region of wealth and power in the last few decades of the Ottoman Empire. In doing so they fully exploited the potentials of this landscape and strengthened their ties to it, while creating a semi-autonomous regional economy, which also meant important and necessary ties to both the Ottoman imperial centre and world trade centres. In fact, the centralisation policies of the modernising Empire, together with the demands of the world economy – which did not act against one another in the case of this region at least – helped shape this autonomous fashioning. In other words, the Çukurovan capitalistic formation entailed very complex political and economic processes that worked not against or despite one another, but together: as such, rather than being simply part of the story of the peripheralisation of the Ottoman Empire by the European centre, Çukurova became part of the world economy itself, with this position constantly being re-aligned against various forces of the late nineteenth - early twentieth-century world economy. This confrontation with the world economy simultaneously strengthened the region's relative autonomy vis-à-vis the Ottoman centre. In turn, this autonomy became the hallmark for investment and accumulation which very much depended on close links, co-operation, and various credit and trade relations based primarily and initially on trust fed by newly founded social networks, benefiting from the security afforded by central reforms. What was rather special about Çukurova was that this accumulation found its way back to investment in land.

Indeed, once Çukurova producers began to invest in the agriculture of an exportable crop on a large scale, the rise in agricultural and industrial production pointed to the exceptionally speedy formation of a regional economy: Çukurova had become the greatest cotton-producing region of the Empire, with 100,000 bales of short-staple cotton in addition to lesser amounts of the long-staple kinds.<sup>37</sup> The total area under cotton now

35 Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim, Arazi Atik Defterleri, Register Nos 3083, 1316-1317 (1901-1902).

36 BOA Yıldız Esas, 22/140-22-23, Section 36, 1314 (1896-1897)

37 United States National Archives (hereafter USNA), Special Reports and Government Inquiries, MC 1107, Roll 8, No. 97. 20 February 1918. p. 7.

amounted to 100,000 hectares, with around 30,000 hectares as estate-like *çiftlik*s,<sup>38</sup> and the highest number of landholdings larger than 50 *dönüm*s (5 hectares) in the Empire.<sup>39</sup> In addition, the development of the textile industry in Çukurova during the two decades prior to World War I was also very impressive.<sup>40</sup>

This radical transformation must be placed between the central and the global, not simply for the sake of measuring local dynamics and how these hindered or helped integration either into the Ottoman centre or the world capitalist system. For one thing, highlighting local dynamics in the various processes of integration into the world economy only adds to the earlier crude model of economic domination between centre and periphery. Merely focusing on a region and its dynamics rather than conceptualising the Ottoman Empire as a whole within the world economy does not change its hierarchical categorisation.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, not focusing solely on a provincial capital or a port-city spatially mediates regional analysis between central and global presences. On the other hand, studying Çukurova's own dynamics through the process of regional formation can help us re-align the extent and scope of both the imperial centre's transforming mechanisms and the world economic forces beyond presumed hierarchies of centre-periphery relations. Assessing a region beyond the manifestations and categories of world economic power is the only way to capture economic prosperity and regional consciousness beyond the centre and the inscriptions of the imperial project. That is to say, as much as the regional history of Çukurova is not readily comprehensible through the workings of world trade in the port-city, it is also meaningless only in the context of a provincial capital emerging out of Ottoman reforms. The direction of regional analysis, however, does provide answers in a reverse way; that is to say, Çukurova's history can help us to make sense of Ottoman reforms as well as the workings of world economic dictates.

In this sense, the discussion of property relations in Çukurova is particularly warranted for a series of reasons. That investment in land at unprecedented levels and hold-

38 W. F. Bruck, *Vorläufiger Bericht über Baumwoll-Erzeugung und -Verbrauch der Türkei* v. Dr. W.F. Bruck (Augsburg-Berlin 1917), 14. Not all *çiftlik*s were registered by one person, fragmentation was frequent. Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim, Arazî Atik Defterleri, Registers No. 3067, 1300-1305 (1885-1890) and No. 3083, 1316-1317 (1901-1902).

39 T. C. Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, *Osmanlı Dönemi Tarım İstatistikleri. 1909, 1913 ve 1914. Tarihi İstatistikler Dizisi Cilt 3* (Ankara 2011), The 1909 figures, 28. Fifty *dönüm*s is the size of the largest landholding in this category.

40 D. Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of the Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge 1993), 44.

41 The challenge is in H. İslamoğlu, 'Oriental Despotism in World System Perspective' in H. İslamoğlu-İnan (ed.), *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy* (Cambridge 1987), 1-26. The tone of the discussion is set in the now-classic I. Wallerstein, H. Decdeli, R. Kasaba, 'The Incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the World Economy', in the same volume. For other sophisticated approaches to the study of the peripheralisation of the Ottoman Empire see Ç. Keyder (ed.), 'Ottoman Empire: Nineteenth Century Transformations', *Review*, 11/2 (1988), 120; R. Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: The Nineteenth Century* (Albany 1988).



ing sizes in Çukurova came at a time when the Ottoman state codified private holdings necessitates an evaluation of Ottoman agrarian history.<sup>42</sup> Yet this was also the time when settlement in Anatolia reached ever higher rates, not unlike large settlement and population movements elsewhere in the world, especially along rivers. If anything, the nineteenth century codifications can be seen as part of the ‘great transformation’, as one of multiple state formations that signalled the re-ordering of social realities’.<sup>43</sup> Islamoğlu herself indicates that the establishment of property rights in the aftermath of 1858 meant entitlements that were negotiated among different power groups, including the state. Furthermore, the Code of 1858 stood as only one such signal that the ‘social realities’ in Çukurova shaped its outcome as large landholdings. This outcome alone shows that we must re-evaluate our understanding of Ottoman agrarian history from the point of the imperial political power. From Gerber, who placed central liberal policies at the core of rural life, to Islamoğlu who located the re-ordering of multiple state formations in the transformation to modernity in the Ottoman Empire, any re-alignment of property relations is treated as peripheral to the imperial centre. But the actual integration of production processes into the codifications of the imperial state showed such a great differentiation among different regions of the Empire that it neither fits into a formula of Empire-wide peripheralisation, nor can it be captured in re-orderings of the state, however much they may have been negotiated. Instead, settled peasants and farmers as well as nomads and migrants who relocated throughout the century “changed and shaped the lands and areas that they farmed and settled in rather particular and significant ways”.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, the 1858 codification cannot be treated as the only medium of property formation either in Çukurova or anywhere else in Anatolia. What mattered most was the struggle of the farmers and landholders in establishing their rights: “Before the institutional *personae*

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42 The nature and the impact of the Land Code have occupied a large part of the discussions on Ottoman agrarian history, producing a variety of opinions which are beyond the purposes of this paper. One argument is that the primary concern of the Code was the elimination of local notables in the age of re-centralisation after the Tanzimat. According to another argument, the Code recognised private property rights for the first time in Ottoman agrarian history. The debate has also revolved around the issue of the legal basis of the emergence of large estates (‘the çiftlik debate’), which was an anomaly in terms of Anatolian landholding patterns. For a summary of the development of the debate, see M. Toksöz, ‘Osmanlı’da Toprak and Tarım: Çağlar Keyder ve Faruk Tabak’tan *Osmanlı’da Toprak Mülkiyeti ve Ticari Tarım Üzerine*’, *Cumhuriyet Kitap*, 463 (1998). See Quataert, for his summary of the debate, in his ‘The Age of Reforms’ in H. İnalcık with D. Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, Vol. II (Cambridge 1994), 856–861. One of the contributions most discussed is from Huri Islamoğlu in her ‘Property as a Contested Domain’.

43 Islamoğlu, ‘Property as a Contested Domain’, 14.

44 Y. Terzibaşoğlu, ‘Eleni Hatun’un Zeytin Bahçeleri: 19. Yüzyılda Anadolu’da mülkiyet haları nasıl inşa edildi?’, *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, 4 (2006), 123. The particularities in Ottoman agrarian history before the nineteenth century must not be overlooked either. See S. Faroqhi, ‘Wealth and Power in the Land of Olives: The Economic and Political Activities of Müridoğlu Hacı Mehmed Ağa, Notable of Edremit (died in or before 1823)’, in Ç. Keyder and F. Tabak (eds), *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East* (Albany 1991), 77–96.



farming property relations, stand the individual parties to the dispute".<sup>45</sup> In this struggle, a multitude of legal relations and legal categories appear: in Çukurova, different registrations of landholdings spread over the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and the largest estates appeared in the newly settled Ceyhan sub-region. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, Çukurova competed with İzmir and Aydın, in terms of the accumulation of capital in the former, and the volume and relations of production in the latter. Clearly, in Aydın agricultural capital accumulation was high; in fact, overall cultivation per hectare brought almost twice as much income as cotton did in Çukurova.<sup>46</sup> The first difference to note is in the diversity of crops in Aydın, bringing it commercial success, as opposed to a single crop in Çukurova. The production processes of the two areas also greatly differ: Aydın enjoyed skilled labour while Çukurova continuously struggled with lack of labour and unskilled seasonal labourers. Relatedly and yet most importantly, Aydın farms remained much smaller as estate formation took place only sporadically.<sup>47</sup> The development of cotton mono-culture in the province had to wait for the later Republican years, when capitalist agriculture in Söke, a major district of Aydın, reached Çukurovan levels of the 1950s. In addition, there were other West Anatolian areas that enjoyed and profited from commercial agriculture, such as Muğla. However, Muğla never turned into a region in the way Çukurova did, as no particular crop attracted export trade and whatever accumulation was possible remained in agriculture.<sup>48</sup>

From the days of İbrahim Paşa onwards, the plain welcomed many different people from all sorts of classes, including migrant labour.<sup>49</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century, merchants and now-settled nomads, despite the limitations of labour scarcities, gained control over the land and the production process. Commercial agriculture quickly developed as more and more productive capital was being invested in agriculture, i.e., in the extension of cultivation, in the means of production, and labour power. In other words, the administrative changes and settlement efforts only paid off when the development of the port-city prompted the extension of cultivation, and registration of land. The 1858 Land Code, which defined the rights and obligations of the landholders, had organised the system of registering title deeds for the right of cultivation on state lands (*miri*). The Code extended the formerly limited right to title deed to all cultivators to ensure continuous production. However, the right to possession could lapse when cultivation was dis-

45 Mundy, *Governing Property*, 2.

46 H. Akder, 'Yirminci Yüzyılın Başında Çukurova'da Pamuk Ekmenin Maliyeti', in O. Yıldırım (ed.), *Osmanlı'nın Peşinde Bir Yaşam* (İstanbul 2008), 252.

47 O. Kurmuş, *Emperyalizmin Türkiye'ye Girişi* (Ankara 1982).

48 S. Aktüre, '19. Yüzyılda Muğla', in İ. Tekeli (ed.), *Tarih İçinde Muğla* (Ankara 1993), 34-113.

49 At the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the population of Çukurova had reached somewhere between 400,000 and 500,000. There are many different sources of statistics of population in these years. Although with different configurations, they seem to show the population of Çukurova in the pre-war period as ranging between 300,000 and 500,000: *Bulletin Annuel de Statistique*. (İstanbul 1911), *Annuaire Oriental de l'Empire Ottoman* (İstanbul 1912) and 'Devlet-i Âliye-i Osmaniye'nin 1313 senesine mahsus İstatistik-i Umumi', *Ticaret ve Nafia Nezareti* (İstanbul 1316).

continued for three consecutive years. There is no indication that there were any such lapses in Çukurova. Furthermore, investments in land and means of production carried on as usual, if not more than before. Indeed, no epidemic, no political crisis, no lack of rain stopped the cultivators from believing in producing cotton now. By the end of the century, travelling from the east and north to the centre of the plain no longer presented a security issue and wages for seasonal labour kept increasing.<sup>50</sup> As a result, by 1908, Çukurova became a land of shared hegemony between foreign capitalists, the burgeoning indigenous classes, and the state. There was a new social and economic stratification, which caused clashes and massacres, and with the Republic, the predominance of non-Muslim merchants ended and their Turkish counterparts took their places as their primary role became the integration of the region with the Republican economy. This meant the end of a region and its autonomous economy.

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50 AP, Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1899, 11.



CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE:  
ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY  
AND THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES



# ENGINEERING THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE: IRRIGATION AND THE PERSISTENCE OF EARLY MODERN EXPERTISE

Alan MIKHAIL\*

THE RURAL WORLD WAS MADE. There is nothing natural about a field, a river, or a forest. Each has a history of negotiation, choice, manipulation, accident, conflict, and compromise. One of the great insights of environmental history is to demonstrate the complex ways in which humans, non-humans, and geophysical and climatic processes have participated in forging the pasts of all environments and thus the histories of the societies those environments supported. These observations are particularly salient for Ottoman and Middle East historians. The lands that would become the Ottoman Empire had been subject to human manipulation for millennia prior to the Ottoman conquests, and, unlike many regions of the globe, the documentary evidence of these changes exists for historians to be able to narrate these histories. When the Ottomans entered the Middle East, the Balkans, and North Africa, they did not find an untouched pristine wilderness. On the contrary, they encountered an intricately arranged and cultivated world, representing a particular historical and ecological order, forged through millennia of environmental management techniques. Over the centuries of Ottoman rule, these regions would continue to be manipulated and remade through imperial, environmental, economic, and social processes.

Focusing on just one aspect of this vast and complex history, this chapter explores the role of rural engineers in Ottoman Egypt between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Identified as *mühendis* (*muhandis* in Arabic) in the archival record, these individuals were integral to the manipulation of rural environments and helped to maintain and develop constructive relationships between local communities and the Ottoman imperial administration. Until the early nineteenth century, a shared interest in the maintenance and proper functioning of infrastructure, including canals, embankments, roads, bridges, and quays, kept rural peoples and the Ottoman state in regular communication over complicated matters related to the repair, manipulation, and expansion of these public works.<sup>1</sup> Engineers

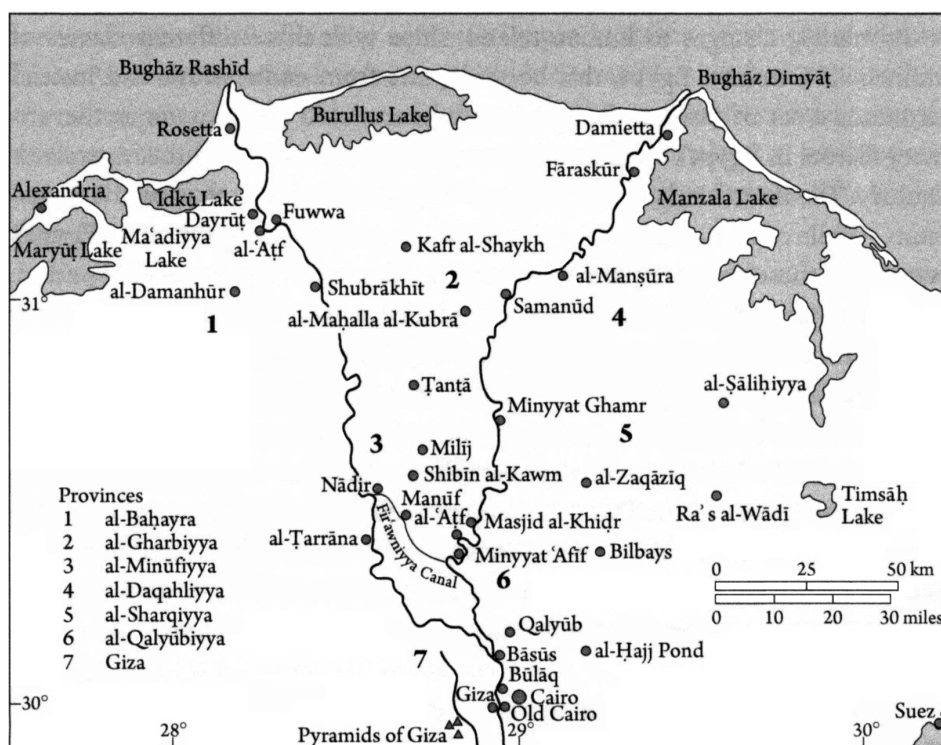
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1 For examples of this communication, see: A. Mikhail, *Nature and Empire in Ottoman Egypt: An Environmental History* (Cambridge 2011), 38-66.

were particularly important because they functioned as a kind of middleman between peasant interests and imperial concerns. Judges and other imperial officials relied on them to preserve a balanced relationship between local needs and imperial desires in rural Ottoman Egypt. The history of these engineers thus illuminates something of the logic and function of Ottoman governance in rural areas of the Empire in the early modern period. This backdrop proves essential in considering what came of these engineers and of engineering expertise in the early nineteenth century, when the nature of labour in rural Ottoman Egypt changed drastically.<sup>2</sup> This chapter ends with a discussion of what these transformations meant for engineers.



Map 1: The Nile Delta

### *Downstream, 1664*

In the summer of 1664, a problem emerged with a canal embankment in the village of Shārimṣāḥ in the sub-province of al-Daqahliyya in the north-east of the Egyptian

2 On these changes in labour, see: A. Mikhail, 'Labor and Environment in Egypt since 1500', *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 85 (2014), 10-32.



Delta.<sup>3</sup> Hoping to find a solution, the head of the village (*kāshif*) brought the problem to imperial administrators at the sub-provincial court of al-Manṣūra, the seat of al-Daqahl-iyya. Three sections of the face of the embankment had deteriorated and become dis-jointed (*takhalkhala*), falling into the canal's water. All three sections had been eroded to the point that the dried mud and clay of the internal portions of the embankment had become as soft as manure (*ṣāra sibākhan*). Water was thus allowed to spill wastefully out of the canal instead of being properly channelled to fields, and the land behind the embankment had become a soppy (*ghamīqa*) muddy mess. There was, moreover, a real possibility that these damaged sections would be completely destroyed by the rushing waters of the next season's flood, obviously a cause of enormous concern both for those living near the embankment and those further downstream.

The judge sitting in his court in al-Manṣūra was not an expert in irrigation works or infrastructural repair. In order for him to make a decision about what to do in this case, he needed expert testimony, particularly to ensure that any monies disbursed for repairs were properly and effectively spent. The imperative for expertise was not simply a bureaucratic and financial requirement to fulfil the court's legal function. Indeed, the correct and timely repair of the embankment had real-world consequences. Peasants (*ahālī*) from various downstream villages on the canal came to the court to testify that failure to repair the embankment would cause their fields, and hence their lives and livelihoods, great harm.<sup>4</sup> They added that neither they nor their village leaders had the financial or technical wherewithal to help repair the upstream embankment in Shārimṣāḥ that controlled so much of their agricultural fate. Thus for different reasons, the court, local leaders, and peasant communities were all in need of someone to provide the expert information required to fix the broken embankment.

Enter the engineer. Al-Mu'allim 'Aṭā' Allah was identified in this case, and in others, as the engineer of al-Manṣūra (*al-muhandis bil-Manṣūra*) and was, as his title suggests, likely a local Egyptian who resided somewhere in the sub-province. He was summoned to the court, made aware of the situation, and then dispatched to the field to gather the information needed to repair the embankment and restore the canal's proper flow. He went right to work.

'Aṭā' Allah's first task was to consult with rural cultivators in Shārimṣāḥ and its downstream villages about the state of the embankment and the effects of its disrepair on their communities.<sup>5</sup> Furthering their earlier testimony, they explained to him the po-

3 Dār al-Wathā'iq al-Qawmiyya [National Archives of Egypt, Cairo; hereafter DWQ], Maḥkamat al-Manṣūra 4, p. 108, case 281 (Evail M 1075/25 Jul.-3 Aug. 1664). On the village of Shārimṣāḥ, see: M. Ramzī, *al-Qāmūs al-Jughrāfī lil-Bilād al-Miṣriyya min 'Ahd Qudamā' al-Miṣriyyīn ilā Sanat 1945*, 6 vols in 2 pts (Cairo 1994), pt. 2, 1: 243.

