

The Integration of Settlers into Existing Socio-Environmental Settings: Reclaiming the Greek Lands After the Late Medieval Crisis



Georgios C. Liakopoulos

Abstract This chapter examines to what extent two late medieval nomadic groups in the southern Balkans adopted the economic practices of the areas they moved into, in order to achieve agricultural sustainability. In the fourteenth century, these two groups, Turk *yörüks* and transhumant Albanians, migrated to Greece in order to invigorate depopulated areas and reclaim lands in Thessaly and the Peloponnese respectively. Almost three generations after their establishment, Ottoman taxation cadastres cast light on their agricultural and pastoral activities. Even though these groups followed different trajectories in their sedentarisation—more or less dictated by their ethnocultural peculiarities—they both focused over time on farming basic, life-sustaining crops, such as cereals, which were complimentary to the manifold market-oriented farming activities of the long-settled local Greeks.

Keywords Nomads · Yörük · Albanians · Sedentarisation · Land-reclamation · Ottoman Empire · Greece

Introduction

The crisis of the Late Middle Ages that swept across Europe marked the fourteenth-century Balkans with political fragmentation, ranging from disputes between local lords or magnates to a larger scale of power shift among empires and various local polities. Almost constant unrest combined with the Black Death ravaged the demography and, consequently, the economy of the region (Fine 1996: 329–34; Varlık 2015: 107–12, 125; Kostis 2020: 303–20). This instability and shortage of agricultural labour caused an increasing demographic mobility, as local landlords tried to recruit landless people. In the big picture, entire vulnerable population groups fled their insecure war-torn homelands to seek a better life.

The menacing revenue shortfalls troubled the state authorities, which, in an organised fashion, invited or deported nomadic and transhumant groups to repopulate

G. C. Liakopoulos (✉)

Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History, Jena, Germany

e-mail: liakopoulos@shh.mpg.de

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regions and reclaim arable lands. This paper aims to explore the extent to which this was a wise practice and how two such groups, the nomads of Turkish origin (*yörük*, *tatar*) in Thessaly (central Greece) and the transhumant Albanians of the Peloponnese (southern Greece), exploited the natural resources of their new habitat, by analysing quantifiable fiscal data contained in contemporary Ottoman tax registers. The *yörüks* followed military chieftains and were then deported *en masse* by sultans from Anatolia into the Balkans, whereas the Albanians were invited to repopulate the countryside of southern Greece by the Venetians and the Byzantines. The Ottoman cadastres offer a cross-section of the two population groups after a period of between sixty and seventy years subsequent to their deportation or immigration to their new homelands, and thus furnish the historian with tools to investigate the level of sedentarisation required for undertaking agricultural activities. It should be noted that these groups were differentiated in the surveys only on the basis of their fiscal peculiarities (i.e. tax exemptions or reductions), not as distinct ethnic groups. The *yörüks* retained a more cohesive nomadic profile, while the Albanians seemed to have evolved to a sedentary level, as far as the circumstances allowed.