4 On the use of the term *ahālī* in Ottoman Egypt, see: A. Mikhail, 'Unleashing the Beast: Animals, Energy, and the Economy of Labor in Ottoman Egypt', *American Historical Review*, 118 (2013), 326, fn. 31.

5 These downstream villages included Bisāt, Kafr Tiqay, and al-Za'ātra. See the text of this case for a complete list. On these three villages see, respectively: Ramzī, *al-Qāmūs al-Jughrāfī*, pt. 2, 1: 242, 245, 246.

tentially immense deleterious consequences of failing to fix the embankment. The yearly flood was only weeks away. Should it arrive with its full force before the embankment was repaired, the resulting damage to both fields and the canal would be enormous. The uncontrolled water would surely sweep away much of the embankment, along with other irrigation structures, and the waterway would be left in an unfixable state (*lā qudra li-aḥad ‘alā saddihi*). These peasants thus implored ‘Aṭā’ Allah to do all he could to fix the embankment quickly and sturdily.

Armed with his initial charge from the court and now with this corroborating information regarding the existing situation, ‘Aṭā’ Allah and his assistants set out to survey the damage to the embankment. Three parts of the structure had been destroyed. The first broken section measured 13 by 1.5 *qaṣabas*, and was opposite a group of three water-wheels.<sup>6</sup> The second damaged portion was near a basin known as al-Waḥdāniyya and measured 8 by 1.5 *qaṣabas*. The third damaged area was 9 by 1 *qaṣabas*. On the basis of these measurements, ‘Aṭā’ Allah estimated the total cost of these repairs to be 200,000 *nişf fiḍḍa*.<sup>7</sup> This sum included the needed repair materials, their transport to the construction site, the specialised tools required to move them, and the necessary labour.

He then returned to the court to report his findings to the judge and the head of Shārimṣāḥ. He relayed what locals around and below the embankment had told him about its disrepair and summarised his measurements of the damaged structure and his estimates for the cost of its repair. The total of 200,000 *nişf fiḍḍa* needed to fix the embankment was a huge sum. Other repair jobs from al-Manşūra in this period usually cost lesser orders of magnitude. In 1646, for example, 18,120 *nişf fiḍḍa* was spent on a series of repairs carried out on a canal and its embankments in the city of al-Manşūra.<sup>8</sup> In Shārimṣāḥ in 1664, costs were high, but there was simply no way to avoid the enormous sum. The court’s expert witness had reported his findings, and the consequences – financial, agricultural, and human – of not implementing his recommendations would surely be much greater than 200,000 *nişf fiḍḍa*. The court recorded what ‘Aṭā’ Allah had to say and approved the repairs.

Engineer ‘Aṭā’ Allah was one of the most powerful parties in this case. The whole project to repair the canal’s embankments rested on his expert recommendations. His consultation with locals, his measurements, and his cost estimates moved the repair pro-

6 One *qaṣaba* equals 3.99 metres. W. Hinz, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte umgerechnet ins metrische System* (Leiden 1955), 63. There is some discrepancy about this conversion. In her discussion of the repair of the Maḥmūdiyya Canal in the early nineteenth century, Helen Anne B. Rivlin takes one *qaṣaba* to equal 3.64 meters. H.A.B. Rivlin, *The Agricultural Policy of Muḥammad ‘Alī in Egypt* (Cambridge 1961), 218. Elsewhere she writes that the *qaṣaba* ranged between 3.75 metres and 3.99 metres. *Ibid.*, 125. Unless otherwise noted, throughout this chapter I take one *qaṣaba* to equal 3.99 metres.

7 The *nişf fiḍḍa* was “the silver coin in common use during Mamlūk and Ottoman times in Egypt”. It “was called *nişf fiḍḍe* colloquially and *para* officially”. S.J. Shaw, *The Financial and Administrative Organization and Development of Ottoman Egypt, 1517-1798* (Princeton 1962), 65, n. 169.

8 DWQ, Maḥkamat al-Manşūra 1, p. 84, case 197 (20 Z 1055/6 Feb. 1646).

cess forward. Without him, the embankment would have languished in disrepair, fields would have flooded, and tax revenues would have fallen. His authority over most of the case's other parties is evidenced by the court's decision to ignore the village head's initial recommendation to reinforce the embankment with another surface structure (*raşîf*). The village head presented this idea to the court before 'Aṭā' Allah was summoned for his expertise, but ultimately the engineer's ideas trumped the village head's. The testimony of local peasant cultivators was also an important component of this case. Their recommendations, though, were ultimately filtered through 'Aṭā' Allah and so were also presented to the court as part of his package of ideas. The judge in this case deferred to him as well. The engineer 'Aṭā' Allah's privileged knowledge and expertise was thus the most significant factor in the repair of the embankment and the accompanying massive expenditure of imperial funds.

His expertise was the crucial link between the institution of the court and the many peasant communities directly affected by imperial actions on the canal. The logic governing the Ottoman management of irrigation in rural Egypt recognised that water usage linked peasants in the Egyptian countryside not only to other, often distant, villages, but also to the palace and to areas of the Empire far beyond Egypt. Grains grown by the Nile's irrigated water and the tax revenues they helped to raise connected Egyptian peasants to Istanbul and elsewhere. 'Aṭā' Allah was an intermediary in the relationship between al-Manṣūra and Istanbul, between a small-scale canal's particular ecology and the empire it supported. He went back and forth co-ordinating between the court and the countryside and between Shārimṣāḥ and its downstream villages. Just as these Egyptian villages were connected by their shared use of the canal, so Istanbul, the Hijaz, and other areas of the empire that consumed Egyptian grains were also downstream communities. That is, the status of a canal embankment in a village like Shārimṣāḥ deeply impacted many other places outside Egypt. Engineers like 'Aṭā' Allah were therefore not simply fixing irrigation works but also working to keep the connective tissue between empire and community healthy and functional.

### *Scale, 1680*

Engineers were such central actors in rural Ottoman Egypt in part because of the sheer scale of the projects to which they contributed. Regularly assisting the imperial administration in infrastructural work of such immense size and importance secured their place in the functioning of the Empire. Indeed, the information and expertise provided by engineers in rural Ottoman Egypt controlled massive amounts of resources, cash, labour, and effort.

In 1680, the tax farmer (*multazim*) of the village of Ṭunāmil, Muḥammad Aghā, came to the court of al-Manṣūra to register a problem with a canal known as Baḥr al-Fuḍālī.<sup>9</sup> This canal, which served as the main source of water for his village and ten others, was

9 DWQ, Maḥkamat al-Manṣūra 7, p. 134, case 340 (7 Za 1091/29 Nov. 1680). On Ṭunāmil, see: Ramzī, *al-Qāmūs al-Juḡhrāfī*, pt. 2, 1: 174, 179.

barely flowing because of the enormous amounts of silt and plant matter it had been allowed to accumulate this year.<sup>10</sup> Muḥammad thus asked the court to dredge and clean the canal. To corroborate and offer further details on Muḥammad's claims, the court asked the engineer of al-Manṣūra (again *al-muhandis bil-Manṣūra*), in this year a man named al-Mu'allim Ḥasan, to inspect the canal. After measuring it – it was 80 *zirā'* in length and an average of 20 *zirā'* in width – Ḥasan reported back to the court that the canal was indeed in dire need of dredging.<sup>11</sup>

While at the canal site, Ḥasan also noticed a problem on one of the banks of the waterway. Measuring the distance between the canal and a large orchard in Ṭunāmil, he and his assistants found that there was not enough room for people to pass on the canal bank. One could, however, avoid this narrow section of canal bank by passing to the other side of the canal and then back again on two bridges that spanned the canal on either side of the orchard. Each bridge was five *zirā'* wide, 20 *zirā'* long, and ten *zirā'* high, and both were in need of repair. According to Ḥasan's report, their reconstruction would require 100,000 mud bricks (*tūba*) and an unspecified enormous amount of stone. The work needed to clean the canal and fix the two bridges would last 30 days, and on each day 40 workers would be required. These men were to be paid the going rate for this kind of work and be given provisions of food. On the basis of Ḥasan's report, the court authorised both the dredging of the canal and the added work of repairing the two bridges.

Ḥasan's authority to direct the repairs in this case is obvious. On his word alone, the court not only approved the work it had originally been asked to do on the canal but also undertook repairs that went much further than those brought to its attention by the tax farmer of Ṭunāmil. More significantly, this case highlights the enormous scale of the sort of irrigation work that was regularly pursued in rural Ottoman Egypt. The numbers are telling – 11 villages, 100,000 mud bricks, and wages and food for 40 workers for 30 days. The capital, resources, and organisation demanded by such numbers underscore both the level of environmental, social, and economic manipulation such projects entailed and the enormous trust and power invested in the person of the engineer. As 'Aṭā' Allah had done in Shārimṣāḥ a few years earlier, Ḥasan advanced the project on Baḥr al-Fuḍālī. He measured the canal, informed the court about the two broken bridges, and offered estimates of the work's cost and labour demands. Projects of this scale could only be entrusted to and managed by people with knowledge, expertise, and proven reliability. These people were engineers like Ḥasan.

### *Knowledge, 1705*

A case from roughly 25 years later provides further information about how the Ottoman administration organised and utilised the expertise of engineers.<sup>12</sup> Also from the court of

10 The ten other villages were Dammās, Kafr al-Rūla, Minyat Gharb, Durra, Tanbūl, Tūḥ, Nūr Ṭīq, al-Sandalāwī, Barhamnus, and Shubrahūr.

11 One engineering *zirā'* (*zirā' al-handasa*) equals 0.656 metres. Hinz, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte*, 58.

12 DWQ, Maḥkamat al-Manṣūra 16, p. 257, case 527 (18 Z 1116/13 Apr. 1705).

al-Manşūra, this case concerns the repair of a deteriorating embankment at the mouth of the large canal of al-Baḥr al-Ṣaghīr that flowed east to the Lake of al-Manzala in the sub-province of al-Daqahliyya. In 1705, after years of neglect, the embankment was badly in need of maintenance. Parts of it had broken off and fallen into the canal, while other sections were badly silted up. Because state funds (*al-māl al-mūrī*) were to be used to fix the embankment, the heads of the seven military blocs in al-Daqahliyya, judges from the sub-province, and other local elites came to the court to discuss these repairs.<sup>13</sup> As in the previous cases, they consulted with the engineer of al-Manşūra about the repairs, ultimately deferring to his expertise.

In 1705, the engineer was a man named al-Ḥājj Shāhīn, and his title was head of the corporation of engineers of al-Manşūra (*shaykh ṭā'ifat al-muhandisīn bil-Manşūra*).<sup>14</sup> This title tellingly points to the presence of an organised institution of engineers in rural Ottoman Egypt. Like the members of other consortiums or guild formations, engineers understood the power they could derive from their knowledge and expertise and adopted corporate organisation in order to advocate and protect their interests.<sup>15</sup> This was an early modern knowledge economy.

The commodification of groups of engineers' collective expertise is abundantly clear in this case. Shāhīn and his associates were brought from Damietta – over 40 miles away from al-Manşūra – to inspect the damaged embankment and offer advice about how to repair it. The case unequivocally states that these men were valued for their expertise (*li-kaun anna lihum khibra wa ma'rifa*).<sup>16</sup> Their 'importation' from Damietta is mentioned repeatedly throughout the case. Moreover, although never stated explicitly in the text, there was probably a cost associated with bringing these men from Damietta. Perhaps they were even paid for their services. These men are therefore most usefully thought of as travelling expert consultants who were employed by the Ottoman state for their technical knowledge and expertise.

Conceptualising these engineers' knowledge as a commodity also helps explain their movement across the sub-province of al-Daqahliyya. The Ottomans were masters of comparative advantage.<sup>17</sup> They regularly organised the transport of resources between different parts of the Empire to achieve optimal configurations of effort and capital. In the

13 The use of state funds for this repair is specifically mentioned in the following case: DWQ, Maḥkamat al-Manşūra 16, p. 289 or 290, case 599 (17 S 1117/10 Jun. 1705). The seven military blocs were the 'Azeban, Çavuşan, Çerakise, Gönüllüyan, Mustahfızan (Janissaries), Müteferrika, and Tüfenkciyan.

14 DWQ, Maḥkamat al-Manşūra 16, p. 257, case 527 (18 Z 1116/13 Apr. 1705).

15 Generally on Ottoman guilds, see: E. Yi, *Guild Dynamics in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul: Fluidity and Leverage* (Leiden 2004); A. Cohen, *The Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem* (Leiden 2001); G. Baer, *Egyptian Guilds in Modern Times* (Jerusalem 1964); S. Faroqhi, *Artisans of Empire: Crafts and Craftspeople Under the Ottomans* (London 2009); S. Faroqhi and R. Deguilhem (eds), *Crafts and Craftsmen of the Middle East: Fashioning the Individual in the Muslim Mediterranean* (London 2005).

16 DWQ, Maḥkamat al-Manşūra 16, p. 289 or 290, case 599 (17 S 1117/10 Jun. 1705).

17 For further discussion of this point, see: Mikhail, *Nature and Empire*, 124-125.

case of Egypt, this meant moving the province's excess grain to other parts of the Empire and moving wood from southern Anatolia and elsewhere to the timber-bereft Nile Valley.<sup>18</sup> Like grain and wood, albeit on a more local scale, the engineering know-how of Shāhīn and his fellow engineers was moved to areas where it was needed most.

And what did these men find once they got to the canal of al-Baḥr al-Ṣaghīr? Their first recommendation to the imperial bureaucracy was to remove the massive quantity of silt that had collected in the canal. The total volume that had to be dredged was 906.5 cubic *zirā'*. The cost of dredging a single cubic *zirā'* was 80 *nişf fidḍa*, so the total cost of this part of the repairs was 72,520 *nişf fidḍa*.<sup>19</sup> In the embankment itself, a section measuring 700 square *zirā'* had to be replaced. The cost of repairing a single square *zirā'* of the embankment was again 80 *nişf fidḍa*, bringing the cost of this portion of the work to 56,000 *nişf fidḍa*. Another 10,000 *nişf fidḍa* was needed to purchase soil, stones, and other building materials. Thus the grand total engineer Shāhīn and his associates estimated for this work was 138,520 *nişf fidḍa*. Throughout the text of this case, all of these measurements and repair costs are reported as being on the authority of the engineers (*al-takhmīn bi-ma'rifat al-muhandisīn*). Subsequent cases recorded after the repairs had been completed confirmed the accuracy of the engineers' estimates.<sup>20</sup>

Rural engineers' authority and the value of their expertise was thus in large part a function of the accuracy of their estimates. Running way over cost or overestimating the amount of time needed for a repair job obviously did not help engineers to sell their knowledge to the Ottoman state. Perhaps the Ottoman administration of Egypt undertook the added complexity of bringing Shāhīn and his associates from Damietta (rather than using local engineers) precisely because they were known to give accurate estimates in their repair work or, more generally, because of their proven integrity and honesty. Reputations clearly mattered in Ottoman Egypt's knowledge economy, and engineers like Shāhīn used this fact to their advantage.

Unlike in some of the previous cases, peasant communities did not have much input in the repair of al-Baḥr al-Ṣaghīr's embankment in 1705. This was primarily because the canal was part of the state's imperial irrigation infrastructure. There were two classes of canal in rural Egypt: *sulṭānī* (imperial) and *baladī* (local).<sup>21</sup> If a canal served a large group of peasants, contributed to the common good, or promoted equality among peasants, it was considered a *sulṭānī* canal, the responsibilities for which fell to the Ottoman state in Egypt. *Baladī* canals, by contrast, were those that served the irrigation needs of a particular community. These were to be maintained by local leaders. Although both *sulṭānī* and *baladī* canals ultimately remained the property of the state, their upkeep was very often

18 Ibid., 82-169.

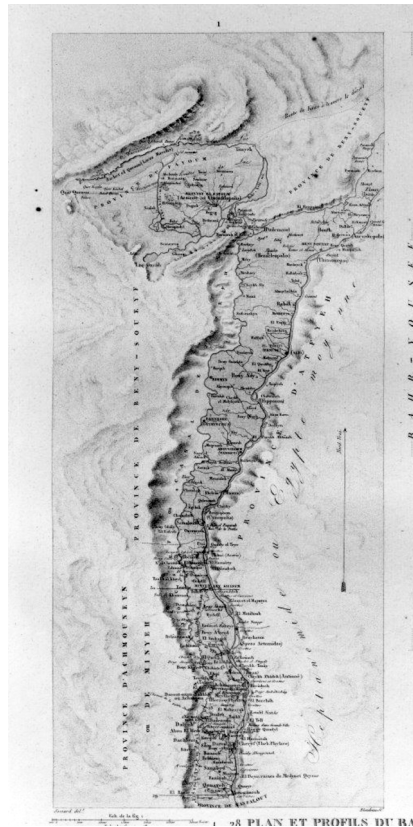
19 All of these measurements and cost estimates come from the following: DWQ, Maḥkamat al-Manşūra 16, p. 257, case 527 (18 Z 1116/13 Apr. 1705).

20 DWQ, Maḥkamat al-Manşūra 16, p. 289 or 290, case 599 (17 S 1117/10 Jun. 1705).

21 On the distinction between these two types of canal, see: S. J. Borsch, 'Environment and Population: The Collapse of Large Irrigation Systems Reconsidered', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 46 (2004), 458-460; S. Tsugitaka, *State and Rural Society in Medieval Islam: Sultans, Muqta's and Fallahun* (Leiden 1997), 225-227; Mikhail, *Nature and Empire*, 40-46.



entrusted to locals – engineers, peasants, and rural elites – since they were the ones who used and most directly relied on these waterways. Since al-Baḥr al-Ṣaghīr was a *sulṭānī* canal, the responsibility to repair it fell squarely on the shoulders of the state, hence the use of imperial funds (*al-māl al-mūrī*) to repair it. In thinking about the role of engineers in Ottoman Egypt, in the end it did not much matter if canals were classed as *sulṭānī* or *baladī*. In both cases, engineers were key figures in their maintenance and repair.



**Map 2:** Fayyūm and Manfalūt

### *Soundness, 1709*

As in the sub-province of al-Daqahliyya, state funds were likewise regularly used to repair *sulṭānī* irrigation works in Fayyūm throughout the first half of the eighteenth century, and engineers played similarly prominent roles in these cases.<sup>22</sup> In 1709, the *divan* of the Ottoman Sultan Ahmed III sent a *firman* to the Vali in Cairo about on-going dam-

<sup>22</sup> Generally on this repair work in eighteenth-century Fayyūm, see: A. Mikhail, 'An Irrigated Empire: The View from Ottoman Fayyum', *IJMES*, 42 (2010), 569-590.



age to the regulation mechanisms on the important canal of Baḥr Yūsuf in Fayyūm.<sup>23</sup> This single canal was the lifeline of Fayyūm. Lying in a depression south-west of Cairo, the region is unique in Egypt since it is the only major agricultural zone that is neither in the Nile Valley nor the Delta.<sup>24</sup> In the eighteenth century, Baḥr Yūsuf provided all of Fayyūm's water. Problems of the sort which arose in 1709 thus led to widespread environmental stress throughout the region.