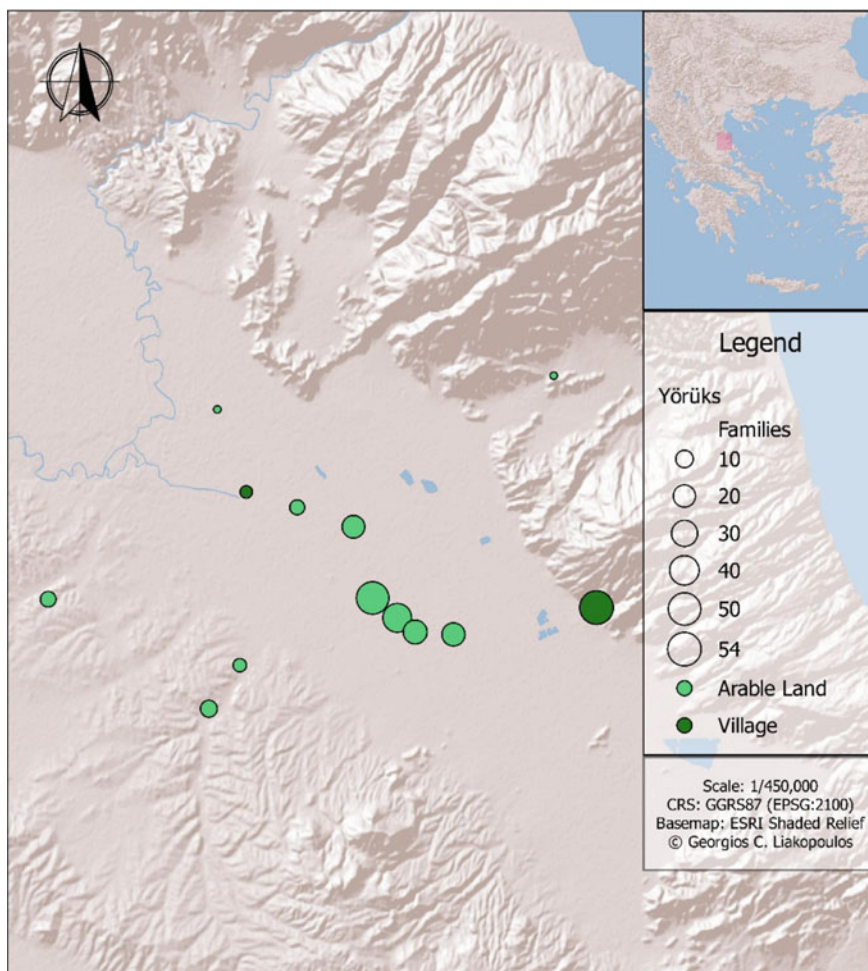
The Turkish Nomads in Thessaly

Around 1385, Thessaly witnessed the incursions of the Ottoman warlord Evrenos Beg, who appeared in the following winter of 1386–87 as the sovereign of the region (Beldiceanu and Năsturel 1983: 117–18; Savvides 1995: 38–40, 59–60; Kiel 1996: 114–15; Kiel 2013: 474). Under his command, nomadic groups of Anatolian origin infiltrated Thessaly, prior to the consolidation of Ottoman rule by Sultan Bayezid I in 1393. The topic of the use of nomadic tribes in the fields of colonisation and military institutionalisation by the sultanic authorities has been well addressed by the historians of the Ottoman Empire (Halaçoğlu 1991: 99–104; Yeni 2017: 188–91). One aspect that commonly gained currency is that the Ottoman state often resorted to the nomadic populations of Anatolia or farther eastern provinces to invigorate and safeguard newly conquered lands in the Balkans (İnalçık 1954: 125). Their areas of service included the military (auxiliary soldiers, raiders, guards of mountainous passes and bridges), transportation, rice cultivation, salt production, butter supplying and mining (İnalçık 1982: 104). Their contribution was so valued that the great economic historian of the period, H. İnalçık, considered them ‘the backbone of the entire imperial organisation’ (İnalçık 2014: 485). In the imperial chancery, these groups were referred to by the term *Türkmen* (Turcoman), for those present in eastern Anatolia; and *yörük* or *yürük* for those who had moved west of the Kızılırmak River, many of whom were funnelled at a later stage into the Balkans (Kasaba 2009: 21; Çetintürk 1943: 109; Barkan 1953–54: 209–13; Arıcanlı 1979: 30–31). On the basis of the registers of 1520–35, as many as 37,435 households (19.2% of the Muslim population) in the Balkans belonged to *yörüks* (Barkan 1957: 33).

In the first extant Ottoman taxation cadastre of central Greece (MM10 cadastre of Trikala) dated 1454/5, the *yörüks* are earmarked either by the note ‘*yörüks* inhabit’

next to the place name or by the mention of *yörük* or Tatar cultivators of farmlands in the taxation section. Such entries are recorded in two fiefs: (a) one village and nine arable lands included in the fief of the governor of Trikala (MM10: 1b–60b), and (b) two villages and ten arable lands belonging to the fief of İbrâhîm and Yūsuf (MM10: 212a–221b) (Map 1). The village of Andriya Miħal, belonging to the fief of Burâķ, deserves our attention. Its headline reads as follows:

This village was formerly inhabited; nomad Turcomans came and were settled (ordered by the authorities to settle); there are no infidels now; they did not even have grain sowed; it has a lot of lands; one could not reason with the *yörüks*. (MM10: 141b).



Map 1 *Yörük* settlements in Thessaly in 1454/5

Being on guard against anachronism, we should conceive the term *türk* as the equivalent of Turcoman or tribal, rather than an ethnonym (Beldiceanu and Năsturel 1983: 131; Ergül 2012: 634). The fields of this village were cultivated by outsiders, upon whom an annual lumpsum of one hundred silver coins (*ağçes*) was levied.¹ From this note, one can infer that the settlement of the nomadic tribes in the Balkans was not always carried out effortlessly; thorny issues arose both from the part of the *yörüks* and the local population. According to another cadastre (1530, TT167), the Christian villagers of Divlas in the Dojran district of central Macedonia had to resettle in neighbouring Dolna Ğırbas (Kato Sourmena) under pressure from *yörük* attacks (Coşkun et al. 2003: 276). The presence of nomads in an urban environment is, as expected, quite sporadic; one *yörük* is mentioned inhabiting the Bedrü'd-din Ğoca quarter of Yeñişehir (Larissa) under the name *Ṭurĥan* the tailor (MM10: 55a).