According to the *firman* in this case, much of Fayyūm was currently unwatered (*sharāqī*) because of the failure of Baḥr Yūsuf's irrigation mechanisms.<sup>25</sup> From its downstream perspective, the Sultan's council strongly asserted that it was not only Fayyūm which was directly affected by this deterioration in the irrigation network. Repeating an idea we have seen already, this *firman* emphasised the great destruction to agricultural lands that might result should this situation remain unaddressed, which would hurt Egypt's overall agricultural output and thus greatly reduce the amount of tax revenue available to the state. To stave off these deleterious consequences, the imperial bureaucracy once again turned to engineers. The Sultan ordered the Vali of Egypt to send to Fayyūm a group of engineers of sound judgement (*mühendis-ini sahih ül-tahmin*) to oversee the reconstruction of the canal's dams and embankments as quickly as possible (*alavechitta 'cil*). To fund this work, 11 Egyptian purses (*kise-i Mısır*) were made available from the annual tribute of 1708/1709.<sup>26</sup>

Inspections and repair work on the canal continued for several years under the collective direction and management of engineers in Fayyūm. In 1711, they registered a report with the imperial administration about the deterioration of many of the canal's irrigation works.<sup>27</sup> In the major dam of al-Gharaq, for instance, there was a damaged area

23 BOA, İbnülemin Umur-i Nafia 94 (Evasit Ra 1121/21-30 May 1709).

24 For a description of Fayyūm's geography and irrigation, see: Mikhail, 'An Irrigated Empire', 574-576.

25 The Egyptian Arabic word *sharāqī* refers to land that is not reached by water and is hence parched and dry. In contrast to *būr* land, which is uncultivable wasteland, *sharāqī* earth has the potential for cultivation given the proper amount of water.

26 The Egyptian purse equalled 25,000 *para*, which, again, was the official Ottoman name given to the *nişf fidḍa*. Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization and Development*, 65, n. 169. Repairs to irrigation works in Fayyūm were often funded from the Egyptian annual tribute (*irsaliye*), the overall revenue garnered from the province in any given year. Although not all Ottoman provinces submitted an annual tribute to Istanbul, of those that did, Egypt's was by far the largest. It was one of the main responsibilities of the Vali to send these funds each year. For cases concerning various aspects of the organisation of the yearly Egyptian *irsaliye*, see: TSMA, E. 664/4 (n.d.); E. 664/64 (1 C 1059/12 Jun. 1649); E. 5207/57 (Evail B 1056/12-21 Aug. 1646); E. 5207/58 (Evasit B 1056/22-31 Aug. 1646); E. 7016/95 (n.d.); E. 5207/49 (Evahir Ca 1056/5-14 Jul. 1646); E. 664/66 (n.d.); E. 4675/2 (20 N 1061/6 Sep. 1651); E. 3522 (24 Ş 1148/8 Jan. 1736). For further discussion, see: Shaw, *Financial and Administrative Organization and Development*, 283-312, 399-401. For a detailed accounting of each component of the *irsaliye* from 1596 and 1597, see: idem, *The Budget of Ottoman Egypt, 1005-1006/1596-1597* (The Hague 1968).

27 BOA, Mühimme-i Mısır, 1: 167 (Evasit S 1123/31 Mar.-9 Apr. 1711).

that measured 27,234 square *zirā'*. Broken sections in the foundation (*paye*), walls (*du-varlar*), and support girdle (*kemer*) of the dyke of al-Lāhūn totalled 9,980 square *zirā'*. Between just these two structures (there were others damaged as well), the total area in need of repair was therefore 37,214 square *zirā'*. It was estimated (*alavechittahmin*) that the cost of repairing one square *zirā'* would be 15 *para*, bringing the total cost of fixing these two irrigation works to 22 Egyptian purses and 8,510 *para*. The bulk of these funds was needed to purchase building materials—mainly lime (*kireç*), wooden supports (*şecār*), and stone (*taş*). Istanbul directed that these monies be taken from the Egyptian annual tribute of 1710/1711.

The engineers of Fayyūm thus worked in conjunction with the imperial administration to fix problems on Baḥr Yūsuf. Engineers were a clearly identified and recognised group in Fayyūm whose trustworthiness and soundness of mind were both confirmed by the Ottoman state and relied upon to carry out vital infrastructural work.

### *Intermediary, 1713*

The role of the engineer as intermediary between the imperial and the local is further demonstrated by cases of irrigation repair that, like the previous example from Fayyūm, climbed up the entire bureaucratic ladder to reach the palace in Istanbul. Such cases usually involved very large irrigation structures whose damage or destruction would have had serious consequences for imperial governance in Egypt and indeed throughout the Empire. In 1713, a petition from Manfalūt in southern Egypt reached the Sultan's court.<sup>28</sup> The supports of a weir on a canal in the village of Waḥīshāt near Manfalūt had been broken by the force of the canal water's incessant pounding and had fallen into a dangerous state of disrepair. Should the supports given way entirely, water would rush uncontrollably through the canal, and the many villages that relied on it would lose their primary source of water. Agricultural lands would remain parched and dry, and food supplies and tax income would suffer.

This threatening situation was a cause of great concern for the Ottoman Sultan and his retinue. They understood the downstream implications of the massive loss of agricultural resources and revenues from an area of high cultivation like Manfalūt. Indeed, the seriousness of the situation is evidenced by the fact that this petition was not handled by the court in Manfalūt, but instead bubbled all the way up to the palace itself. In response, the Sultan issued a *firman* instructing his Vali to hire, yet again, an engineer and other local experts (*ehl-i hibre ve erbab-i vukuf*) to inspect the situation.<sup>29</sup> The engineer's name was el-Hâc Mehmed, and, quite tellingly, of the men of technical knowledge identified in this case, he was the only one specifically named. Thus again we find a collective body of technical expertise in the Egyptian countryside that took the lead in inspecting and repairing irrigation works.

28 BOA, Cevdet Nafia 120 (Evasıt Ca 1125/5-14 Jun. 1713).

29 For more on these local experts, see: Mikhail, *Nature and Empire*, 66, 176-178.

After Mehmed and his associates had visited the deteriorating weir and completed their measurements, they reported back to the palace, through the Vali, that the area in need of repair measured 9,110 square *zirā'* and would cost 18,130 *para* to fix. After some deliberation, and with the stated goal of properly reinforcing the weir to prevent future damage, funds were made available to undertake the repairs. The *firman* issued to release these funds again repeatedly invoked the authority of the engineer as proof of the urgency of the repair work and justification for the costs.

Like previous cases, this one turned on the expertise of the engineer. Mehmed was the one who directed how much the state was to spend on repairing the damaged weir. Indeed, the line of communication in this case ran very clearly from a particular petitioning community in Egypt through the engineer to the Sultan. It was the engineer's technical knowledge that integrated him into the imperial administration. The Sultan in many ways devolved authority over technical matters such as the repair of a weir to local experts like Mehmed who through years of working in the countryside had proved both their acumen and trustworthiness. Mehmed could not fix irrigation works without the money provided by the state; the state could not fix them without the knowledge provided by experts like Mehmed. This was why engineers were so indispensable to Ottoman governance and why Ottoman governance was so indispensable to engineers.

### *Persistence, 1816*

The expertise of local Egyptian engineers like 'Aṭā' Allah, Ḥasan, Shāhīn, and Mehmed would remain important well into the period of Mehmed 'Ali's reforms in the first half of the nineteenth century. Mehmed 'Ali's major innovation in the realm of engineering was the establishment of a School of Engineering in the fall of 1816. Despite importing European teachers, textbooks, and training for the school, Mehmed 'Ali continued to privilege the knowledge and technical skill of Egyptian engineers. Local engineers still drove how Ottoman rulers used engineering expertise to fix Egypt's infrastructure. Even the story of the founding logic of the engineering school speaks to the role of local technical expertise. As the Egyptian chronicler al-Jabartī relates:

A Cairene named Ḥusayn Çelebi 'Ajūwa had the idea of a wheel to use in stripping rice. He made a model of it in tinsplate which revolved with great ease, so that whereas the conventional apparatus required four oxen to drive it, his needed only two. The pasha [Mehmed 'Ali] admired this model when it was presented to him, so he gave Ḥusayn some money and ordered him to build a wheel in Damietta crafted according to his knowledge of engineering. With a decree authorising the wood, iron, and whatever money he needed, Ḥusayn made the machine, thus verifying what he had claimed. After constructing another at Rosetta, he gained renown.

The pasha became convinced, based on Ḥusayn Çelebi's feat, that Egyptians have a superior aptitude for the sciences. Accordingly, he ordered that a school be built in the courtyard of his palace in which a group of natives and the pasha's mamluks were enrolled under the teacher Ḥasan Efendi, known as al-Darwīsh al-Mawṣilī. With the collaboration of a Turk named Rūḥ al-Dīn Efendi and several Europeans, the principles of accounting and engineering were

taught, as well as arithmetic, geometry, and trigonometry, and algebra.<sup>30</sup> Various technical instruments of English manufacture were provided, with which the students could measure distance, elevation, and area. Provided with monthly stipends and yearly clothing allowances, they met regularly in this school, which was called the School of Engineering, every morning of the week until shortly past noon, when they returned to their homes. Some days they made field trips to the open country to study surveying. In fact, knowledge of surveying was the pasha's main goal.<sup>31</sup>

The institutionalisation of engineering knowledge in a formal school was something novel in Ottoman Egypt.<sup>32</sup> What is striking, however, is the extent to which early modern engineers and their modes of knowledge persisted and remained central into the nineteenth century. Engineers continued to communicate directly with Ottoman officials about the possibility of improving rural technologies, and the imperial state continued to give them money to facilitate their work – as is made clear in the story of Hüsayn Çelebi. Reputation, moreover, remained fundamental to the economy of engineering in the early nineteenth century. It was Hüsayn Çelebi's "renown" that proved his worth.

Mehmed 'Ali's belief "that Egyptians have a superior aptitude for the sciences" came from the sustained role engineers played in Egyptian society, even into the nineteenth century. Mehmed 'Ali's school was a formal recognition of this fact and an attempt to institutionalise these engineers' knowledge. Many of the students in the school, those referred to as "natives" by al-Jabartī, were engineers like 'Aṭā' Allah, Ḥasan, Shāhīn, and Mehmed – locals from rural communities throughout Egypt who were brought to Cairo in an effort to centralise their expertise for the benefit of Mehmed 'Ali's government. And even though others now participated much more directly in the development and utilisation of engineering expertise in Egypt – Europeans, Ottoman officials, Mehmed 'Ali's own *mamluks*, and government technocrats – local Egyptian engineers, the *ehl-i hibre ve erbab-i vukuf* of the countryside, still offered the best advice and most expert knowledge.

Their critical role was clear when Mehmed 'Ali's son, Ibrahim Pasha, undertook a cadastral survey in 1821. He assembled several groups of surveyors and engineers: officials from the School of Engineering, sixty engineers from Upper Egyptian towns and villages, a group of European engineers, and a number of Coptic surveyors led by the Coptic notable al-Mu'allim Ghālī. Each of these groups of engineers represented a different tradition and mode of understanding technical knowledge, and each claimed the right to administer the cadastre themselves. In order to choose which group of experts to use for the survey, Ibrahim Pasha arranged a kind of engineering contest. "He announced that

30 For more on Rūḥ al-Dīn Efendi's work in Egypt, see: *ibid.*, 260-263, 284. On his career in the imperial translation office in Istanbul, see: C. M. Philliou, *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution* (Berkeley 2011), 91-93.

31 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Jabartī, *'Abd al-Raḥman al-Jabartī's History of Egypt: 'Ajā'ib al-Āthār fī al-Tarājim wa al-Akhhbār*, eds. T. Philipp and M. Perlmann, 4 vols (Stuttgart 1994), 4: 359.

32 Related to surveying, another motivation behind the founding of the school was the desire to create a class of technocrats who could advise Mehmed 'Ali on his massive irrigation schemes and other infrastructural manipulation projects. Mikhail, *Nature and Empire*, 260-261.

he wanted precision combined with speed and set a test on a plot of land which would demonstrate precision and variations.”<sup>33</sup> The winners of this competition were the Coptic engineers. If we accept al-Jabartī’s claim that the School of Engineering was founded primarily for purposes of surveying, then, at least in this instance, the school seems to have failed in its mission. Its graduates were defeated in a surveying contest by Egyptian engineers with no connection to the school. Thus despite the emergence of European and other forms and tools of scientific knowledge, local Egyptian engineering know-how was still deemed the most useful. A local tradition of engineering expertise persisted.<sup>34</sup>

### Conclusion

We are accustomed to seeing the decades around 1800 as a period of complete rupture. The early modern centuries were, we are told, vastly different from the nineteenth century. In multiple realms they indeed were. In the face of this temporal divide, however, the persistence of engineering knowledge in Ottoman Egypt serves as an important reminder of some of the many continuities between these supposedly incommensurable periods. While the founding of the School of Engineering, often taken as a mark of innovation and rupture, was of course a significant event in and of itself, it did not radically alter the role or status of local engineering knowledge in Egypt. Engineers drawn from local communities throughout Egypt still directed the state in its management and manipulation of the countryside.

This kind of before-and-after-1800 historiography of the Ottoman Empire has a corollary in the field of environmental history that is worth considering in this context. Environmental historians have identified a notion of ‘pristine nature’ as both a fiction and a trap.<sup>35</sup> Pristine nature is the idea that somehow nature existed in a perfect state of harmony, balance, and sustainability before humans came to destroy it. Embedded in this idea is the spectre of ecological ‘decline’—another conceptual fiction with which Ottoman historians are all too familiar. The declensionist narrative of environmental history posits that the overwhelming majority of human interactions with nature have been detrimental.<sup>36</sup> Humans have depleted, mangled, and scarred environments in various irreversible ways, forever ruining what could only have been a pristine, because now lost, version of

33 al-Jabartī, *‘Ajā’ib al-Āthār*, 4: 448.

34 For more on this dynamic, see: Mikhail, *Nature and Empire*, 279, 288.

35 W. M. Denevan, ‘The Pristine Myth: The Landscape of the Americas in 1492’, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 82 (1992), 369-385; W. Cronon, ‘The Trouble with Wilderness: Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature’, *Environmental History*, 1 (1996), 7-28. For further discussion, see also the several essays on this topic and William Cronon’s response in the same issue of *Environmental History*.

36 For an analysis of some of the political and ecological uses of a declensionist environmental narrative in colonial North Africa, see: D. K. Davis, *Resurrecting the Granary of Rome: Environmental History and French Colonial Expansion in North Africa* (Athens, Ohio 2007), 131-176; eadem, ‘Potential Forests: Degradation Narratives, Science, and Environmental Policy in Protectorate Morocco, 1912-1956’, *Environmental History*, 10 (2005), 211-238.

nature. Critics of these ideas have emphasised that the relationships between humans and the rest of nature are much more complex than this simple story of one-way decline and ruin. Environments shape humans, humans then reshape environments, these new environments offer a new set of limits for humans, and so on and so forth.<sup>37</sup> It is this dialectical relationship that we must understand to fully grasp environmental history. The idea of pristine nature thus in many ways takes ecology out of history. Environmental history works to put ecology back into history and history into ecology.

These ideas and their critiques are instructive for Ottoman historians. The Empire's early modern history was not a pristine moment of unvariegated state and society relations waiting patiently – outside of history as it were – for the forceful ideas, actors, and wars of the nineteenth century. As I have tried to show in this chapter, the early modern centuries were a dynamic and conflicted period in their own right, not a mere empty stage awaiting the main event of the nineteenth century. The notion of a pristine early modernity thus sets up a false dichotomy between what preceded 1800 and what followed it. The divide is not so unassailable.

Rural engineers were an important component of this history of continuity. As their example shows, certain kinds of actors and forms of expertise persisted across the purportedly absolute temporal divide of 1800. Indeed, the ways in which engineering knowledge came to shape nineteenth-century rural Egypt followed patterns set much earlier. As we saw with the examples of 'Aṭā' Allah, Ḥasan, Shāhīn, and Mehmed, engineers were the experts on whom the Ottoman administration relied to defuse the tension and conflict inherent in the management of irrigation works and, ultimately, properly to build and repair early modern Egypt's rural infrastructure. Their authority derived from their expertise, direct personal experience of the countryside, reputation, and ability to provide accurate estimates of repair dimensions and costs. They served as crucial intermediaries between imperial desires and ambitions and local ecological realities and economic interests. Engineers helped to make the rural world.

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37 In William Cronon's words, "environment may initially shape the range of choices available to a people at a given moment, but then culture reshapes environment in responding to those choices. The reshaped environment presents a new set of possibilities for cultural reproduction, thus setting up a new cycle of mutual determination." W. Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York 2003, rev. ed.), 13.





## RURAL ECONOMIES AND DIGITAL HUMANITIES: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES

Antonis HADJIKYRIACOU\* – Elias KOLOVOS\*\*

IN THIS SHORT ESSAY WE AIM TO EXPLORE the new possibilities which the current advance of Digital Humanities can lend to the study of Ottoman rural economies and societies.<sup>1</sup> Our starting-point is the marked lack of interest in contemporary Ottomanist historiography in employing the unprecedented level of sophisticated and complex mathematical calculations provided by new digital tools in processing masses of numerical data from Ottoman land and fiscal survey registers. This, in turn, follows the general neglect that contemporary historiography shows of the study of rural societies and economies, already observed in the introduction of this volume and in many of its papers.

In this short essay, we present our existing work on the employment of Geographic Information Systems (G.I.S.) methods in the study of Ottoman rural economies. Our observations are based upon three research projects, of which one has been completed ('Digital Crete'), another is currently in progress ('Mediterranean Insularities'), and a final one is under development and consideration ('Mapping Economic Space in the Ottoman World'). These projects, in many ways the past, the present, and the future of our work, are hosted by the Institute for Mediterranean Studies, Foundation for Research and Technology, Hellas (FO.R.T.H.) based in Rethymno, Greece.

The experience of working on, and thinking about, these projects leads us to argue that Ottoman fiscal registers (*tapu tahrir defterleri*) are an indispensable tool in identifying, processing, and employing toponymic data, necessary for any geo-referencing exercise in the context of digital mapping. In other words, the particular sources (as well as others) are not simply valuable from the vantage point of economic history, but of any

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kind of mass data spatial analysis. In addition, ‘big data’ projects facilitated by exciting new digital technologies still require the type of micro-historical and toponymic knowledge that can only be acquired by acquaintance on a case-to-case basis with any given spatial entry in a fiscal register (and in addition, its preceding or succeeding variants or alternative denominations). We further explore the prospects and challenges that Digital Humanities tools present, and acknowledge the early stage at which the field still is in fully taking advantage of the exciting opportunities open to it.

### *The past*

Implemented between 2004 and 2008, ‘Digital Crete: Mediterranean Cultural Itineraries’ (<http://digitalcrete.ims.forth.gr>) was conceived as an online cultural information portal, bringing together selected digitised documentation and data on the cultural heritage of Crete, from the prehistoric to the modern period.<sup>2</sup> One of the primary motivations behind the project was to increase understanding and awareness of the Cretan cultural heritage, aiming at not only researchers, but also local society, educators, schoolchildren, and visitors. In this sense, this was an opportunity to expand target audiences and engage with local society. At the same time, it was a chance to further integrate our Institute’s research engagements into Digital Humanities.

The project included the following inventory modules:

- the Digital Archaeological Atlas of Crete from prehistory to the Roman period;
- the Venetian Crete Database, focusing on Western Art in Crete between 1300 and 1650;
- the Ottoman Crete Databases;
- the Modern Crete Database, focusing on the social history of the towns of Crete in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century;
- the El Greco Database;
- Musical Routes – a database digitising the ethno-musicological collections of Crete.