Members of this group were by no means precluded from the fief-holders (timariots) class. Our list concludes with three *yörük* timariots: Muĥammedī son of Altun, mentioned as a 'yörük man' (MM10: 159b); and Mūsā and Nesīmī sons of Balcı, mentioned as members of the 'yörük tribe' (MM10: 222b). These two cases illustrate a rather confined advancement of nomads to the military élite of local administration. The epithet 'from time immemorial' (*kadīmī*) employed for Muĥammedī's fief is an indication that it had been initially granted during the first stage of the Ottoman conquest. In other cases, the cadastre clearly mentions that the fief-holders themselves or their forefathers came in Thessaly with Evrenos or Ṭuraĥan Beg (Delilbaşı and Arıkan 2001: I, xx–xxiii). The Anatolian nomads who fought as raiders under the command of such military chieftains facilitated the Ottoman expansion in the Balkans in the second half of the fourteenth century (Yeni 2013: 185). In order to stimulate their immigration and settlement in Rumelia, the Ottoman authorities granted them arable lands, areas to set their tents and fiefs (Gökbilgin 1957: 15). N. Beldiceanu and P. Ş. Năsturel query whether the exceptional hereditary form of the early Thessalian fiefs should be related to these inducements (Beldiceanu and Năsturel 1983: 148; see also Moutafchieva 1988: 37–41).

Being a *yörük* was primarily a matter of tax privilege *vis-à-vis* the Ottoman state. It paid off to remain nomadic, even when perhaps engaging to some extent in cultivation of scattered fields. An obvious taxation difference which favoured the *yörüks*, as opposed to their sedentary neighbours of the same religion, was the exception from the payment of the *ra'ıyyet kulluĝu*, the regular agricultural tax of the Muslim subjects, a money equivalent of the *corvée* due to the fief holder, which was estimated on the basis of a plot of land workable by a pair of oxen, unless they were recorded as settled (*yerlū*) in a certain arable land (İnalcı 1959: 581; İnalcı 2014: 472). Our cadastre mentions nominally only ten such *yörük* families which evolved to a sedentary stage: seven in Şarıĥanlı (Modestos) (MM10: 216b), one in Çullular (Melia) (MM10: 216b) and two in Saĥallu (Melissa) (MM10: 217a). When it comes to transhumant nomads with no connection to the earth, the only mention given, as stated above, is the number of the cultivators. The Germiyanlu (Prinia) village is located,

¹ The Ottoman silver coin, *ağçe* or *asper*, contained 1.01 grams of silver in the 1450s and 0.96 in the 1460s (Pamuk 2000: 46).

Table 1 Percentages of agricultural and pastoral taxes in Thessaly in 1454/5

Taxable asset	<i>Yörüks</i> (%)	Sedentary Muslims (%)	Greeks (%)
Cereals	94	75.72	38.93
Vineyards	1.04	0.31	6.85
Other cultivations	0.52	5.09	8.21
Animal husbandry	4.44	18.88	46.01

according to its heading, ‘amid the sheep-breeders’ (MM10: 215a). Despite the fact that the toponym refers to the homonymous principality in western Anatolia, a region that historically staffed with *yörüks* the Ottoman raider class in Rumelia, this village is not included in the enumeration of the *yörük* settlements, since no inhabitant is earmarked as such. The same holds true for Emîrhanlı *alias* Aydınlı (MM10: 221a–221b); the anthroponymic study showed that at least one of its dwellers, Aşlıhan the tailor son of Tatar Maḥmūd, was of nomadic provenance. Finally, the rice-cultivators village Çeltükçi *alias* Ḥallāc Ḥamza (Neohori) (MM10: 215b) does not record any *yörüks*, even though the engagement of this group in risiculture is well documented (İnalçık 1982: 103–6).² The headman of the rice cultivators, ‘Alī Faḫīh, was most probably the chieftain of the neighbouring ‘Alī Faḫīlar (Kalamaki) village, where fifty-four *yörük* farmers are recorded (MM10: 215b–216a).

The nomads of Thessaly appear to combine agricultural and pastoral activities. The absolute majority of the taxes levied on the two hundred and forty-three families recorded in designated *yörük* localities, excluding the head taxes on those settled, belongs to the cultivation of cereals (94%) (Table 1; Appendix Table 5).³ Nomadic groups with a rather loose engagement in farming tended to focus on staple crops. Within the context of self-consumption, they cultivated small plots in the vicinity of their pastures or abandoned lands to secure the supply of grain for their own diet and for fodder. Cereal production is almost equally divided between wheat (730.5 *kile*; 53.95%) and barley (615 *kile*; 45.42%) (Appendix Table 6). Their total agricultural income is eked out by a mere 1.04% of viticulture and 0.52% of cotton

² Cf. the nomads’ contribution of 36.57% (7640-*aḳçe* tithe) to the total rice production (20,890-*aḳçe* tithe) of Adana’s Kınık district in 1525 (Kurt 2004: xlv).

³ The calculation of the exact cereal yield in kilograms is hindered by the fact that both the metric equivalent of the unit of measurement for weight (*kile*) and the actual percentage of the tithe (‘*ögr*’) remain uncertain for the specific province in the mid-fifteenth century. The cadastre mentions that two *kiles* equal one load (*yük*) (MM10: 7b); the latter may vary between 150 kg and 205.4 kg (Beldiceanu and Năsturel 1983: 106; Hinz 1955: 14, 36; İnalçık 1983: 330). Moreover, one cannot ascertain whether the *kile* employed refers to the one of Trikala (*kile-i Tırḫala*) or the one of Larissa (*kile-i Yeñişehir*). In 1506 the *kile* of Trikala equalled two *kiles* of Istanbul or 40 *oḳkas*, that is a total of 51.312 kg, and the one of Larissa equalled two *kiles* of Trikala (Beldiceanu and Năsturel 1983: 106; Taşkın 2005: 70). On the other hand, the tithe could fluctuate between 10.5% and 13.33% of the production, depending on the inclusion of the *sālāriyye* or *sālārlik* surtax (Alexander 1985: 490).

Table 2 Percentages of pastoral taxes in Thessaly in 1454/5

Taxable asset	Yörüks (%)	Sedentary Muslims (%)	Greeks (%)
Swine	0	0	23.47
Sheep	43.43	42.25	58.36
Apiculture	56.57	57.75	18.17

and madder (Table 1; Appendix Table 7). The latter two manufacturing productions should be construed in relation to the renowned nomadic kilim- and carpet-making. It is noteworthy that madder is not recorded among the taxable assets of either sedentary Muslims or Greeks. Both nomadic and sedentary Muslims present a similar ratio of apiculture to sheep breeding, namely 1:0.77 for the *yörüks* and 1:0.73 for the settled Muslims (Table 2). One would expect a more substantial contribution of animal husbandry to the *yörüks* activities than 4.44%. This low figure may be attributed to the ‘relative invisibility’ of certain *yörüks*; namely, those tribes who were not recorded in the cadastral surveys by virtue of pursuing exclusively pastoralism and not engaging in farming (Yeni 2013: 200). Their settled Muslim and Greek neighbours appear to flourish more in this sector, with 18.88% and 46.01% of agricultural and pastoral taxes, respectively (Table 1). Due to Islamic religious limitations, swine breeding is only recorded among the Greeks (Table 2).

This image is by no means particular to Thessaly. Across the Aegean, in the second half of the fifteenth century, the Meander Valley accommodated a substantial *yörük* population of nine communities numbering 294 households. On the basis of the cadastre of Aydın (1461–70, TT1), barley and wheat constituted 30.37% and 25.17%, respectively, of the total tithes (Erdoğan and Bıyık 2015: 23). Animal husbandry, on the other hand, contributed only 1.81% to the total revenue, which is interpreted by the editors as a marked preference of the inhabitants for agriculture, dictated by the fertility of the region, despite the nomadic presence (Erdoğan and Bıyık 2015: 36). In the previous century, the export of grain from the regions of Smyrna and the Meander proved to be of paramount importance for Venice (Zachariadou 1983: 163–65). We are thus witnessing parallel farming orientations and practices by *yörüks* in the major granaries of the southern Balkans and western Anatolia.

All in all, the *yörüks* of Thessaly enjoyed reduced taxation, which is mirrored in their average tax per family of 42.6 *ağçes*, as opposed to the 67.5 *ağçes* of the sedentary Muslims and the 66.4 *ağçes* of the Greeks. The rates are evened out when one deducts the personal encumbrances: the *yörüks* paid, on average, 18.4 *ağçes* less than a settled Muslim family and only 1.8 *ağçes* less than a Greek one (Appendix Table 5). The overall impression is that to a large extent they adhered to the nomadic *modus vivendi*. Their engagement in farming should be viewed as a means of increasing the fief-holder’s revenue through the reclamation of abandoned lands for agriculture. Out of their twenty-three recorded localities, one is a standing village (‘Alı Fağılar: 54 families), one is abandoned (Andriya Miğal: 0 families) and the remaining twenty-two are cultivated lands (229 families). Finally, there are only two cases where former

nomads earned a living as artisans, one in the local capital, Yeñişehir, and the other in Emīrhanlu/Aydıñlı, as mentioned above.