The Ottoman component of the Digital Crete project consisted of three different elements:

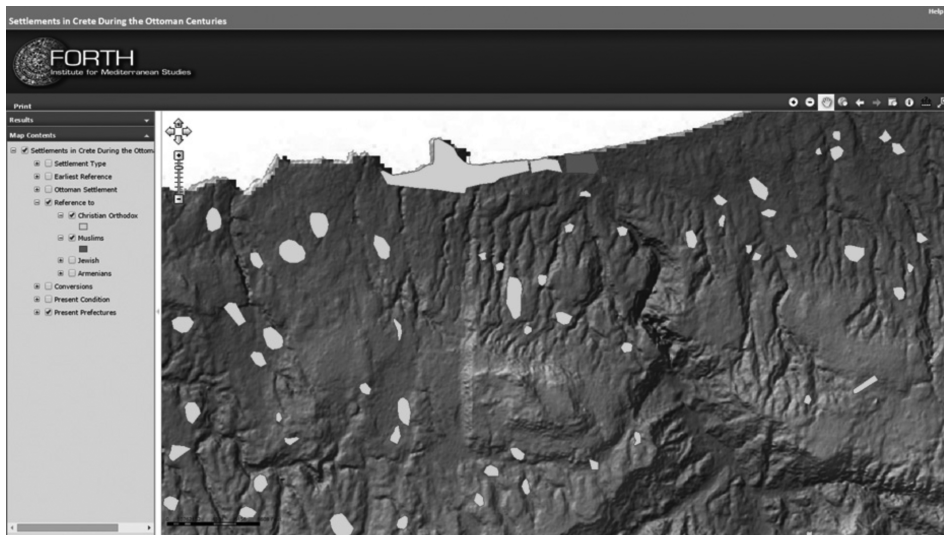
- a) a database of Ottoman monuments in the towns and the countryside of Crete, surviving or otherwise, with a brief account of their history. This was the first attempt towards the recording of this kind of Ottoman cultural heritage in Crete, and the main purpose was to instigate further research;
- b) the Islamic Tombstones project, led by Antonis Anastasopoulos. This consisted of a special database that recorded the Islamic Tombstones and their inscriptions

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2 The project was part of the Greek Operational Programme for Information Society, funded by the 3rd European Community Support Framework. 75% of funds came from the European Regional Development Fund, and the remaining 25% from the Ministry of Finance of the Hellenic Republic.

found so far in Rethymno. The tombstones are dated from the late seventeenth century until 1900;<sup>3</sup>

- c) the Ottoman Settlement Database and G.I.S. map. This database included information on the settlements in Crete during the Ottoman period, based on Ottoman land and population survey registers. The main aim in the creation of this inventory was to locate/visualise the distribution of the Christian Orthodox and Muslim population on the island during the Ottoman period. The settlements which we were able to identify have been geo-referenced and included in a G.I.S. map of Crete.



**Figure 1:** G.I.S. mapping of Christian (light grey) and Muslim (dark grey) settlements around Ottoman Rethymno from the ‘Digital Crete’ online database

As far as Ottoman fiscal surveys are concerned, we attempted to use G.I.S. as a means of presenting the relevant data. Because of various limitations in resources and know-how, we had to restrict the use of our data to demographics. As a result, the potential of these sources for the purposes of studying the patterns of economic production was left unexploited. At the same time, and despite the limited resources at our disposal, the Ottoman component of ‘Digital Crete’ laid some important foundations in georeferencing toponyms and identifying the different variations of village names in the transition between Venetian and Ottoman sovereignty. This issue has actually proved valuable for the subsequent project, as we will explain below.

3 See A. Anastasopoulos, ‘The Islamic Gravestones of Ottoman Rethymno: Preliminary Remarks and Thoughts about Them’, in idem (ed.), *The Eastern Mediterranean under Ottoman Rule: Crete, 1645-1840. Halcyon Days in Crete VI, A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 13-15 January 2006* (Rethymno 2008), 317-329.

### *The present*

In 2014, Antonis Hadjikyriacou was awarded a two-year Marie Curie Intra European Fellowship to implement a project entitled ‘Mediterranean insularities and miniature continents: Space, landscape and agriculture in early modern Cyprus and Crete’ (<http://medins.ims.forth.gr>). The project is hosted at the Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FO.R.T.H. under the academic co-ordination of Elias Kolovos.

‘Mediterranean Insularities’ (MedIns) is a comparative spatial history of Ottoman Cyprus and Crete. Based on data from the conquest fiscal survey registers *mufassal defterleri* of Cyprus (1572) and Crete (1669–70), the project employs G.I.S. methods and digital cartographic tools to map the patterns of economic production of the two islands. It sets these two fiscal snapshots of the countrysides of the two islands against the backdrops of the rural landscape, geomorphology, water resources, climate, and environment. Through this mode of inquiry, the project constitutes an attempt to make the concept of insularity more tangible by exploring the articulation of material conditions in the spatial setting of an island, and more specifically, in two quintessential Braudelian ‘miniature continents’.

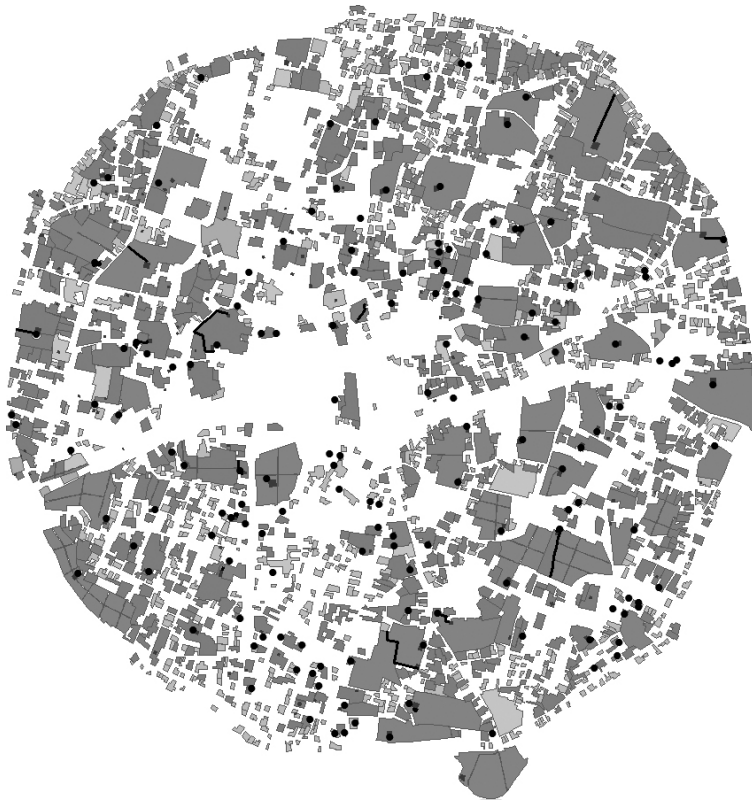
The project builds upon the ‘Digital Crete’ experience in a range of ways. Primarily, it capitalises on existing know-how with reference to the challenges of reading the *siyakat* script of Ottoman Turkish (in which these registers are compiled), particularly so with reference to deciphering place-names. If obvious and basic, this aspect of working with the particular kinds of sources is more often than not underestimated. The result is a great many mistakes, minor or major, in reading toponyms. In turn, such problems inhibit, if not preclude, the geo-referencing of place-names.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, MedIns goes beyond ‘Digital Crete’ in that it focuses on the economic, rather than just the demographic, data in the registers. In doing so, it explores the correlations between the types of crops cultivated or other forms of taxable economic activity recorded, with the geomorphology, topography, access to water resources, environment, and climate. While G.I.S. data concern contemporary realities rather than those of five centuries ago, error margins remain relatively small, while at the same time it is possible to identify and explain major discrepancies in the current landscape with the types of economic activity recorded, if we accept the figures with a reasonable degree of trustworthiness. For example, would elevation, gradient, soil type, proximity and access to water justify the requirements of a particular cultivation of, say, cotton in that particular village?

MedIns also employs historical maps as sources of data. It does so by digitising the first modern maps of Cyprus compiled by the British upon their arrival to the island in the later decades of the nineteenth century. More specifically, the project uses the plans of the cities of Nicosia and Famagusta on a scale of 1:2,500 (undated, c. 1881), and a map of the whole island (entitled *A Trigonometrical Survey of the Island of Cyprus*) on a scale

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4 See, for example, E. Kolovos in *IJMES*, 40 (2008), 139–140, book review of Fariba Zarinebaf, John Bennet, and Jack L. Davis, *A Historical and Economic Geography of Ottoman Greece: The Southwestern Morea in the 18th Century* (Athens 2005).



**Figure 2:** Digitisation of green space and water management resources (wells, water tanks and conduits) according to Kitchener's plan of Nicosia (c. 1881).

of 1:63,360 (conducted in 1882; published 1885).<sup>5</sup> These maps were compiled by Horatio Kitchener, who employed the latest technology of the time and provides a mine of information for the student of landscape, particularly so from the perspective of economic history. For example, the plan of Nicosia depicts gardens, orchards and green space, wells, chains of wells (*lagoumia*), conduits, or water tanks – all digitised for the purposes of MedIns (see Fig.2). These maps, however, remain problematic as far as the accuracy of their cartographic methods, selective inclusion of information, or even impressionistic recording of details are concerned,<sup>6</sup> as assessments carried out in the context of the

5 Andreas Stylianou and Judith A. Stylianou, *The History of the Cartography of Cyprus* (Nicosia 1980), 156-157; Rodney Shirley, *Kitchener's Survey of Cyprus 1878-1883: The first fully triangulated survey and mapping of the island* (Nicosia 2001).

6 S. Zesimou, 'Seeing Beyond the Walls: Maps, Power and Ideology in Nicosia', *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 8 (1998), 252-283; T. Bekker-Nielsen, *The Roads of Ancient Cyprus* (Copenhagen 2004), 42-44, 143 fn. 4, 217.

present project reveal. The value of the information they provide is more qualitative than quantitative. For example, they may mention mills or wells, but there is no indication of how many; the symbology is quite problematic; the boundaries of buildings or public spaces are unclear. These issues notwithstanding, they remain extremely useful in the range of information they provide, and provide the best available source recording the Cypriot landscape which has a tolerable temporal remoteness. That is to say that from a macroscopic point of view, the expected changes within a timespan of 300 years do not justify discarding this source. As in any other case, it should be qualified, and its limitations taken into serious consideration.

MedIns takes a further step regarding its dissemination activities. It has entered the field of digital cultural heritage management, and is designing a mobile telephone application that allows the user to project a historical map over their current location, and visualise what was recorded on that map. This application is addressed to tourists, students and educators, as well as the general public.

### *The future*

Initially tried rather experimentally in the context of Ottoman Crete, and subsequently further developed and expanded to include a comparison with Cyprus, our methodology as to employing the toolbox of digital humanities cannot remain confined to two case studies of islands. Our long-term, if rather ambitious, vision is to continue developing Historical G.I.S. tools for the study of Ottoman economic space through the spatial and statistical analysis of fiscal survey registers. The main question here is how to input data from land and taxation survey registers into a unified and standardised database.

Any such exercise needs to be collective and collaborative, open- or relatively open-access, and in digital form, preferably online. These conditions, however, are neither simple nor straightforward, and one needs to be aware of a range of caveats. Be that as it may, what are we learning from our past and current experiences for this sort of future engagement?

First of all, it makes little sense to publish Ottoman fiscal survey registers in the form of a book in this day and age. The end product is usually expensive, and is addressed to too narrow an audience. Most likely it will end up on the shelves of a highly specialised library. Last but not least, it is extremely impractical to have endless tables of figures that one still needs to input into a spreadsheet in order to either check the statistical analysis attempted in the book, or conduct a different kind of analysis. On the other hand, a Historical G.I.S. tool provides much greater analytical potential and allows many more applications.

A second issue is the necessarily collaborative nature of the work involved. Reading the *siyakat* script and familiarity with the idiosyncrasies of fiscal survey registers (which are anything but standardised, and virtually each one constitutes its own kind) require highly specialised skills, knowledge, and experience. This is not unrelated to the shrinking number of scholars studying fiscal survey registers. Processing the data also presents a different set of challenges in organising the spreadsheets used, the formulas employed,

how to standardise and convert measures and monetary values, and how to deal with errors in the original.

Third, this exercise demands an army of researchers based in different countries and institutions who will need to co-ordinate and standardise procedures, integrate different datasets, and work together. It goes without saying that at least some familiarity with the economic, spatial, and environmental/climatic microhistory of the region studied by any given person/group working on the relevant register will be necessary. This is because of the need for constant reformulation, or formulation of new, research and methodological questions as data processing is under way. Other textual, visual or cartographic sources which will supplement our datasets are equally important.

Yet all is not as daunting as it may appear. As challenging and ambitious as this project may seem, it can be initiated on a small scale, gradually expanding to include more and more regions, and streamlining procedures to expedite work flow. In other words, we need to start slowly and patiently. We should not forget that G.I.S. tools are still quite new, while other digital humanities software (e.g., R, Python) are constantly under development and offer radically new and horizon-opening possibilities.





# LAND TENURE AND LAND SETTLEMENT IN VOSTIZZA FROM OTTOMAN TO VENETIAN RULE: G.I.S. MAPPING OF THE VENETIAN *CADASTRO* OF 1700

Socrates D. PETMEZAS\*

OTTOMAN ECONOMIC HISTORY WAS CATAPULTED into prominence more than 50 years ago thanks to the intensive use of the detailed fiscal registers by such historians as Ömer Lüt-fi Barkan and, later, Halil Inalcik. Subsequently, successive generations of scholars have added to our understanding and a special term, ‘defterology’, has even been coined to cover the field of the use of such registers. The Ottoman fiscal registers have been sanctioned as sources of demographic and agricultural-economic history, and used in conjunction with the Byzantine *praktika*, can give us invaluable information on the demographic structures of late medieval and early modern Balkan rural societies. Comparable Ottoman sources on the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries are more rare, diverse in form, and have been less studied, until lately. They are, nonetheless, now included in the mainstream of available sources.<sup>1</sup>

Ottoman fiscal registers have detailed information on taxation, population, and production aggregated on village level. Their accuracy is still a matter of debate, but a general view of the demographic, productive, and fiscal size of every village in the region covered is available to researchers. Other documents, like the capitation registers, can even give us a (very rough) glimpse of the income distribution among the Christian adult male population of a village. And yet, we still do not have, *on a micro-historical level*, detailed quantitative data on land tenure and land settlement (that is, the size, fragmentation, and distribution of land holdings) in the Ottoman Empire before the Tanzimat pe-

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1 Cf. E. Kolovos, ‘Beyond “Classical” Ottoman *Defterology*: A Preliminary Assessment of the *Tahrir* Registers of 1670/71 concerning Crete and the Aegean Islands’, in E. Kolovos, P. Kotzageorgis, S. Laiou and M. Sariyannis (eds), *The Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, the Greek Lands: Toward a Social and Economic History; Studies in Honor of John C. Alexander* (Istanbul 2007), 201-235; E. Balta and M. Oğuz, *Το οθωμανικό κτηματολόγιο του Πεθύμνου* [The Ottoman property register of Rethymno] (Rethymno 2007); F. Zarinebaf, J. Bennet, and J. L. Davis, *A Historical and Economic Geography of Ottoman Greece: The Southwestern Morea in the 18th Century* (Princeton 2005), xxxiv; S. Parveva, ‘Agrarian Land and Harvest in South-West Peloponnese in the Early Eighteenth Century’, in Eadem, *Village, Town and People in the Ottoman Balkans, Sixteenth – Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Istanbul 2009), 61-110.

riod, when local registers, diverse in quality and form, became available and have been put to use in some cases.<sup>2</sup> There are, however, alternative sources of information that may help us observe the distribution of landed patrimony in the villages and small provincial towns. This article uses one such *non-Ottoman source* to study the unequal access to land resources and to reconstitute - on a micro-level - the land tenure and land settlement patterns of late seventeenth-century Ottoman and early eighteenth century Venetian Vostizza (present day Aegion) in the Morea. The Venetian *Cadaastro* of Vostizza, completed in 1700, will constitute our main data source.<sup>3</sup> This document, which was magnificently published 20 years ago by Professor Konstantinos Dokos and George Panagopoulos,<sup>4</sup> is the product of the short-lived Venetian administration of the Morea (1685-1715).

### *The Venetian Conquest and the Survey of the Venetian Morea*

The Venetian conquest of the Morea (1684-87) and the establishment of the new regime took place in a short but relatively well-studied period. No less renowned a historian than Leopold von Ranke himself studied this unhappy interlude of devastating wars, forced population movements, and plague epidemics that befell the local population.<sup>5</sup> The destruction of the Parthenon and the sacking of Athens in September 1687 is part of the story that was miserably concluded in 1715 with the easy demise of Venetian power in the Morea, during the war which ended with the Treaty of Passarowitz.<sup>6</sup>

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- 2 Cf. T. Güran, *Structure économique et sociale d'une région de campagne dans l'Empire Ottoman vers le milieu du XIXe siècle* (Sofia 1980); S. Petmezas, 'Recherches sur l'économie et les finances des villages du Pélion, région d'industries rurales dispersées', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 1989.
  - 3 My initial project was to use the modern Geographical Information Software to visualise the structures of land tenure and land settlement of 1700. Thanks to the expertise of my colleagues at the Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FoRTH, Dr Apostolos Sarris and Mrs Katerina Anagnostaki M.A., who did all the real work, it was soon clear that we could relate the structures depicted in the 1700 Cadaastro with present-day patterns of land settlement, as shown in the Greek Cadastre (<http://gis.ktimanet.gr/wms/ktbasemap/default.aspx>). It is only recently that Prof. Jack Davis kindly brought my attention to the M.A. thesis of Jennifer Glaubius, 'The Venetian Period in Vostizza, Greece, 1685-1715: A GIS Analysis' (Cincinnati 2005). Mrs Glaubius has used the same data but has adopted an estimate different from mine for the surface measures.
  - 4 K. Dokos and G. D. Panagopoulos, *Το βενετικό κτηματολόγιο της Βοστίτσας* [The Venetian property register of Vostizza] (Athens 1993).
  - 5 Cf. L. von Ranke, 'Die Venezianer in Morea', *Historisch-Politische Zeitschrift*, 2 (1836), 405-502; I have used the Greek translation by Pavlos Kalligas: 'Περί της εν Πελοποννήσω Ενετοκρατίας (1685-1715)' [On Venetian rule in the Peloponnese (1685 - 1715)], *Πανδώρα*, 1862, nos 287-290 *passim*.
  - 6 Cf. A. Vacalopoulos, *Ιστορία του νέου ελληνισμού*, vol. 4: *Τουρκοκρατία 1669-1812 : η οικονομική άνοδος και ο φωτισμός του γένους* [History of modern Hellenism, Vol. 4 Turkish rule 1669 - 1812: the economic rise and enlightenment of the nation] (Thessaloniki 1973), 11-86; For the succeeding second period of Ottoman rule in the Morea see M. Sakellariou, *Η Πελοπόννησος κατά την δευτέραν Τουρκοκρατίαν, 1715-1821* [The Peloponnese during the second period of Turkish rule 1715 - 1821] (Athens 1939).



The Vostizza *Cadastro of 1700*, completed under the supervision of Francesco Van Deyk, *ingenier publico* of the *Regno di Morea*, was the outcome of the first successful and complete cadastre registration to be organised in time of peace, after the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, and which followed the newly perfected methodology and regulations imposed by Francesco Grimani, *Provveditor General delle Armi* of the *Regno di Morea* (1698-1701). According to this new and amended methodology, all the landed properties, *both public and private*, parcel after parcel, village after village, were itemised, measured, and registered in the cadastre. The original was sent to Venice, and a working copy was held locally in order to register all future changes in land tenure. This meant a clear modification of the earlier administrative procedure, because until then cadastres were used only to mark the existing public properties, and no copy was held locally, making the registration of any (public) property change impossible.<sup>8</sup>

8 Cf. During the long war which lasted from 1684-1699, the local Venetian authorities had attempted to register in the cadastres *only public property*, while copies of the cadastre were not preserved locally. Once the war was over, Grimani, anxious to ameliorate the administration of the Morea and impose a firmer grip on public land, decided to amend and perfect the cadastral

In fact, the Venetian conquest of the greater part of the Morea was completed in 1687,<sup>9</sup> and was immediately followed by a conscious effort on the part of the new administration (while war was still raging) to register all public property, *i.e.*, the immovables formerly owned by the Ottoman *élite* and pious foundations (*evkaf*), and the Muslim community in general. The Venetian Senate has already sent, in November 1687, a written order (*comissione*) to register public property in all the 24 Moreot provinces (*territori* and *juridicione*)<sup>10</sup> and to supplement the property registers (*catastici*) with detailed cadastral maps (*disegni*) depicting the exact position of each parcel of public property. It soon became evident that by registering and mapping solely the public patrimony, the Venetian administration was unable to control it and to obstruct the silent peasant movement of squatting and appropriating what had formerly been Ottoman lands and buildings. This initial plan of cadastre production was aborted in 1698, after the cadastres of nine provinces had been completed, and a second round of cadastral registration was initiated.<sup>11</sup> In this new wave of cadastre production which was undertaken once Venetian domination was secured by the treaty of Karlowitz, all landed properties, *both public or private*, were to be registered and carefully mapped.<sup>12</sup> The ambition was to produce a full cadastre of the Venetian Morea.