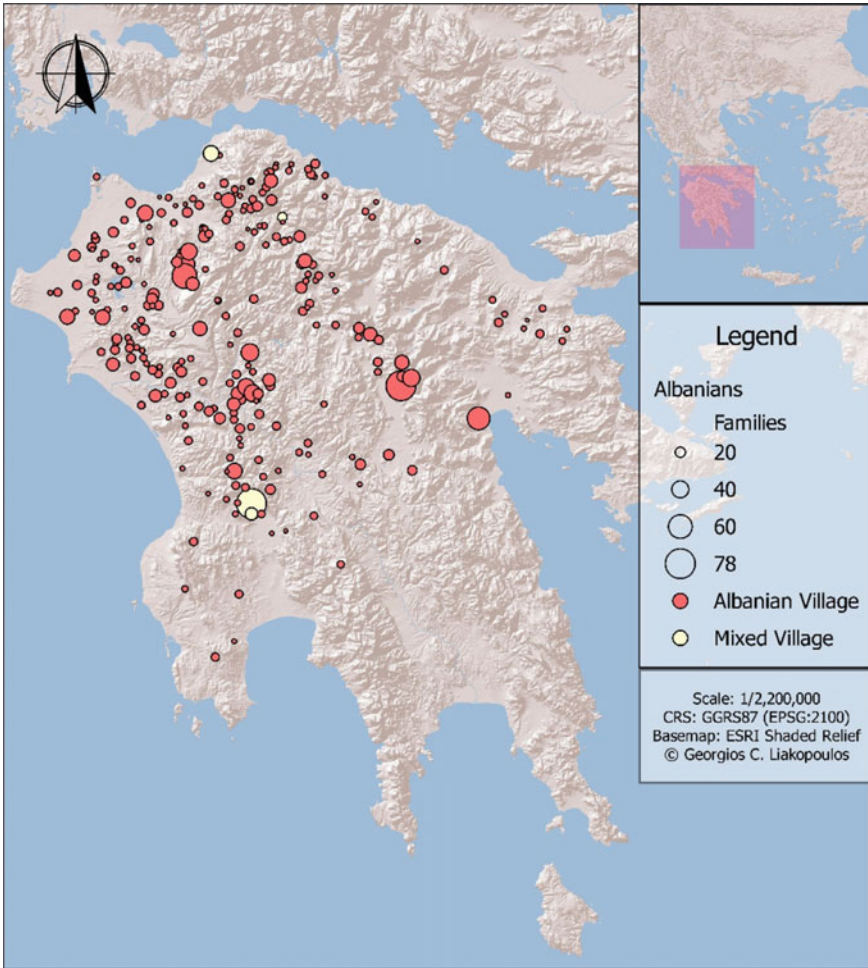
The nomadic groups of Turkish origin who settled in Thessaly in the 1380s preferred hamlets to villages, where they engaged primarily in cereal cultivation and, to a lesser extent, in manufacturing production. In this aspect, they proved to be quite successful in reclaiming the fertile lands of Thessaly for staple crops. From parallel cases in Anatolia, we presume that the animal husbandry section of their economy must have been more significant than attested to in the tax register. Overall, they appear more destitute than their sedentary neighbours.

The Albanians in the Peloponnese

Less than a decade later and farther south, the first extant Ottoman taxation cadastre of the Peloponnese (TT10-1/14662), dated 1460–63, divides the recorded settlements into Greek and Albanian on the basis of different rates of taxation, which favoured the latter ethnic group.

Due to the persisting wars and the plague in the fourteenth century, the Peloponnesian population had suffered losses (Zakythinos 1949: 9–10; Panagiotopoulos 1987: 61–68). This demographic deficit was counterbalanced to some degree by the invitation and settlement of Albanian nomadic clans, this time Christian—as opposed to the Muslim *yörüks*—who formed populous groups consisting of families, or tribes. The Albanians, also known as Arvanites in the Greek lands, were first mentioned in the Peloponnese in the second half of the fourteenth century. By 1391 there had been an influx of Albanians that could be hired as mercenaries. The Venetians were in need of colonists and soldiers in their depopulated areas and hence offered plots of arable land, pastures and tax exemptions to the wandering Albanians in southern Greece (Thiriet 1959: 366; Chrysostomides 1995: 206, 291, 337, 339; Topping 1980: 261–71; Ducellier 1968: 47–64). A well-attested-to, more populous Albanian settlement took place during the rule of Theodore I Palaeologus (1384–1407), when ten thousand Albanians appeared before the Isthmus and asked Theodore for permission to settle in the Peloponnese (1394–95). A second wave of immigrants from southern Albania and western mainland Greece descended on the Peloponnese, perhaps in 1417–18. Their establishment was significant for the invigoration of the Albanian demography in the peninsula that led to the Albanian rebellion in 1453 (Zakythinos 1975: 247–56; Biris 1998: 133–40). In the first stage of their arrival, in the space of ten to thirty years, they were probably in search of appropriate land for animal husbandry. After mapping out the evidence contained in the Peloponnesian register, it becomes apparent that by the early 1460s the Albanians had established their settlements throughout the region regardless of land morphology and elevation (Map 2).

The main reason for occupying a different category in the cadastre is the 20% reduction in the poll tax (20 *ağçes* instead of the 25 the Greeks paid). This mirrors a late Byzantine (Vranoussi 1998: 293–305)—and even, as we saw, Venetian—practice of tax exemptions that the Ottomans adopted to control the intractable Albanians



Map 2 Albanian settlements in the Peloponnese in 1460–63

and should be examined within the context of the ‘continuity for stability’ policy. Their rebellions of 1423 and 1453, were reminiscent of their untamed nature (Chalcocondyles 1923: II, 16–17; Dilo 1969: 205–11). However, within half a century, the favourable taxation terms granted to the Albanians had ceased to exist. The next register of the Peloponnese (1514/5, TT80) recorded the same amount of poll tax (25 *akçes* annually) levied on both Greeks and Albanians and, for this reason, did not earmark the Albanian villages. This shows that by the early sixteenth century Ottoman rule in the peninsula had been consolidated. The TT10-1/14662, on the other hand, clearly noted the Albanian villages with the heading ‘of the Albanian community’. Besides the villages marked as Albanian, there were inhabitants of

Albanian origin in Greek villages and towns, as their names indicate (Liakopoulos 2019, 214–16). These, however, like the rest, were due to pay a 25-*ağçe* poll tax.

The analysis of the financial data contained in the Peloponnesian cadastre (Appendix Table 8) shows that an Albanian family paid, on average, a little less than three-fifths (58.85%) the amount of tax a Greek one did, which constitutes a first indication of the relative poverty of this ethnic group. It is plausible to suggest that such communities were mostly engaged in cultivation of life-sustaining crops (e.g. cereals), instead of agricultural activities that were geared towards securing a monetary surplus. An Albanian family appears to pay, on average, 4.7 *ağçes* more wheat tithe and produce 238.6 kg more wheat than a Greek one.⁴ Barley follows with a similar analogy of 0.8 *ağçes* more tithe and 46.9 kg more production than the Greek equivalent (Appendix Tables 8 and 10). On the other hand, the contribution of the Albanians in other agricultural taxable assets ranges a little over one-tenth of the totals in the Peloponnese (11.9%).

Viticulture and wine production constitute two areas of agriculture and pre-industrial activity that require a certain amount of know-how and a closer connection to the earth; hence, they are more often performed by established sedentary societies. The transhumant Albanians, who must have continued being employed as mercenaries in armies of various Italian states (*stradioti*), show a very constrained, almost non-existent, contribution to the cultivation of the vine (3.25% of total viticulture and vinification taxes). This holds true for the cultivation of both taxed subjects' and fief-holders' personal demesne vineyards (Liakopoulos 2009: 202–3). The exclusive cultivation of resin trees by Greeks points to resin's use in the maintenance of wine jars and barrels. With the exception of oak trees in the Buryalisa village (TT10: 186), the Albanians did not engage in cultivating the fief-holders' fields to the same extent as their Greek neighbours did (Appendix Table 9). This, however, should be examined in the light of the main settlement pattern in the early Ottoman Peloponnese, which was the fortified large village or town dating back to the Franco-Byzantine era (thirteenth to fifteenth centuries). The largest fiefs were established around such a fortified centre, which functioned as the local administrative capital and market (Panagiotopoulos 1987: 45–49). The Albanian newcomers chose to inhabit a number of small satellite settlements in the periphery. This allowed them seclusion and loose relations with the local capitals, where the fief-holders had their mansions and fields.

On the other hand, the Albanians appear to thrive more in the sector of animal husbandry, different to the *yörüks* of Thessaly (Appendix Table 8). As determined by their semi-nomadic nature, they contributed to the tax levied on swine breeding and to sheep ownership, with 84.65% and 60.68%, respectively. However, the impact of pastoral activities on the overall economy is limited to 2.13% for the Albanians and 0.15% for the Greeks.