Only two provinces finally had their detailed *Cadastro* fully completed before the Ottoman reconquest: the *territorio* of Vostizza, in 1700, and the *territorio* of Napoli di Romania (Nauplion) in 1704.<sup>13</sup> Another one, the *territorio* of Argos, had only its abridged summary *Cadastro ordinario* compiled.<sup>14</sup> It seems that during the same era, the abridged summary cadastres of the *territorii* of Fanari, Caritena, Tripoli, and Calamata were pre-

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registration of the Morea; Dokos and Panagopoulos, *To Βενετικό Κτηματολόγιο της Βοστίτσας*, xxxiv–xxxv. Dokos and Panagopoulos suggested that the earlier cadastres were prepared and sent to Venice for symbolic rather than for practical reasons, since no local copy was held. *Ibid.*, xlvii–xlvi.

9 Only the fortified town of Malvasia resisted until 1690.

10 In fact the structure of the provincial administration did not change much. The 22 Ottoman juridical districts (*kaza*) and two sub-districts (*nahiye*) were replaced by 22 *territori* and two *juridicione*. After the Ottoman reconquest the number of juridical districts remained the same. The independent Greek kingdom divided the Morea into 24 provinces (*eparchies*), aggregated into five prefectures (*nomoi*). In the long run, the human geography structures of provincial administration changed little.

11 Cf. Dokos and Panagopoulos, *To Βενετικό Κτηματολόγιο της Βοστίτσας*, xxxiii.

12 Cf. Peter Topping, 'Premodern Peloponnesus: The Land and the People under Venetian Rule (1685-1715)', *Regional Variation in Modern Greece and Cyprus: Toward a Perspective on the Ethnography of Greece*, cclxviii (1976). Spyridon Lampros was the first scholar to spot these *cadastr*i in the Venetian archives, cf. S. P. Lampros, 'Κτηματολόγια Πελοποννήσου [Property registers of the Peloponnese]', *Νέος Ελληνομνημίων* 18 (1924), 223-238.

13 Cf. E. Liata, *To Ναύπλιο και η ενδοχώρα του από τον 17ο στον 18ο αιώνα : Οικιστικά μεγέθη και κατανομή της γης* [Nauplio and its hinterland from the 17th to the 18th century: ekistic magnitudes and land distribution] (Athens 2002).

14 Cf. Eadem, *Αργεία Γη : Από το περιτόριο στο βιλαέτι (τέλη 17<sup>ου</sup>-αρχές 19<sup>ου</sup> αι.)* [Argive land: from the territorio to the vilayet (late 17th - early 19th century)] (Athens 2003).

pared. There were also incomplete efforts to produce another detailed general cadastre (*cadastro particolare*) of the *territorio* of Tripoli.<sup>15</sup> During the first round of cadastral registration, before 1698, nine *territorii* were covered: Gastuni (or Castel Tornese), Patras, Modon, Androussa, Navarino, Arcadia, Coron, Leondari, and Calamata. This means that the endeavour of cadastral registration began during the war with the *territori* of the western *province* of Messenia and Achaia, where the larger number of colons was installed, and continued, after 1699, with Romania. The *provincia* of Laconia was not scheduled for cadastral registration until the demise of Venetian rule.

Thus, in the initial plan, a complete *cadastro* (consisting of registers and accompanying maps) was supposed to be prepared for each *territorio*. Global aggregate registers and maps for each of the four administrative departments (*province*) of the *Regno di Morea* and of the whole of the Morea itself were also projected to be compiled later. In this way, a complete cadastral registration of the entire Morea would have ultimately been produced. Of this visionary effort only the completed cadastres of two *territori*, Vostizza and Napoli di Romania, were finally produced and have survived.

### *Description of the Document*

There were two different cadastral registers per complete *cadastro*: one abridged summary cadastre (*cadastro ordinario*) in which the basic aggregated data for each agglomeration (*luogo*) were included, and a second detailed general cadastre (*cadastro particolare*) where *all the immovable patrimony* (parcel of land after parcel of land) of every subject and of every institution, whether public or private, were inscribed (along with the parcel's size and other characteristics), itemised (with a code number), and related to the accompanying cadastral maps (*disegni*). In both cadastral registers the same detailed description of each agglomeration, with its confines, was given and data were listed separately for each agglomeration. The accompanying cadastral maps were of four distinct types: first, a general map for the whole *territorio* and, second, a detailed communal map for each of the inhabited agglomerations (hamlets, villages, and town). The scale of these cadastral maps was too small to map the registered (and itemised) parcels of lands. Thus, a third type of larger-scale topographical map was also produced in order carefully to depict all the parcels. Large villages and towns needed more than one such larger-scale map to depict all the existing parcels of land and other immovable properties (buildings, orchards, etc.). Finally, for each township, usually the chief town of the province, a separate topographical map of the town itself showing all its buildings (both public and private) and roads, along with other important topographical sites (bridges, fountains, mills, etc.) was drawn. Special attention was given to the careful design of the map points that permitted the linking of the different cadastral maps of each province (see Map 1).

15 Spyridon Lambros also spotted in Venetian archives fragments of cadastres of the *territorii* of Zaccogna and of Corinto, cf. S. A. Davies, 'The Pylos Regional Archaeological Project, Part VI: Administration and Settlement in Venetian Navarino', *Hesperia*, 73 (2004), 88 (n.141).



Two detailed catalogues formed the main body in the register of the detailed *cadastro particolare*, and were directly referenced to the cadastral maps for each agglomeration (village or town). The first was the ‘**Catalogue of all the parcels of land**’ of each agglomeration (listing separately all fields and vineyards). For each parcel, its code number on the respective cadastral map and the name of its holder were given and, in some cases, supplementary information was added identifying its former Ottoman owner or a specific characteristic of the parcel (e.g., “abandoned vineyard”, “rented to [name]” etc.). On the cadastral map each parcel was identifiable through the above-mentioned registered code numbers, and it was coloured according to the character of its tenure (freehold, ecclesiastical, public in gratuitous concession, etc.) (see Map 3).<sup>16</sup>

The second catalogue was the ‘**Catalogue of the landholders**’<sup>17</sup> of every agglomeration, arranged alphabetically by their first name. This second catalogue of the register recorded the land holdings of each landholder, either a person or an institution (monasteries and churches). For each landholder all the parcels of fields and vineyards that were ascribed to him were enumerated, with their size meticulously measured and registered. Finally, the aggregate size of his property was computed and registered. Furthermore, during the preparation of the *Cadastro*, the Venetian registry verified all the property titles in the hands of the landholders and meticulously compared them with the registered land parcels. Thus, in this second catalogue, the computed aggregate size of property for each landholder, followed by the aggregate of his verified property titles, separately for fields and vineyards, was entered. This aggregate sum was usually in *stremmata*, but it could also be expressed in other units (e.g., yokes of oxen).<sup>18</sup> At the end of this second catalogue the aggregate sum of all cultivated land of each agglomeration was calculated, separately for arable fields and vineyards and for each type of land tenure: freeholds (*beneprobatum*), monastic and ecclesiastical lands, public land in gratuitous concession

16 Dokos and Panagopoulos, *To Βενετικό Κτηματολόγιο της Βοστίτσας*, 79–131.

17 I define as a landholder (or as landholder unit) every person (or group of persons) or institution (almost all of them local churches and monasteries) holding arable fields or vineyards in the *Cadastro* of Vostizza, irrespective of the legal form of its rights (private property, permanent or temporary gratuitous concession, lease or rent of every kind, or even *de facto* occupancy without titles).

18 Liata, *To Ναύπλιο και η ενδοχώρα του*, 51–62, studying the *cadastro particolare* of Nauplion, considered that this list of additional aggregates of fields and vineyards did not refer to the verification of old property titles of each landholder, but that it was a list of additional aggregate registrations of new properties, added sometime after the fabrication of the *Cadastro*, in 1704, and before the demise of Venetian rule in 1715. These additional aggregate registrations of fields and vineyards were *not itemized* on the corresponding maps. By accepting this assumption, Liata posits that 1) the cultivated surface of Napoli *almost doubled* in a few years passing from 89 thousand to 160 thousand *stremmata*, 2) all land holders acquired more land and that no landholder lost any of his parcels and 3) that the administration silently transformed the *cadastro particolare* of Nauplion from a meticulously fabricated cadastre of all land parcels to a simple list of property valuation (probably to be used for fiscal reasons). I find these assumptions difficult to accept. Of course only a more detailed examination of this *Cadastro* can give a definitive answer.



(*concessione a gratia*), in short term rental (*affitanza*), or on long-term lease (*a livello*), and land held by individuals without any kind of written title (*senza carta*).

At the end of the *Cadastro* itself, there is a third separate list of all landholders of the *territorio* where one can verify the aggregate size of fields and vineyards held by each landholder in every agglomeration (some landholders having property in more than one agglomeration) and additionally of the titles the landholder has presented for verification. In the *Cadastro* of Vostizza of 1700, there were 40 inhabited agglomerations listed, having in all 607 landholders (176 of them had property in more than one agglomeration) and 6,529 parcels of land. In the case of the chief town of Vostizza itself, there was a list of 451 houses and 313 distinct house-owners (houses were held as private properties, gratuitous concessions, or rented public property). The aggregate figure of landholders (476 indigenous and 131 immigrant colons) should be compared to the 1,126 families registered as inhabitants of the *territorio* in the *Cadastro*. Only half of the population hold any property at all, and fewer than 3% could be considered large landholders (holding more than 50 ha).

The size of arable fields was measured in three different units of area, one local and two Venetian. For vineyards a fourth local unit was added. All four units were supposedly multiples of the same base unit - the *tavola* or *passo* of 43.53 sq. m.<sup>19</sup> All areas have been converted to the basic land area unit currently in use in Greece, the *stremma* of 1,000 sq. m. (or one-tenth of a hectare).

area units	<i>tavole</i>	<i>stremmata</i>
<i>Campi trevisani</i>	1,250	5.441
<i>Campi padovani</i>	840	3.657
<i>Cuvelli</i> (κουβέλια)	625	2.721
<i>Zappade</i> (αξινάρια)	156	0.679

Finally, the Venetian authorities also computed the aggregate area of the *territorio*, and of each agglomeration, according to its land use: fields, vineyards, pastures, forest, arable or unusable waste land (Table 1). The aggregates have been recomputed and we have concluded that the original registration and computation by the Venetian engineers were meticulously conducted and generally precise, both in what concerns the territorial community of the town of Vostizza and the whole of its *territorio*. The topographical depiction of the territorial community of the town of Vostizza, as shown on the cadastral maps is equally precise and impeccably conducted. Using Geographical Information Software, we have been able to superimpose all the Venetian cadastral maps of 1700 on the present-day Cadastre of Aegion (Vostizza) (see maps in [www.ims.forth.gr](http://www.ims.forth.gr)). It is an almost exact fit both for the fields and vineyards and for the houses and streets of the town itself. The

19 Each *passo* or *tavola* equals 36 sq. feet (6x6 *piedi quadri*), cf. *ibid.*, lxx. Glaubius, 'The Venetian Period in Vostizza, Greece, 1685-1715: A GIS Analysis', 16, fn 11, has used the *tavola* of 25 sq. feet (i.e., 3.02 sq. m.) and thus underestimated the total area by almost 30%. Liata, like myself, used the 36 sq. feet *tavola*.

**Table 1:** Use of land in the *Territorio* of Vostizza (in stremmata of 1000 sq. m.)

	arable land			vines	pasture	forest	land unfit for culture	total area	as % of total area		
	plain	uplands	uncultivated						cultivated arable	vines	other
Town of Vostizza		7.700	24.867	32.567	1.573		1.576	35.715	21,6	4,4	74,0
Çiftlik estates	20.294	16.530	609	37.433	29		2.623	71.505	51,5		48,5
Alimocturi	169		609	778				778	21,7		78,3
San Zorzi di Cazi (deserted)		890		890				1.336	66,6		33,4
Lucha		993		993				1.489	66,7		33,3
Trano	4.598			4.598				4.598	100,0		
Teratza & Temeni	10.374			10.374				10.374	100,0		
Rizomylos	1.502			1.502			414	1.915	78,4		21,6
Thelopotamo	3.651	1.485		5.137				7.329	70,1		29,9
Mirtidi		2.528		2.528				7.582	33,3		66,7
Eftapites		2.025		2.025	29			3.654	55,4	0,8	43,8
San Zuane		3.001		3.001				6.131	48,9		51,1
Basuschia Cattù		2.015		2.015			2.209	15.351	13,1		86,9
Monastic estates	4.620	11.986		16.605	350		6.039	49.706	33,4	0,7	65,9

	arable land			vines	pasture	forest	land unfit for culture	total area	as % of total area		
	plain	uplands	uncultivated						cultivated arable	vines	other
Dimitropulo	4.620	770		5.390	1.545			6.935	77,7		22,3
Meglissari		6.837		6.837	15.271		2.745	25.172	27,2	1,3	71,6
Vovoda		3.818		3.818	6.658		3.295	13.801	27,7	0,2	72,1
Cardena		561		561	3.237			3.798	14,8		85,2
Small-owner villages	21.690	51.365		69.478	138.369	49.512	19.865	279.229	26,2	0,7	74,4
Tumba		5.265		5.265	2.543			7.825	67,3	0,2	32,5
Greca Panù & Catù		2.089		2.089	6.086		1.717	9.892	21,1		78,9
Aracova		3.125		3.125	2.602			5.727	54,6		45,4
Bordano		1.105		1.105	2.666		587	4.357	25,3		74,7
Franca		574		574	3.055		965	4.595	12,5		87,5
Lopesi		1.106		1.106		3.319		4.425	25,0		75,0
Bogdano		575		575		4.018		4.593	12,5		87,5
Cugnina		1.767		1.767	10.257	6.924	3.316	22.608	7,8	1,5	90,7
Paraschievà		4.677		4.677	13.478		1.203	19.724	23,7	1,9	74,4
Cacocorio		2.610		2.610	6.383			9.175	28,5	2,0	69,6
Maurichi		1.411		1.411	9.278	6.018	3.259	20.177	7,0	1,0	92,0
San Pantaleone		2.156		2.156	3.322	2.213	1.111	8.802	24,5		75,5



	arable land											as % of total area		
	plain	uplands	uncultivated	total								cultivated arable	vines	other
Fteri		2.882		2.882								13,7		86,3
Basuschia Panù		1.236		1.236								17,2		82,8
Mamussia		4.053		4.053								29,6		70,4
Villa Diakofto	3.577	16.732		16.732				725	47.065	23.531		22,9	0,8	80,3
Porovizza, Pirgo, & Plessa	18.113			18.113				161	6.322			67,8	0,6	31,6
Province of Vostizza	46.604	87.580	25.476	156.083				3.957	196.500	49.512		30,8	0,9	69,1
Town of Vostizza		8,8%	97,6%	20,9%				39,7%						
Çiftlik Estates	43,5%	18,9%	2,4%	24,0%				0,7%	16,0%					
Monastic estates	9,9%	13,7%		10,6%				8,9%	13,6%					
Small-owner villages	46,5%	58,6%		44,5%				50,7%	70,4%	100%				
Province of Vostizza	100%	100%	100%	100%				100%	100%	100%				

Venetian engineers did a splendid and precise job, at least as far as the territorial community of Vostizza is concerned<sup>20</sup>.

The registered surface of the whole territorio is estimated by the Venetian engineers at 152,136 cuvelli and 349 tavole (using the standard local measure) or, according to my own estimate, at 436,155 stremmata of 1,000 sq. m. (i.e., 436 sq. km.), of which 134,184 were arable cultivated lands and 3,957 were vineyards, while there were 196,500 and 49,512 more stremmata used as pasturages and woodland, respectively. Finally, there were 25,476 stremmata of arable land (all of it within the confines of the town of Vostizza) left vacant and 30,103 more stremmata which were considered totally unfit for any productive use. The aggregate area covered by those communes of the province of Aegialia which were part of the 1700 territorio is estimated at 352 sq. km. For this last computation we have used the official measurement of the area of these communes according to the 1991 census of the Greek National Statistical Service, but one should take into consideration the fact that we have a very sketchy idea of the exact overlapping of the communes' area on their borders of 1991 and 1700, respectively.<sup>21</sup>

### *The Geography: Litoral Plains and Upland Valleys*

The *Cadastro* mapped the small *territorio* of Vostizza, which coincided to a large extent with the present-day province of Aegialia. The *territorio* was embedded into the much larger mountainous province of Kalavryta, situated upon the mountain ranges of Aroania (Chelmos), Erymanthos, and Panachaïkon. Aegialia resembles a narrow litoral corridor between the key provinces of Corinth to the east and Patras to the west, and the town of Vostizza (the present day city of Aegion) was and is an important node on the road network leading west from the Isthmus of Corinth to the major port-city of Patras. In fact, since 1945, the province of Aegialia has been a continuous litoral bridge linking the two key provinces of the Northern Morea, but, before the Second World War, the province was cut into two unequal pieces, by the canton (demos)<sup>22</sup> of Krathis, which belonged to the province of Kalavryta. In the Venetian era, the smaller eastern piece of the *territorio* was actually completely embedded (from all sides except the sea) into the province of Kalavryta.<sup>23</sup> The *territorio* was bounded to the north by the sea, to the east by the small torrent of Tholopotamos (present-day Tholoura<sup>24</sup>), and to the west by another torrent,

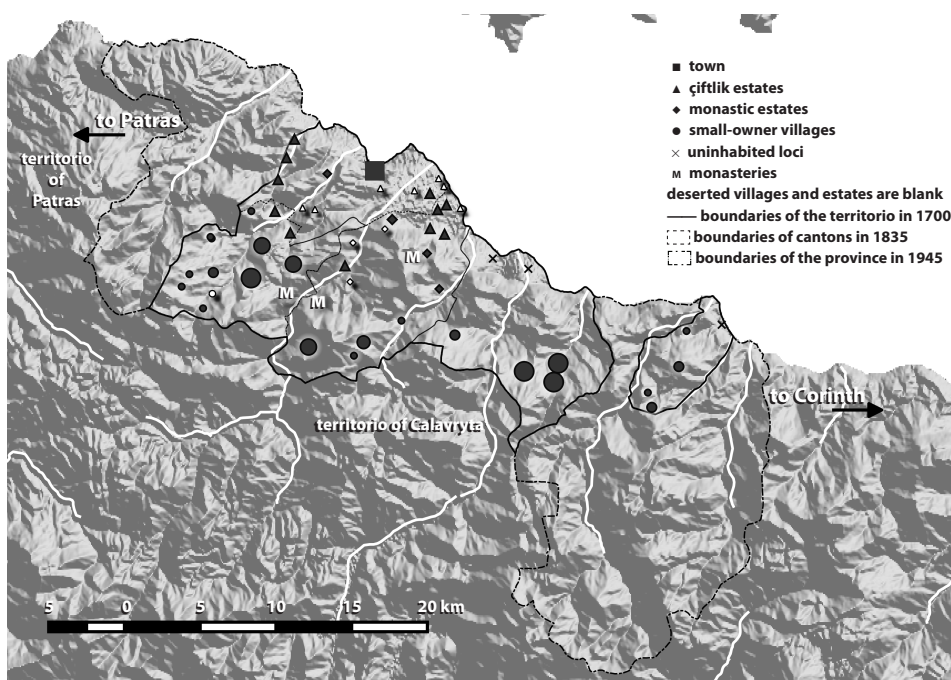
20 Distances were measured using the Venetian miglio of 1,460 m.