⁴ The calculation of the actual cereal yield is based on the Adrianople *müdd* (*müdd-i Edrene*). One *müdd* of wheat cost 80 *ağçes* and a bushel (*keyl*) 4 *ağçes*, and one *müdd* of barley cost 60 *ağçes* and a bushel 3 *ağçes* (TT10: 26; İnalçık 1983: 324–25; Beldiceanu and Beldiceanu-Steinherr 1980: 57; Barkan 1964: 258). One *müdd* of wheat weighed 513.12 kg and one *müdd* of barley 445 kg (Hinz 1955: 47). The tithe on cereals is estimated at one-eighth of the total production (Beldiceanu and Beldiceanu-Steinherr 1980: 24).

From the above it is inferred that, even if we employ the rather optimistic family coefficient of 5, in most cases the cereal harvest, presumably produced by both ethnic groups, surpassed the level of domestic consumption. The yearly subsistence minimum per individual is estimated at 200 kg of cereals plus 59 kg for seed and 36 kg for tax, a total of 295 kg (Asdrachas 1999: 90; Kiel 2007: 41). The grain tax figures of the Peloponnesian cadastre are closely related to the population of each settlement (cereals in kg to families, R^2 : 0.88; p-value: <0.001). The commercialisation of the most profitable cultivations' surplus, in our case the cereals and the vines, was obligatory for the sustainability of the household that was encumbered with the poll tax and the capitation (Balta 2015: 118). The complementarity of agrarian production constitutes a key characteristic of pre-industrial economies (Asdrachas 1999: 221–22; Asdrachas 1988: 15–17). However, the Albanians had less of a need to obtain the same surplus as the Greeks, due to their 20% reduction in the poll tax. Whereas they seem to have mainly focused on cereal cultivation (cereals: 89.36%; viticulture: 3.88%), the Greeks present a more balanced ratio (cereals: 42.97%; viticulture: 43.60%) (Table 3). In addition to that, Greeks are keener to engage in cotton and silk manufacturing. The latter should be connected with mulberry cultivation; the two combined reach an impressive 56.34% of the taxes levied on activities other than cereal cultivation and viticulture/vinification (Appendix Table 11). These findings tally with the image of destitute stockmen living in the countryside that the historical sources give about the Albanians:

This entire race are nomads and they do not engage in any lasting activity. (Chalcocondyles 1923: II, 170).

So, having acquired all these, without wanting to calm down anymore and being ungrateful to the beneficiaries, in the middle of winter after three years, he removes from the Illyrians in the Peloponnese all their herds, many horses, many oxen, several sheep and several swine. (Lambros 1926: 194).

The Albanians of the Peloponnese were settled throughout the region, inhabiting mostly small-sized villages in the periphery of the Greek towns. Their farming activities were clearly oriented towards cereal cultivation. As a matter of fact, their geographical distribution shows that they achieved high rates of cereal production regardless of elevation and soil type. On the basis of their impressive animal breeding scores, one can deduce that they must have been the main suppliers of animal products to the Greek towns. On the other hand, the sectors of viticulture and manufacturing lagged behind those of the Greek settlements.

Table 3 Percentages of agricultural and pastoral taxes in the Peloponnese in 1460–63

Taxable asset	Albanians (%)	Greeks (%)
Cereals	89.36	42.97
Vineyards	3.88	43.60
Other cultivations	4.63	13.28
Animal husbandry	2.13	0.15

Conclusions

The first Ottoman officials to arrive in a newly conquered land were the tax surveyors (Cvetkova 1983: 134). The Ottoman state, parallel to applying its own general taxation system in its core lands, incorporated, abolished or amended a number of local pre-existing taxation practices in a sense of pragmatism and flexibility (Dağlı 2013: 195–200). The Thessalian and the Peloponnesian cadastres possess, *mutatis mutandis*, the quality of a Domesday Book in presenting a snapshot of the *yörüks* and the Albanians. After more than half a century since the two population groups under study had been introduced to their new homelands, they demonstrated different trajectories towards sedentarisation and achieved different standards of living (Table 4). Almost all (94.7%) of the *yörüks* of Thessaly retained their nomadic taxation status. On the other hand, all the 4900 Albanian families of the Peloponnese are recorded inhabiting villages, the majority of which (93.71%) numbered fewer than forty families, by contrast with the respective 27.03% of the 7103 Greek families. Eighty percent of the Albanian villages belonged to temporary transhumance settlements named after the clan chieftain (Liakopoulos 2019: 221, 223). This is an indication that the Albanians were, by the mid-fifteenth century, already advanced in pursuing a more sedentary livelihood than the *yörüks*. As a matter of fact, Albanians had only incidentally and occasionally been nomads in their history; their migration period in the southern Balkans is characterised by an acquired mobility necessitated by low living standards (Ducellier 1979: 35). Their relatively rapid transition into farmers is attested to by a similar episode in Attica. It was most probably the Florentine duke of Athens, Antonio Acciaiuoli, who resorted to their assistance between 1418–20, in an attempt to strengthen the defence of his duchy against the Venetians and the Ottomans, and to increase his revenues by reclaiming arable lands (Biris 1998: 108). Paleoenvironmental records from Brauron (Vravrona) in eastern Attica showed extensive soil erosion attributed to anthropogenic activities such as ploughing and herding in the first half of the fifteenth century, which coincides with the settlement of Albanians in the area (Triantaphyllou et al. 2010: 19–20; Kouli 2012: 273, 276).