21 If we were to follow Glaubius and adopt the smaller 25 *piedi tavole* (instead of the 36 *piedi tavole* suggested by Dokos), then the estimated area would be 303 sq. km. rather than 436. The surface of the province of Aegialia in its 1861 borders was estimated at 361 sq. km., cf. S. Petmezias, *Η ελληνική αγροτική οικονομία κατά τον 19ο αιώνα* [The Greek agricultural economy in the 19th century] (Iraklio 2003), 15.

22 The lower level of local administration in nineteenth-century independent Greece was the *demos* or canton, which enclosed a few inhabited agglomerations (5-12) and usually had a population of a few thousand people. Each province, which is the equivalent in size of an Ottoman *kaza* would contain 4-7 cantons. A canton was usually a compact socio-geophysical unit.

23 Dokos and Panagopoulos, *Το Βενετικό Κτηματολόγιο της Βοστίτσας*, lxxiii-lxxiv.

24 Ibid., lxxiv.



**Map 1:** The Venetian Territorio of Vostizza  
(see more detailed map in [vostizza.ims.forth.gr](http://vostizza.ims.forth.gr))

bearing the same name of Tholopotamos. Between these two Tholopotamoi, run in parallel, from west to east, five other rivers and torrents: Gaidouropnichtis (Meganitis), the rivers of Vostizza (Selinous), of Klapatsouna<sup>25</sup> (Kerinitis), of Episkopi (Vouraikos), and of Kalavryta (Krathis). Each of these rivers flows down from the surrounding mountains, through small valleys that constituted small compact geophysical units.

The river Gaidouropnichtis, which is the eastern border of the communal confines of the town of Vostizza itself, formed a valley where a number of villages were located (Mertidi, Eftapites, Louka, Agios Giorgos Hatzi, Grigoris, Tumba, Kakochorio, Greka, Arachova, Agia Parasekevi, Kouninas, Liopesi, Bordanou, Bogdanou, Franga). After the foundation of the independent Greek State, in 1835, the villages located higher in the valley formed the canton (demos) of Meganitis, named after the river. The canton of Meganitis bordered to its east on the canton (demos) of Eliki, which included the other two upland valleys: those of the rivers of Vostizza and of Klapatsouna. The river of Vostizza, which is the eastern boundary of the communal confines of the town of Vostizza, forms a narrower upland valley, where the villages of Krokova, Mavriki, Melissari, and Vovoda are located, while the river of Klapatsouna forms yet another even narrower valley (villages of Cardena, Bouchouscia, Agios Panteleimonas, and Pteri). In 1841, the cantons of

<sup>25</sup> The village of Klapatsouna is currently called Plataniotissa.

Eliki and Meganitis were annexed to the litoral canton (demos) of Aegaeon, which has also founded in 1835 and included the town of Vostizza and the villages lower in the valley of Gaidouropnichts. The enlarged Canton of Aegaeon thus covered the whole litoral plain of the *territorio* of Vostizza and the valleys of the three small rivers<sup>26</sup> that flow into this plain, which was in fact the productive core of the *territorio*. Contiguous to the east of this core area were the spacious mountainous communal confines of Diakofto, which in the nineteenth century formed the canton (demos) of Vouron (the village of Mamousia was also included in this canton).<sup>27</sup> Finally, physically separated from the main body of the *territorio*, situated between the rivers of Krathis and Tholopotamos, were the communal confines of Pyrgos, Porovitza, and Plessa, which were to be the nucleus of the canton (demos) of Akrata in the nineteenth century.<sup>28</sup>

*Terra de Vostizza* was a small, non-fortified town standing on a hilltop, just a quarter of a mile from the sea, but it had never before served and would never later serve as an important port, although it had a convenient harbor.<sup>29</sup> Vostizza was one of the 16 urban territorial communities of the Morea recognised by the Venetian authorities as a *comunità*.<sup>30</sup> Each *comunità* was a legal collective body, constituting a legal person, with specific privileges and obligations, and with organised institutions of self-government, controlled and manned by the body of citizens (*citadini*), themselves a *sub-total* of its inhabitants. The body of citizens usually included the adult male members of the richest, socially most prominent and politically most influential families.<sup>31</sup> At the end of the seventeenth century, the town hosted a diversified population, of agriculturalists, small craftsmen, and merchants, and served as a small urban and administrative centre of a narrow mountainous litoral region, which was home to about 4,000 inhabitants.<sup>32</sup>

26 T. Louloudis, *Αχαΐα. Οικισμοί, οικιστές, αυτοδιοίκηση* [Achaia. Settlements, settlers, local government] (Patra 2010), 40–41.

27 Ibid., 40.

28 In the nineteenth century, the province of Aegialia also included the canton (demos) of Aegira, to the south and the east of the canton of Akrata.

29 Cf. B. Randolph, *The Present State of the Morea, Called Anciently Peloponnesus Together with a Description of the City of Athens, Islands of Zant, Strafades, and Sergio: With the Maps of Morea and Greece, and Several Cities* (London 1689), 2-3; François Charles Hugues Laurent Pouqueville, *Voyage en Morée, à Constantinople, en Albanie, et dans plusieurs autres parties de l'Empire Othoman, pendant les années 1798, 1799, 1800 et 1801*, 3 vols (Paris 1805); W. M. Leake, *Travels in the Morea: With a Map and Plans*, 3 vols (London 1830), iii: 185–189. Cf. the views of Leake and Gell (in 1817) who – contrary to Randolph – observed that Vostizza possessed a harbour, as cited by Glaubius, ‘The Venetian Period in Vostizza, Greece, 1685–1715: A GIS Analysis’, 17.

30 Cf. Dokos and Panagopoulos, *Το Βενετικό Κτηματολόγιο της Βοστίτσας*, xiii.

31 Cf. A. Papadia-Lala, *Ο θεσμός των αστικών κοινοτήτων στον ελληνικό χώρο κατά την περίοδο της βενετοκρατίας (13ος-18ος αι.): μια συνθετική προσέγγιση* [The institution of urban communities in Greece in the period of Venetian rule (13th - 18th century: a synthesising approach] (Venice 2004), 465 sqq.

32 Cf. V. Panagiotopoulos, *Πληθυσμός και οικισμοί της Πελοποννήσου, 13ος-18ος αιώνας* [Population and settlements in the Peloponnese, 13th -18th century] (Athens 1987), 148.



In spite of the abrupt mountainous relief, the land in the narrow valleys and the small littoral plains was fertile and the area was described in positive terms by the official Venetian documents<sup>33</sup> and contemporary travellers, like the English merchant Bernard Randolph.<sup>34</sup> It produced corn, olive-oil, and various animal products. It also produced exportable goods like wine, some currants and raisins, raw silk and valonea, etc.<sup>35</sup> This was clearly a low population density and land-extensive agriculture, which produced surplus grain for export<sup>36</sup> and enough wine and animal products for its subsistence needs, while the olive production was probably deficient.<sup>37</sup> Later, in the nineteenth century, the region was transformed into the most prosperous agricultural export region of independent Greece, producing the best currants and fetching the highest prices.<sup>38</sup>

The rural area of the small *territorio* of Vostizza was actually composed of two distinct geographical and social landscapes. The lowlands and low hills were dominated by large land estates (called *çiftlik* or *zevgoлатia*) owned by landlords or monasteries (called *metochia*). Some of these small agglomerations were named villages (*ville*) but were also held respectively by private individuals or monasteries (see Table 8 in the Appendix). In fact, some of the agglomerations in the lowlands which were called *villae* in the 1700 Cadastro, were known to be *çiftlik/zevgoлатia* estates or were even registered as such in the Grimani census of 1700.<sup>39</sup> According to the Venetian *Cadaastro*, their population was mostly composed of immigrant colons from Rumelia. The indigenous sharecropping population had presumably fled, following their Ottoman overlords or escaping from the war zone.<sup>40</sup> The land of these estates was held, as gratuitous concessions, by immigrant landholders established in the town of Vostizza. The population of these estates – also composed of immigrant colons – was most probably made up of sharecroppers.

Upland villages were larger in size and their population was in majority composed of indigenous smallholders. Mostly endowed with collectively held pasturages and woodland, but not with adequate land suitable for cereal production, their economy was based on multiple sources of agricultural and non-agricultural income (sericulture, livestock

33 Cf. Dokos and Panagopoulos, *To Βενετικό Κτηματολόγιο της Βοστίτσας*, 4–5.

34 Cf. Randolph, *The Present State of the Morea*, 2.

35 A detailed and meticulous analysis of the productive structure of the Venetian *territorio* is given by Glaubius, 'The Venetian Period in Vostizza, Greece, 1685-1715: A GIS Analysis', 88 sqq. The author has mapped the data of the *Cadaastro* which testify to the spatial distribution of productive structures (mulberry trees, mills, felt factories). For the later eighteenth century, cf. V. Kremmydas, *To εμπόριο της Πελοποννήσου στο 18ο αιώνα (1715-1792) (με βάση τα γαλλικά αρχεία)* [Trade in the Peloponnese in the 18th century (1715 - 1792) (on the basis of the French archives)] (Athens 1972); idem, *Συγκυρία και εμπόριο στην προεπαναστατική Πελοπόννησο (1793-1821)* [Conjuncture and trade in the pre-revolutionary Peloponnese (1793 - 1821)] (Athens 1980).

36 Glaubius, 'The Venetian Period in Vostizza, Greece, 1685-1715: A GIS Analysis', 90, 98.

37 Ibid., 92–93.

38 Cf. T. Kalafatis, *Αγροτική πίστη και οικονομικός μετασχηματισμός στην βόρεια Πελοπόννησο: η Αιγιάλεια στα τέλη του 19ου αιώνα* [Agricultural credit and economic transformation in the northern Peloponnese: Aigialeia in the late 19th century], 3 vols. (Athens 1990).

39 Cf. Panagiotopoulos, *Πληθυσμός και οικισμοί της Πελοποννήσου*, 279, 306–307.

40 Dokos and Panagopoulos, *To Βενετικό Κτηματολόγιο της Βοστίτσας*, lxxxix.

**Table 2:** Population and registered landholders\* in the territorio of Vostizza (c.1700)

	Registered number of families in the Cadastro			Grimani 1700 census, families	Numbers and percentages of registered landholders									
	Total	colons	% co- lons		all	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Town of Vostizza	435		n.a.	383	181	51		9	121			5%	70%	100%
Çiftlik estates	92	79	86.6%	94	49	5	3	1	2	35	2	6%	80%	15%
Monastic estates	25	24	96.6%	10	14	1	3	2		6	2	29%	60%	10%
Small-owner villages	446	72	16.6%	411	505	382	78	12	14	19		2%	7%	80%
Rural area	563	175	31.1%	515	568	388	84	15	16	60	4	3%	14%	74%
Province of Vostizza	998		n.a.	898	749	439	84	24	137	60	4	4%	27%	80%

- (1) Indigenous landholders inhabiting the agglomeration where they hold property.
- (2) Indigenous landholders but NON inhabiting the agglomeration where they hold property.
- (3) Institutional landholders of indigenous inhabitants
- (4) Colon landholders inhabiting the agglomeration where they hold property
- (5) Colon landholders but NON inhabiting the agglomeration where they hold property
- (6) Institutional Colon landholders
- (7) percentage of Institutional landholders (Churches and Monasteries) to the total number of landholders
- (8) percentage of colon landholders to the total number of landholders (excluding all institutional landholders)
- (9) percentage of landholders (indigenous and colons) inhabiting the agglomeration where they hold property to the total number of landholders (excluding all institutional landholders)

\* The registered population is the number of families registered as population of each village in the *Cadastro*. This can be compared with the population per village figuring in the Grimani census of 1700. In the Cadastro, each landholder (either a person/group of persons or an ecclesiastical institution) is also registered and thus an estimate of the number of *landholders* can be calculated.

husbandry, forestry, seasonal agricultural labour in the plains). Landholdings in upland valleys were smaller and more fragmented than in the lowlands. In each valley, property in the village was not confined exclusively to the local inhabitants but was also held by persons from neighbouring villages (some of them from villages of the province of Kalavryta), but always situated in the same river valley, which formed compact geophysical and social entities.<sup>41</sup>

In effect, the most noticeable difference between the villages of the litoral plain and the upland villages is their size, composition of the population, and land tenure system. Thus, immigrant colons were a substantial part of the rural population in the litoral: they were 31% of all rural families, in general, and probably as high as 86% in the sharecropping lowlands, as opposed to just 16% in the small-owner mountain villages (see Table 1 and Table 8 in the Appendix). This estimation makes use of the number of registered families in the rural agglomerations as shown in the Vostizza *Cadastral*. A different estimate can be made using the number of landholders (indigenous or immigrant colons) enumerated in each agglomeration. There were 607 landholders, of whom 130 were immigrant colons.<sup>42</sup> One must add that 50 indigenous and 121 immigrant landholders (excluding the properties of all institutions like monasteries, churches, and communes) held properties in the town of Vostizza. In the lowlands there were 57 landholding units of which 10 belonged to just five indigenous persons who actually lived in these villages.

All the immigrants holding the other landholding units in the lowlands are known to have been town-dwellers. In the lowlands, property was held almost exclusively by townsmen, while, of course, the village population was made up of sharecroppers working the land.<sup>43</sup>

In the lowlands, on former Ottoman *çiftliks* (now called by their Greek term *zeugotatia*) and on the monastic properties there were 9 indigenous and 130 immigrant families registered as cultivators, while only five indigenous persons were registered as landholders living in the locality. It is clear, then, that in the lowlands the land was under the control of three monasteries and of immigrant colons living in the town of Vostizza and holding (as we shall see) landed property of substantial size. The above-mentioned 166<sup>44</sup> families of cultivators were in their majority cultivating land that did not belong to them,

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41 In the upland villages of the Meganitis valley (later the demos of Meganitis) all landholders are either inhabitants of the village itself or inhabitants of neighbouring villages in the same valley. Some landholders came from the neighbouring villages of Verino and Tsestevo (agglomeration neighbouring Ano Salmeniko in the province of Patras). Exactly the same pattern is observable in the villages of the valleys of the Selinous and Vouraikos rivers (demos of Eliki).

42 There are ten individual landholders (with very modest properties) who could not be qualified either as indigenous or as immigrant colons.

43 After the Ottoman reconquest of the Morea, its newly published *kanunname* made ample reference to the sharecropping system in the province, the cultivator giving a share of the produce (after taxes) to the *sahib-i arz*, E. Balta, 'Οι Κανονναμέδες του Μωριά [The *kanunnames* of the Morea]', *Ιστορ*, 6 (1993), 51.

44 There are 27 families which are not qualified as either indigenous or immigrant living in the land estates in the lowlands.

for a ground rent, most probably a share of the net produce after taxes and expenses were met. There were 30 immigrant and one indigenous landholder living in the town of Vostizza who held property in these villages. In addition, three monasteries<sup>45</sup> were also among the large landowners.

In the uplands, the land tenure system presented a completely different structure. The number of landholders living in the villages of the area was 385, of whom only 10 were immigrants. There is an additional number of 32 landholders living in various neighbouring villages of the *territorio* of Kalavryta and holding property in the villages of the *territorio* of Vostizza: a total number of 433 discrete landholders (of whom 12 were immigrant colons living in Vostizza). The presence of immigrant colons on the mountain slopes was much weaker than in the lowlands. The total number of registered families of inhabitants in these villages is 443, of whom 270 were indigenous and 70 colons.<sup>46</sup> It is clear that here small-ownership, mostly belonging to the indigenous population, was the dominant feature.<sup>47</sup>

### *The Demographic Story: Long-Term Developments*

During the short Venetian era, a large part of the population were immigrant colons who followed the Venetian armies after their retreat from the neighbouring provinces of continental Greece (the southern part of the Ottoman Rumelia province). In 1700, the area from Corinth to Patras was reported as deserted, and the main body of the about 20,000 immigrants and refugees from mainland continental Greece was established there by the Venetian authorities.<sup>48</sup>

It is important to establish whether the war and colonisation had fundamentally altered the population size and structure. The Grimani census of 1700 registered 879 families and 202 monks, or probably a little fewer than 4,000 inhabitants.<sup>49</sup> Little is known of the pre-1700 figures, but the population data published by Evangelia Balta for the middle of the seventeenth century<sup>50</sup> testify to a very slow long-term growth in the second half of the seventeenth century. In the long run, the population losses of the war (caused by deaths and the exodus of the Muslim population) were made good by colonisation. The first estimate for the population of the province of Vostizza after the Greek War of Inde-

45 They were the Monasteries of the Taxiarches (Archangel Michael), of Mary of Pepelenizza, and the Monastery of Jerusalem (transplanted from Rumeli).

46 There are 99 more families which are not qualified as immigrants or indigenous.

47 This is also clearly mapped in Glaubius, 'The Venetian Period in Vostizza, Greece, 1685-1715: A GIS Analysis', 125, 129-130.

48 Cf. Panagiotopoulos, *Πληθυσμός και οικισμοί Της Πελοποννήσου*; A.M. Malliaris, *Η Πάτρα κατά τη Βενετική περίοδο (1687-1715). Γη, πληθυσμοί, κοινωνία στη Β.Α. Πελοπόννησο*. [Patras during the Venetian period (1687 - 1715). Land, people, society in North-western Peloponnese] (Venise 2008).

49 Cf. Panagiotopoulos, *Πληθυσμός και οικισμοί Της Πελοποννήσου*, 279.

50 Cf. E. Balta, 'Settlements and Population in the Morea in 1645', *Osmanlı Araştırmaları*, 24 (2004), 59-60.

pendence was recorded in 1828. The French expeditionary force led by General Maison made use of earlier data collected by F.C.H.L. Pouqueville and registered a population of 1,023 families and 120 monks.<sup>51</sup> This is probably somewhat fewer than 5,000 inhabitants and it is not very far from the estimate of 4,000 inhabitants of the Venetian population census of 1700. These two figures suggest a slow but positive population growth: the cumulative annual rate is equal to about 0.2%.

All these findings are compatible with what we know of the demographic history of the Ottoman Empire: the late seventeenth-century stagnation of population was followed by a steady but gentle growth in the eighteenth century. The low population density, especially in the lowlands, was until the end of Ottoman rule the structural precondition for extensive cereal agriculture, based on sharecropping labour relations.

After Greek independence, the population grew ten times faster at an annual rate of 2.3%, reaching 9,245 inhabitants in 1848 and 11,000 in 1861.<sup>52</sup> This rapid population growth coincides with the expansion of currant vineyards and immigration from the uplands. Population surplus from the neighbouring mountainous provinces 'colonised' the lowlands, providing the necessary labour for currant plantation and cultivation.<sup>53</sup> The figure of 19,437 inhabitants in 1896 coincided with the beginning of the chronic crisis that put an end to currant prosperity, and its apogee of 34,524 was reached in 1940, a time of high population pressure in Greece. The breakdown of the Ottoman land tenure system paved the way for the rapid transformation of local agriculture into a speculative, labour-intensive export agriculture which could sustain higher rural population densities. Immigration and a higher rate of natural population increase were observable in the nineteenth century and population densities reached their climax just before World War II. This fundamental transformation of the land tenure system during and immediately after the Greek War of Independence was instrumental in the rise of population density in Aegialia and the materialisation of the productive potentialities of the region. The absence of such a transformation during the brief Venetian period is in stark contrast.

### *Land and Property in the Town of Vostizza before the Venetian Conquest*

If the war and emigration did not significantly alter the size of the population in the long run, it had nonetheless a significant short-term impact. The Muslims had left, followed by an unknown number of Christians, while immigrants colonised the area, especially

51 Cf. M. Chouliarakis, *Γεωγραφική, διοικητική και πληθυσμιακή εξέλιξις της Ελλάδος, 1821-1971* [The geographical, administrative, and population evolution of Greece, 1821 - 1971], 4 vols (Athens 1973), Vol. A1, 44.

52 The registered population of the Greek province of Aegialis (Vostizza) in 1861 was 12,054 (corresponding to 2,616 families) (cf. G. Bafounis (ed.), *Στατιστική της Ελλάδος. Πληθυσμός του έτους 1861* [Statistics of Greece. Population of the year 1861] (Athens 1991), 19 and 35), but at least 1,000 should be subtracted to make the necessary correction for the territorial expansion of the former (smaller) *territorio* of Vostizza,

53 Cf. M. Stamatoyannopoulou, 'Déplacement saisonnier et exploitation rurale en Grèce dans la deuxième moitié du XIXe siècle: le cas de Krathis', in Stuart Woolf (ed.), *Espaces et familles dans l'Europe du Sud à l'âge moderne* (Paris 1993), 205-214.

the lowlands and the town of Vostizza. These immigrants were provided with land and houses by the Venetian authorities, on what were later thought to be generous terms. If fact, the Venetians strove to settle the immigrants permanently by offering them land gratuitously (*concesso a gratia*) for a temporary period of six to eight years. They were later, in 1700, forced to concede the land permanently to the immigrants, on condition that it would be diligently cultivated. The rest of the Muslim lands and houses that were appropriated by the Venetian Treasury were rented to immigrants and locals alike, either for an annual rent (*affittanza*) or on a long-term lease (*a livello*).<sup>54</sup>

In general, the number of Greek Orthodox indigenous landholders in the town of Vostizza was much smaller than that of the immigrants (see Table 5). The division of the population in the Vostizza *Cadastro* between immigrant colons and indigenous inhabitants, both categories Greek Orthodox Christians, is based on the assumption that all those who held land and houses through the *beneprobatum* were indigenous and had enjoyed secure landholding before the Venetian conquest.<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, all those who possessed land and houses either as a gratuitous concession or by leasing and renting public land were generally immigrants and refugees. This clear distinction is systematically verified, with very few exceptions. People in the *Cadastro* lists would either have *concession per gratia* or *beneprobatum*. Only four persons, two immigrants and two indigenous landholders, owned vineyards with *beneprobatum* while holding, in gratuitous concession, fields belonging to Muslims before 1683.<sup>56</sup> Nicolòs Drosos is the sole indigenous person who was given arable land in gratuitous concession. He had no other property.

This distinction between indigenous and immigrant landholders was verified by using supplementary evidence from sources other than the *Cadastro*. Constantinos Dokos has published lists of concessions to immigrant colons produced by the Venetian authorities in 1691.<sup>57</sup> All the persons present in these lists of colons and to be found in the *Cadastro* are correctly verified as immigrants. Furthermore, all family names in the lists of colons are also family names of immigrants in the *Cadastro*. It is thus clear that the immigrants appropriated the properties of the Muslim population of Vostizza.

In fact, the information given in the *Cadastro* provides the unique possibility of reconstructing the distribution of land in the town of Vostizza before the Venetian conquest. The

54 Cf. Dokos and Panagopoulos, *To Βενετικό Κτηματολόγιο της Βοστίτσας*, xviii–xxiii.

55 Cf. Ibid.; Malliaris, *Η Πάτρα κατά τη βενετική περίοδο (1687-1715)*; Davies, ‘The Pylos Regional Archaeological Project, Part VI: Administration and Settlement in Venetian Navarino’.

56 There are only four persons who held land and houses both through concession and *beneprobatum*. Two were immigrants: Giorgachi Tambachi and Nicolò Cupidi, both important landholders (see table 10 of the Appendix). They held, respectively, five and four parcels of vineyards with a *beneprobatum*, while they also held fields in gratuitous concession like all other immigrants. They had probably bought the vineyards from indigenous owners. Two others, a man – Benizelo Coulouvardis – and a woman – Venedichti Semadà – held one field each in gratuitous concession, while they also owned vineyards with *beneprobatum*, like all other indigenous owners.

57 Cf. K. Dokos, ‘Η μετοικεσία των Αθηναίων στην Πελοπόννησο και η πρώτη φάση του επαναπατρισμού τους (1688-1691) [The migration of Athenians to the Peloponnese and the first phase of their repatriation (1688 -1691)]’, *Μνήμων*, 10 (1985), esp. 109–118 passim.



name of the previous Muslim owner of all the public land rented or given in gratuitous concession in the town of Vostizza is registered and we can thus reconstruct and estimate the landholdings of the Muslims.<sup>58</sup> Of course, Muslims also held properties in other villages apart from the town of Vostizza, but in these cases the name of the previous owners has not been registered in the Catalogue of parcels. It is certain, though, that almost all the land on the litoral was in Muslim hands. This is why it was held almost exclusively by immigrant colons after the conquest. We can also make the reasonable assumption that the indigenous landholders of 1700 also constituted the Christian landholders on the eve of the Venetian conquest. This assumption entails that there was no divergent devolution nor any land sales between 1683 and 1700, or, rather, that in such a short time-span divergent devolution and market transactions did not make any significant change in land distribution. Consequently, we can reconstruct the hypothetical list of landholdings just before the Venetian conquest, calculate the relevant indexes, and reconstruct the distribution of landed property.

**Table 3:** Hypothetical distribution of land between Muslims and Christians in the confines of the town of Vostizza, ca.1684

In stremmata of 1,000 m2	total area	max size	min. size	parcels	owners	size of holding	parcels per holding	size of parcel
Fields (total) <sup>a</sup>	6,726			332	40	168	8.30	20.26
Christians	1,200	251	2.7	41	18	67	2.28	29.26
Christians <sup>a</sup>	317	27	2.7	33	16	20	2.06	9.61
Muslims <sup>a</sup>	6,409	289	1.3	299	24	267	12.46	21.44
Muslims	32,071	24,867	1.3	309	25	1283	12.36	103.79
Christians <sup>a</sup> / total <sup>a</sup>	4.71%			9.94%	40.00%			
Vineyards (total) <sup>a</sup>	1,443			390	120	12	3.25	3.70
Christians	727	23	0.3	197	56	13	3.52	3.69
Christians <sup>a</sup>	727	23	0.3	197	56	13	3.52	3.69
Muslims <sup>a</sup>	716	24	0.0	193	64	11	3.02	3.71
Muslims	849	24	0.0	218	65	13	3.35	3.89
Christians <sup>a</sup> / total <sup>a</sup>	50.4%			50.5%	46.7%			
Fields and vineyards (total) <sup>a</sup>	8,170			722	131	62	5.51	11.32
Christians	1,927			238	61	32	3.90	8.10
Christians <sup>a</sup>	1,044			230	59	18	3.90	4.54
Muslims <sup>a</sup>	7,125			492	72	99	6.83	14.48
Muslims	32,919			527	73	451	7.22	62.47
Christians <sup>a</sup> / total <sup>a</sup>	12.8%			31.9%	45.0%			

<sup>a</sup> without the “outlier” group, *i.e.* land-holders who held wasteland and pastures.<sup>59</sup>

58 Almost all conceded land can be attributed to specific Muslims. Only 2.5% of the registered Muslim land is impossible to attribute to specific Muslim landholders, because the names are illegible (see table 9 in the Appendix).

59 Calculated indexes are more representative of the underlying realities if we eliminate from the table the ‘outliers’, *i.e.* those who possessed properties, like pastures and large strips of wasteland, that were very large in size and distorted the estimated average.



The number of Muslims whose properties are registered is relatively small. Just 25 persons possessed arable fields in Vostizza before 1684. If those who possessed vineyards are included, the number rises to 73 persons. In c.1683, the potential number of Muslim landowners would have been slightly larger than that of Christians, who numbered just 18 possessing arable fields and 61 possessing fields and/or vineyards.<sup>60</sup> Arable land in the territory of Vostizza was clearly in Muslim hands and, of course, it was unequally distributed. On the other hand, it seems that vineyards were much more equally distributed. The number of Christian and Muslims deprived of land is unknown, but it was certainly significant. Not all Muslims were landholders, and even fewer large landholders.

Arable fields were in majority held by a few Muslim owners, who held more and larger parcels than the few Christians. The local wheat market of Vostizza was undoubtedly supplied by the Muslim landowners. Some of them had substantial properties. They are all called Ağas and Ağazades. The richest, possessing almost 90 ha of arable land, was registered by his title *Serdar*. He was followed by Hüseyin Ağazade (89 ha) and Derviş Çelebi<sup>61</sup> (70 ha). Then came Ahmet Ağa, İbrahim Ağazade, Mustafa Ağa, İbrahim Ağazade, Mehmet Ağa Farmaki, Sal Ağa, Abdi Ağa, Halil Ağa, İsmail Ağa, with properties ranging from 20 to 70 ha. (see Maps in <http://vostizza.ims.forth.gr>). These 11 individuals (some of them related to one another) controlled 40% of all Muslim vineyards and 80% of fields or 75% of the total Muslim property and 60% of all the cultivated area in the town. The land in general and the fields in particular belonged to a handful of local notable Muslim families. The next ten richest Muslims possessed a large number of the available fields. In fact, the 21 Muslims possessed almost three-quarters of all land: 80% of fields and 25% of all vineyards (see Table 9 in the Appendix). Land was thus unequally divided (among corn-producers): the Gini co-efficient is 0.533.<sup>62</sup>

This concentration of fields does not mean that we have the equivalent of a large latifundio type of farm, or even of sharecropping *çiftlik*-villages. Holdings are fragmented and scattered all around the communal *terroir*, as can be easily seen from the following experimental and partial representations (see Maps in [vostizza.ims.forth.gr](http://vostizza.ims.forth.gr)). This structure of important but fragmented and scattered landed and real estate property reminds us of comparable Christian patrimonies in the later Ottoman Morea, like that of Panayo-

60 In 1700, an equally small number of 20 indigenous Christians held arable fields, Eighteen of them held arable fields in *beneprobatum* (or customarily, without any legal document - *senza carta*) and two of them in gratuitous concession and this is why these fields have not been included in the pre-1684 land distribution reconstruction as Christian-held arable land (see table 5).

61 His name is written Zelepako, Celepako, Derviş Zelepakoghli, Zelepako is a diminutive of Çelebi and his full name was probably Derviş Çelebioğlu.

62 With a Gini coefficient we measure inequality *among the registered population*. An index of 1.0 is a measure of absolutely unequal distribution and an index of 0 indicates absolute equality. It should be borne in mind that if there are unregistered persons, usually those without any property, they are not included in the measured index.

te Benakis, studied by Gilles Veinstein.<sup>63</sup> A large fragmented patrimony of this kind was certainly rented out or given to sharecroppers, thus weaving a network of asymmetrical relations of economic and social power imposed by the local elite upon the lower strata. There were, of course, cases of small *çiflik* villages (rather, hamlets) and monastic *metochia* in the narrow litoral plain, just west of the town of Vostizza. In 1700, some of these were deserted (turned into *mezraa*) and they were certainly of the kind of small and medium-size *çiflik*-villages (usually exploited through sharecropping labour) heavily involved in cattle-breeding, such as were also to be found elsewhere in the lowlands in the Balkans (however narrow these lowland strips were).

We must keep in mind that some – but not all – of our *Ağalar* also probably owned small *çifliks* in the litoral plain. Unfortunately, in these cases the name of the previous owners has not been registered in the Catalogue of parcels of the *Cadaastro*. It is clear, though, that almost all land on the litoral was in Muslim hands. In 1700, there were 11 *çiflik* (or *zevgotlatia*) villages registered, some of them, e.g., Ali Muhtar, Diroğlu, and Muftisi, were probably named after their former Muslim overlord. In other cases, although former Muslim landholders were not systematically named, we do have information on at least one Muslim owner or his proselytised descendants. This is the case of the villages-*çiftliks* of San Zuane<sup>64</sup> and of Catto Bususchia.<sup>65</sup> In fact the land in the small litoral plains was either held by Muslims, and cultivated by Christian sharecroppers, or held by the Church and monasteries. This is not an isolated regional example as the study of the litoral plain of Navarino at the same period has demonstrated.<sup>66</sup>

If there is a clear difference between the number of parcels and the size of holdings of Muslims and Christians in arable fields, things are altogether different with the vineyards. Christians concentrated on land planted with vines (one-third of Christian properties): they possessed slightly more vines than the Muslims (52% of all vineyards were in Christian hands). Both populations show a comparable distribution of vineyard property. Each registered person had about 3.3 parcels of vineyards, each parcel being about 3.7 *stremmata*. Christians had probably a marginally larger vineyard holding (parcels of Christians being a little larger than those of Muslims). Vineyards were less unequally distributed; the Gini coefficient is lower: 0.497.

63 Cf. Gilles Veinstein, 'Le patrimoine foncier de Panayote Benakis, kocabasi de Kalamata', *JTS*, (1987), 217-219.

64 There are parcels which belonged to a Mustafa Chieghagia (Mustafa Kahya).

65 Where Diamando, the converted daughter of Mustafa Pidugli, held four parcels of arable land without proper documents (*senza carta*) as property.

66 Cf. Zarinebaf, Bennet, and Davis, *A Historical and Economic Geography*, 115-144 (esp. map on p.116).

**Table 4:** Land in the town of Vostizza, ca.1684 (in *stremmata* of 1.000 m<sup>2</sup>)

	fields	vineyards	total	fields	vineyards
Cultivated land owned by Christians	1,512	759	2,272	66.6%	33.4%
Cultivated land owned by Muslims	6,339	696	7,035	90.1%	9.9%
Total cultivated surface	7,851	1,455	9,306	84.4%	15.6%
Public undistributed land	25,419	115	25,534	99.5%	0.5%
Total registered surface	33,270	1,570	34,841	95.5%	4.5%
<i>In percentages:</i>					
Cultivated land owned by Christians	19%	52%	24%		
Cultivated land owned by Muslims	81%	48%	76%		
Total cultivated surface	100%	100%	100%		
Total cultivated surface	24%	93%	27%		
Public undistributed land	76%	7%	73%		
Total registered surface	100%	100%	100%		

### *Land and Property under the Venetians*

The Venetian conquest could have been an opportunity to transform this unequal land tenure system, but it did not. In 1700, the landholding population is Christian, but numerous immigrants from continental Greece have been settled by the Venetians in the area and have taken over the Ottoman land with gratuitous concessions (*concessione a gratia*). A small number of lands and houses, formerly owned by Muslims or the Ottoman state, were annually rented out (*affittanza*) or leased for a long term (*a livello*) by the Venetian state. The persons who appropriated the Ottoman land *were almost all* immigrant colons. Did they take small pieces of land in order to become viable small-owners, or did the Venetian state follow a policy favouring the consolidation of a strong ruling elite, leading to the re-emergence of a non-egalitarian society? In studying the actual distribution of landed patrimony in 1770, we observe that the Muslim fields were, temporarily, conceded to immigrant colons, who thus took over the place of Muslims as the major landholding group. We can even see that the new owners were conceded parts of the personal property of certain Muslims. It is clear that the Venetians made inventories of the landed patrimony of Muslims and that they gave parts of these patrimonies to ‘deserving’ servants of the new Venetian overlord. They were almost exclusively immigrant colons. A landholding elite was thus reconstructed.

Thus, in 1700, the property of Christians was equally ill-distributed as it had been in the time of the Ottomans. This is especially striking in the case of arable fields. Mgr Theophilos, Bishop of Salona, a prelate who closely collaborated with the Venetians,<sup>67</sup> emerged as the largest landowner with 128 ha in the town and another 94 in other agglomerations in the lowlands, all of them arable fields. Military officers like the Colonello

67 Cf. K. Dokos, *Η Στερεά Ελλάς κατά τον Ενετοτουρκικόν Πόλεμον (1684-1699) και ο Σαλώνων Φιλόθεος* [Continental Greece during the Turco-Venetian War (1684 - 1699) and Philotheos of Salona] (Athens 1975).

Giovanni Ludureca<sup>68</sup> with 116 ha in the *territorio* of Vostizza (and the whole estate of San Zorzi di Cazi) or the Capitano Piero Casmicchi Scchiaon, with 75 ha, are on the list of large landholders along with colons of non military status like Stamati Tambachi (188 ha), Nicolo Cupidi (170 ha), Fylacto Vovo (157 ha) (see Table 10 in the Appendix). Here again, these fields (and vineyards) are scattered over the whole communal territory of Vostizza. Let me add that some of these leading landholders had also accumulated as private property free concessions or rented a number (up to five) of houses in the town of Vostizza.

Twelve persons in all (the smaller property being of more than 20 ha) held almost two-thirds of all cultivated land and a little more than 70% of all arable fields. The next 12 persons possessed 17% of all land (and a fifth of fields). Thus the 24 larger land possessors together held 90% of fields but only 17% of vineyards. The distribution of land among Christians did not ameliorate. Inequality actually worsened in the case of arable fields (the Gini co-efficient rose from 0.533 to 0.634) and only vineyards remained the appanage of small owners and of indigenous Christians.

**Table 5:** The distribution of land in the town of Vostizza in 1700

in stremmata of 1000 sq. m.	total surface	max size	min. size	Parcels	owners	size of holding	parcels per holding	size of parcel
Fields (total) <sup>a</sup>	6,968			335	62	112	5.40	20.8
Indigenous	1,260	251	2.7	46	20	63	2.30	27.4
Indigenous <sup>a</sup>	377	27	2.7	38	18	21	2.11	9.9
Immigrants <sup>a</sup>	6,592	289	1.3	297	44	150	6.75	22.2
Immigrants	32,011	24,867	1.3	304	45	711	6.76	105.3
Indigenous <sup>a</sup> / Total <sup>a</sup>	5.4%			11.3%	29.0%			
Vineyards (total) <sup>a</sup>	1,461			399	145	10	2.75	3.7
Indigenous	736	23	0.3	201	56	13	3.59	3.7
Indigenous <sup>a</sup>	736	23	0.3	201	56	13	3.59	3.7
Immigrants <sup>a</sup>	724	24	0.0	198	89	8	2.22	3.7
Immigrants	840	24	0.0	214	90	9	2.38	3.9
Indigenous <sup>a</sup> / Total <sup>a</sup>	50.4%			50.4%	38.6%			
Fields and vineyards (total) <sup>a</sup>	8,429			734	165	51	4.45	11.5
Indigenous	1,996			247	61	33	4.05	8.1
Indigenous <sup>a</sup>	1,113			239	59	19	4.05	4.7
Immigrants <sup>a</sup>	7,316			495	106	69	4.67	14.8
Immigrants	32,850			518	107	307	4.84	63.4
Indigenous <sup>a</sup> / Total <sup>a</sup>	13.2%			32.6%	35.8%			

<sup>a</sup> without the "outlier" group, i.e. land-holders who held wasteland and pastures.

68 A Venetian officer of Croatian descent, he fought during the war in the Morea and Rumelia. His military career was not unblemished, cf. *ibid.*, 51-54.



**Map 2:** Land Tenure in the communal territory of Vostizza  
(see more detailed map in [vostizza.ims.forth.gr](http://vostizza.ims.forth.gr))

One should *not* concentrate on the level of unequal distribution of fields or vineyards. This measures intra-sectoral not inter-sectoral inequality. It is the inequality of landholding in Vostizza (or of agricultural income and taxation in the example of nineteenth-century Zagora on Mt Pelion) that really measures the social impact of the unequal distribution of natural resources. Land-related social inequality in the town of Vostizza of 1700 must have been sharper than that measured in the prosperous post-industrial town of Zagora on Mt Pelion.

**Table 6:** Distribution of inequality in the proto-industrial town of Zagora (1836-1854)<sup>69</sup>  
(Gini co-efficients)

	Vostizza		Zagora	
	c.1683	1700	1836	1854
Land holding (size)	0.780	0.773	0.563	0.613
Cultivated Fields	0.533	0.634		
Income from silk production			0.410	0.400
Agricultural taxation			0.526	0.524
Vineyards	0.497	0.491	0.663	0.575
Olive trees			0.772	0.757
Chestnut trees (forest)			0.793	0.830

69 Cf. Petmezas, 'Recherches sur l'économie et les finances des villages du Pélion', 568 and 581.

A better understanding of the unequal land distribution in the entire *territorio* of Vostizza can be obtained if we look at the provincial distribution of land. The large landowners in the town of Vostizza also held extensive parcels of arable land in the small *çiftlik* villages of the litoral plain. Thus an even more unequal land tenure structure emerges. Thirty-seven landholders (6% of the total) held 50% of the arable lands and 12% of the vineyards (see Table 10 in the Appendix). Among them seven are institutional entities (monasteries or the Venetian treasury), and of the other 30, there are 22 immigrant colons (including the Bishop of Salona and Venetian officers) and eight indigenous inhabitants, only one of whom lived in the town of Vostizza, while six were inhabitants of the distant villages of Diakofto and Porovitza.

**Table 7:** Gini Co-efficient of the inequality of land distribution in Vostizza

	Arable	vineyard	total
immigrant	0.6193	0.5358	0.7639
indigenous	0.6354	0.4510	0.6527
all	0.6857	0.4752	0.7193

The Gini co-efficient of the distribution of landed property (the aggregate sum of arable land and vineyards) is very high: 0.7193! In effect covering 603<sup>70</sup> individual and 14 institutional landholders (churches and monasteries), it is close to including a large part of the population and it is a very representative measure of inequality in land tenure. It would be safe to admit that before the Venetian conquest the inequality of land tenure would be comparable, the Muslim elite holding the greater part of the land in the lowland estates. The landed elite of the indigenous population did not live in the town of Vostizza but in the upland villages of Diakofto, Porovitza, and the valley of Gaidouropnichtis. Among the indigenous landholders the Gini is lower (0.6527)

*Conclusion*

Land ownership in the territory of Vostizza remained highly concentrated in the hands of the town elite, each time closely related to the dominant power, Ottoman or Venetian. Some of them entirely owned small villages and estates in the neighbouring lowlands. The local elite, urban in its residence, thus held a dominant position in the market of basic foodstuffs (corn, etc.) and export products. Only the vineyards were more equitably distributed, constituting the means and symbol of equality. Some speculative agricultural activities (sericulture, animal husbandry) were also in the hands of the small-owners, the majority living in the villages of the uplands, but their commercialisation was probably mediated through the local merchants. Access to markets, especially the wine market, offered the only opportunity for lower social strata to acquire a modest supplementary income.

70 The number of landholders is 607, but in four cases the exact content of their property was not registered.

Large land properties were not consolidated but fragmented in smaller parcels and scattered over the whole territory of Vostizza and its surrounding rural area, especially in the lowlands. The land in the estates of the small litoral plain was also fragmented and distributed among the local urban elite (mostly immigrant colons) under the Venetians. This unequal distribution of land was most probably already in place under the Ottomans, and it was simply recreated by the new overlord. This landed patrimony was worked by landless cultivators, mostly immigrant colons themselves. They were most probably sharecroppers, and consequently, investment in land and equipment would have been scarce and productivity low.

In spite of the proclaimed good will of the *Serenissima*, the indigenous population probably did not profit from Venetian rule. Early declarations promising lower taxes for all and free distribution of former Muslim lands to immigrants did not materialise to the extent that the population may have hoped for. It is certain that the unequal access to land by the indigenous population did not change. It is thus not surprising that the Ottomans did not face resistance when they re-conquered the province of the Morea.



## APPENDIX

**Table 8:** Landholders and properties in the villages of the territorio of Vostizza  
(in stremmata of 1000 sq. m)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	arable fields			vines		
				(4)	(5)	(6)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Cachù	ç	50-200	m						
Cumari	ç	260	m						
Dimitropulo	m	110	m						
Meglissari	m	260	s						
Monastery of Taxiarches		280	s						
Vovoda	m	250	s		61.0	39.0			
Crocova e Paliocrocova	m	60	s						
Cardena	m	280	kr	8.0	5.0	84.8			
Basuschia Cattù	m	150-250	kr		8.1	91.9			
Tholopotamo	ç	60	m			75.0			
Alimocturi	ç	150-250	m			100			
Mirtidi	ç	260	m						
Eftapites	ç	270	m						
San Zorzi di Cazi	ç	200	m			100			
Lucha	ç		m			100			
San Zuane	ç	200	s	40.0	8.0	52.0			
Trano Zeugolatio	ç	30	s		2.3	97.7			
Teratza & Temeni	ç	20-40	s		1.1	98.7		1.1	98.7
Rizomylos	ç	25	kr		0.9	99.1			
Tumba	v	490	m	100			100		
Gligori	v	580	m	66.2	23.0	10.8	66.2	23.0	10.8
Greca Panù & Catù	v	600	m	59.5	23.7	16.8			
Aracova	v	760	m	69.2	3.0	27.8	100		
Bordano	v	>760	m	79.5	10.5	10.0			
Franca	v		m	46.0	54.0				
Lopesi	v	>760	m	100					
Bogdano	v	>760	m						
Cugnina	v	560	m	99.7	0.0	0.8	95.2	4.7	
Paraschievâ	v	630	m	81.8	11.5	5.5	81.6	16.6	1.8
Cacocorio	v	450	m	100			76.6	0.4	23.0
Maurichi	v	960	s	100			100		
San Pantaleone	v	1110	kr	69.7	30.3		100		

average size of property		registered families		landholders (incl. monasteries)			land in use		(8)	(9)
arable	vines	all	(7)	all	indig.	colon	all	% vines		
299.0		4	75	1	1		299		74.8	4.0
195.2		10	100							
				5		4	2,342		234.2	0.0
44.5		4	100	5	1	1	753		188.3	0.8
72.8		7	100	3		3	1,091		155.9	2.3
127.4		7		3		3	2,421		345.8	2.3
28.1		3	100	2		2	169		56.2	1.5
71.9		14	100	2		2	1,294		92.4	7.0
33.2		0		1		1	266			
47.6		4	75	1		1	429		107.1	4.0
24.0		10	80	7	4	1	1,270		127.0	1.4
68.4		15	100	11	1	10	4,579		305.3	1.4
173.6	24.0	26	89	18		17	6,678	1.4	256.8	1.4
353.6		13	100	4		1	1,414		108.8	3.3
27.7	17.4	16	94	25	9	9	3,647	0.5	227.9	0.6
25.6	6.0	13	69	20	4	6	1,906	3.1	146.6	0.7
11.7		5		23	15	1	1,049		209.7	0.2
24.9	9.4	16	25	22	15	2	3,125	7.5	195.3	0.7
21.7		4		6	2	1	347		86.7	0.7
54.0		9		2	1		162		18.0	4.5
10.7		1		2	2		214		214.1	0.5
3.5	0.9	33		30	23	1	1,163	29.4	35.3	1.1
7.4	1.7	43	16	43	27	2	3,580	10.1	83.3	1.0
11.8	2.2	32	38	20	17	2	1,280	14.2	40.0	1.6
2.2	0.9	38		18	18		507	42.5	13.3	2.1
5.1	1.4	8		22	6		827	0.7	103.3	0.4



	(1)	(2)	(3)	arable fields			vines		
				(4)	(5)	(6)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Fteri	v	1100	kr	63.0	14.1	22.9	82.1	17.9	
Basuschia Panù	v	400	kr	60.6	39.4				
Mamussia	v	660	kr	42.2	42.4	15.5	42.2	42.4	15.5
Diacofto	v		v						
Diacofto Chiergniza	v	700	v	82.2	13.7	4.0	93.3	6.7	
Diacofto Vrostena & Castro	v	790	v	88.0	12.0		96.1	3.9	
Diacofto Piscopi	v	420	v	86.8	13.2		79.9	20.1	
Diacofto sto Gialo	l	25	v	2.8	96.3	1.0			
Trupia	l	15	v						
Porovizza, Pirgo, & Plessa	v		kr						
Porovizza	v	670	kr	78.3	4.4	17.3	100		
Pirgo	v	670	kr	87.9	8.7	3.4	97.9	2.1	
Plessa	v		kr	83.9	4.0	10.8			
Paglio Acrata	v		kr	45.2	7.8	47.1			
Acrata	v	130	kr	16.8	28.1	1.0			
Acrata (loco)	l		kr	1.5	25.7				

average size of property		registered families		landholders (incl. monasteries)			land in use		(8)	(9)
arable	vines	all	(7)	all	indig.	colon	all	% vines		
6.4	1.4	27		16	10	1	1,550	11.1	57.4	1.7
6.5		1		9	2		311		310.6	0.1
18.7	2.1	16		12	10	1	2,678	2.5	167.4	1.3
		152	15						98.8	0.6
9.7	2.0			65	64	1	4,707	6.2		
10.3	2.3			47	47		4,034	4.4		
9.3	2.8			61	61		4,458	6.7		
6.6				80	79	1	1,820			
	4.2	32	22						564.7	0.2
57.4				40	39	1	6,437	1.1		
16.1				19	18	1	2,017	4.5		
21.6				54	52	2	2,919			
64.4				12	11	1	1,995			
73.1				20	19	1	2,484			
100.9				11	11		2,219			

- (1) type of land tenure: ç for çiftlik estate; m for monastic estate; v for small-owner village; l for uninhabited location.
- (2) altitude in m.
- (3) river valleys: m for Meganitis river; s for Selinous river; k for Kerenitis river; V for Vouraitis river; kr for Krathis river
- (4) percentage owned by indigenous landholders inhabiting the agglomeration where they hold property
- (5) percentage owned by indigenous landholders who do NOT inhabit the agglomeration where they hold property
- (6) percentage owned by immigrant colon landholders (including churches and monasteries)
- (7) percentage of immigrant colons
- (8) land in use per registered family of inhabitants (stremmata)
- (9) registered families of inhabitants per landholder (including churches and monasteries)

**Table 9:** Ottoman Muslim landholders in descending order of size of land-holdings  
(in stremmata of 1000 sq. m.), c.1683

name		arable fields			vineyards			total	
		area	parcels	average size	area	parcels	average size	area	parcels
Serdar	male	898	12	74,86	37	5		936	17
Husein Ağazade	child	891	34	26,19	17	2		907	36
Çelepak	male	705	31	22,75	59	7	8,37	764	38
Ahmet Ağa	male	424	20	21,19	9	4		433	24
Ibrahim Ağazade	male	371	9	41,25	20	4	4,88	391	13
Mehmet Ağa Farmaki	male	358	26	13,76	30	3	10,11	388	29
Mustafa Ağa Ibrahim Ağazade	male	372	6	61,93				372	6
Sal Ağa	male	284	15	18,95	69	2	34,52	353	17
Halil Ağa	male	262	20	13,08	27	6		288	26
Abdi Ağa	male	229	17	13,44	35	6	5,78	263	23
Ismail Ağa	male	190	14	13,55	45	7	6,39	234	21
Zandar	male	160	12	13,32	20	5	4,02	180	17
Haci Hidir	male	143	10	14,27	12	6	2,03	155	16
Hidirzade	male	17	1	17,2	131	7	18,72	148	8
Ali Celebi	male	147	7	21,03				147	7
Ramadanazade	male	133	7	18,97	13	4	3,21	146	11
Hacioglu	male	116	7	16,52	10	4		125	11
Ganima	male	106	12	8,83				106	12
Zemberek	male	90	6	14,93	11	5	2,24	101	11
Sefil Ağa Ibrahim Ağazade	male	84	3	28,01				84	3
Küfri	male	83	7	11,8				83	7
Kiato	male				38	8	4,72	38	8
Kiatozade	male				35	8	4,43	35	8
Omer Kehya	male				23	5	4,5	23	5
Vakfi	institution	16	2	8,16	6	2	3,03	22	4
Imam effendi	male				22	5	4,46	22	5
Kara Osman	male				16	5	3,3	16	5
Omer Kapucioğlu	male				16	6	2,74	16	6
Hasan Paşa	male				11	4	2,74	11	4
Smaydin	male	10	1	9,84				10	1
Ali Paşazade	male				9	2	4,7	9	2
Leoglu Çelebi	male				9	1	8,69	9	1
Mehmet Caba	male				8	2	4,16	8	2
Ali Kordomeno	male				8	3	2,54	8	3
Yusuf Ağa	male				7	2	3,59	7	2
Kakava	male				6	1	5,88	6	1
Hasan Kokoçeli	male				5	2	2,7	5	2

		arable fields			vineyards			total	
name		area	parcels	average size	area	parcels	average size	area	parcels
Recep Arap	male				5	3	1,77	5	3
Cakut	male				5	2	2,55	5	2
Husein Paşa	male				5	2	2,55	5	2
Semoglu	male				5	1	5,02	5	1
Mesinen	male				5	2	2,38	5	2
Mehmet Alevra	male				5	1	4,53	5	1
Fasili	male				4	2	2,21	4	2
Rori	male				4	2	2,04	4	2
Cako Fer-demzade	male				4	1	3,81	4	1
Ibrahim Paşa	male				4	1	3,81	4	1
Sarakki	male				4	1	3,64	4	1
Cakut hanım	female				4	2	1,79	4	2
Omer Paşazade	male				3	1	3,27	3	1
Aycoğlu	male				3	2	1,56	3	2
tekke	institution				3	1	3,05	3	1
Hasan	male				3	1	2,51	3	1
Aslan	male				2	1	2,44	2	1
Memi	male				2	1	2,3	2	1
Kiato İhtiyar	male				2	1	2,2	2	1
Kurt Mehmet	male				2	1	2,18	2	1
Çakir	male				2	1	2,04	2	1
Halil Ağazade	male				2	1	1,74	2	1
Ali Arap Abdizade	male				2	1	1,74	2	1
Zumboglu	male				2	1	1,72	2	1
Zemberek hanım	female				2	1	1,57	2	1
Cakut Hasan	male				1	1	1,48	1	1
Ibrahim	male				1	1	1,46	1	1
Mehmet Budala	male				1	1	1,42	1	1
Türlü	male				1	1	1,36	1	1
Yahya [?]	male				1	1	1,22	1	1
Murdeni Arap	male				1	1	1,18	1	1
Lapsali	male				1	1	0,96	1	1
Ibrahim Idris	male				1	1	0,87	1	1
Murtes	female				1	1	0,84	1	1
Unreadable		123	11	11,19	61	26	2,36	184	37
Total		6209	290	21,41	919	202	4,55	7129	492

**Table 10:** The most important land holders in descending order of size of land-holdings in 1700

			arable fields				
			town	villages	çiftliks	monastic	province
Name of landholder	(1)	(2)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)
Monastery of Taxiarches ( San Michel Arcangelo)						5.390	5.390
Monastery of Mega Spileo				3.006			3.006
Mgr Teofilo Bishop of Salona	V	c	1.275		701	244	2.220
colons from Rumelia	P	c		2.064			2.064
Stamati Tambachi	V	c			1.876		1.876
Nicolo Cupidi	V	c	3	531	1.168		1.701
Filacto Vuvo	V	c			1.568		1.568
Gianni Mandello & als	V	c			1.465		1.465
Monastery of Saint George						1.429	1.429
Maridhizza Baghla	V	c			1.230		1.230
Collonelo Giovanni Ludurecha	V	c		897	266		1.163
Monastery of jerusalem	C	t			394	745	1.139
Stati Giorgacopulo	V	c			1.115		1.115
Michali Raccheri	V	c			1.052		1.052
Monastery of Saint Nicolas	D			1.014			1.014
Dimo Bogdano	V	c	93	39	832		964
Steffo Peruli	V	c	43		912		954
Micho Levendi	P	i		921			921
Simo Bogdano	V	c		674	249		923
Captain Piero Casmicchi Secchiaon	V	c	591		160		751
Samnaco Canello	D	i		731			731
Mighalli Cazi	V	c	736				736
Giorgo Cirglinghiri	V	c			709		709
Dimachi Mاتيola	V	c			671		671
Giani papa Steffo	V	c			662		662
donna Micromattena	V	c	410		164		573



arable fields		vineyards						fields and vineyards		
province		town	villages	çiftlik	province			province		
(4)	(51)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(3)	(6)	(7)
2	2694,8	31,2			31,2	10,0	3,1	5.421	0,6	0,6
19	158,2	5,2			5,2	1,0	5,2	3.012	0,2	0,2
69	32,2	64,5			64,5	15,0	4,3	2.284	2,8	58,6
17	121,4							2.064		
4	469,0							1.876		
19	89,5	8,9			8,9	4,0	2,2	1.710	0,5	0,7
3	522,7							1.568		
1	1465,4			38,5	38,5	2,0	19,3	1.504	2,6	
4	357,2							1.429		
8	153,8	3,5			3,5	1,0	3,5	1.234	0,3	0,3
13	89,4	7,8			7,8	1,0	7,8	1.171	0,7	0,7
15	75,9							1.139		
2	557,5							1.115		
4	263,1							1.052		
31	32,7		7,6		7,6	1,0	7,6	1.021	0,7	
42	23,0	25,6			25,6	6,0	4,3	990	2,6	12,0
28	34,1	15,5			15,5	4,0	3,9	970	1,6	6,0
16	57,6		32,0		32,0	4,0	8,0	953	3,4	
20	46,2	8,3			8,3	2,0	4,1	931	0,9	0,9
12	62,6	30,6			30,6	3,0	10,2	782	3,9	79,5
38	19,2		33,2		33,2	13,0	2,6	764	4,3	
38	19,4	16,8			16,8	1,0	16,8	753	2,2	100
2	354,3			2,0	2,0	1,0	2,0	711	0,3	
22	30,5	5,0			5,0	2,0	2,5	676	0,7	0,7
18	36,8							662		
31	18,5			55,4	55,4	1,0	55,4	629	8,8	65,2



			arable fields				
			town	villages	çiftliks	monastic	province
Name of landholder	(1)	(2)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)
Caralambi Crisandro	D	i		569			569
Giorgachi Caciairi Theriano	P	i		607			607
Gianni Doganzi	Py	i		600			600
Gianachi Levendi	P	i		586			586
Nicolo Droso	V	i	568				568
Golfi Adhami	V	c				544	544
Panagioti Lemo	V	c	227	315			542
Garufaglia Lemopulla	V	c			515		515
Bussa Gianni	G	i		498			498
All landholders (8)	621		7.816	50.967	17.828	8.724	85.036
Top 6% of landholders	35		3.946	13.053	15.706	8.352	41.056
(9)			50,5%	25,6%	88,1%	95,7%	48,3%

arable fields		vineyards						fields and vineyards		
province		town	villages	çiftliks	province			province		
(4)	(51)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(3)	(6)	(7)
37	15,4		39,4		39,4	8,0	4,9	608	6,5	
9	67,4							607		
14	42,9		5,0		5,0	1,0	5,0	605	0,8	
11	53,3		10,6		10,6	4,0	2,7	597	1,8	
5	113,6							568		100
3	181,4							544		
19	28,5							542		41,9
1	514,5							515		
10	49,8		16,2		16,2	2,0	8,1	514	3,1	
4.484	19,0	1.432	2.552	96	4.081	1.823	2,2	89.068	4,6	10,4
587	69,9	223	144	96	463	87	5,3	41.519	1,1	10,0
13,1%		15,6%	5,6%	100,0%	11,3%	4,8%		46,6%		

- (1) Place of residence : V for Vostizza; P for Porovizza; D for Diakofto; C for Cardena; Py for Pyrgos; G for Grigori.
- (2) Origin of landholders : c for immigrant colons; i for indigenous; t: Monastery transplanted from Rumelia
- (3) area in stremmata of 1000 sq. m.
- (4) No of parcels
- (5) stremmata per parcel
- (6) percentage of the vineyards to the total area of arable fields and vineyards
- (7) percentage of the area in the confines of the town of Vostizza to the total area of the province
- (8) excluding uncultivated land and the land owned by the Venetian Public
- (9) the percentage of the top 6% of landholders to the total of landholders