The readily available manpower, in addition to the renowned military virtues of the *yörüks* and the Albanians, had been key determinants in their utilisation by Ottoman and pre-Ottoman authorities. These two population groups adopted at a different pace to the local practices and exploited natural resources to achieve sustainability and the necessary monetary surplus to cover their, no matter how reduced, personal taxes. Three generations after their immigration, no group seems to have achieved

Table 4 Average taxes per family in Thessaly and the Peloponnese in the mid-fifteenth century (in grams of silver *per annum*)

	Thessaly			Peloponnese	
	Sedentary Muslims	<i>Yörüks</i>	Greeks	Albanians	Greeks
Total	68	43	67	63	107
Excl. personal taxes	60	41	45	43	83.5

full integration with the local sedentary society; neither did they engage in the full breadth of agricultural opportunities the lands they settled in offered. Their high percentages of cereal cultivation indicate assiduity in the discharge of their land reclamation duties. On top of that, they met the needs of urban populations in animal products. The nomadic/transhumant and the sedentary populations complemented one another, perhaps even by the exploitation of the first. As attested to in posterior cadastres, the Peloponnesian Albanians gradually began to cover a wider gamut of agricultural activities and thus narrow the gap with the Greeks. It appears that in the long run the political choices of the authorities to mobilise these marginal groups were successful.

Appendix

See Tables 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.

Table 5 Taxes in Thessaly in 1454/5 (in *ağçes per annum*)

Taxable asset		<i>Yörüks</i>	Sedentary Muslims	Greeks ^a
Wheat	Total tithe	5904 ^b	4940	5428
	Average tithe per family (<i>ağçes</i>)	24.3	27.6	13.2
	Average tithe per family (<i>kile</i>)	3.01	3.45	1.65
Barley	Total tithe	3073	1740	1111
	Average tithe per family (<i>ağçes</i>)	12.6	9.7	2.7
	Average tithe per family (<i>kile</i>)	2.53	1.94	0.54
Millet	Total tithe	32	100	160
	Average tithe per family (<i>ağçes</i>)	0.1	0.6	0.4
	Average tithe per family (<i>kile</i>)	0.03	0.11	0.08
Vetch	Total tithe	10	–	175 ^c
	Average tithe per family (<i>ağçes</i>)	0.04	–	0.4
	Average tithe per family (<i>kile</i>)	0.01	–	0.08
Flax	Tithe	–	–	537

(continued)

Table 5 (continued)

Taxable asset		<i>Yörüks</i>	Sedentary Muslims	Greeks ^a
Walnuts	Tithe	–	–	67
Fruits	Tithe	–	149	15
Cotton	Tithe	40	120	365
Madder	Tithe	10	–	–
Broad beans	Tithe	–	–	96
Kitchen & vegetable gardens	Tithe	–	187	370
Viticulture & vinification	Tithe on vineyards & barrel tax ^d	100	28	1210
Animal husbandry	Tax on swine	–	–	1907
	Tax on sheep	185	714	4741
	Apiculture	241	976	1476
Average tax per family	Total	42.6	67.5	66.4
	Excl. personal taxes	40.9	59.3	44.4

^a Entries of nine Greek villages included in the fief of İbrâhîm and Yûsuf

^b In the arable land of Aynoğoli the tithe on grain is estimated at a lumpsum of 60 *ağçes*

^c In Vaş_ irama (Vathyrrama) it also includes a broad bean tithe

^d The tax on vinification or barrel tax is attested to only in the Greek villages of Kestric (Kastri) and Viseni/Büyük Göl (Aetolofos)

Table 6 Percentages of cereal production in Thessaly in 1454/5

Taxable asset	<i>Yörüks</i> (%)	Sedentary Muslims (%)	Greeks (%)
Wheat	53.95	62.66	70.25
Barley	45.42	35.31	22.97
Millet	0.48	2.03	3.31
Vetch	0.15	0	3.47

Table 7 Percentages of cultivations other than cereals and vines in Thessaly in 1454/5

Taxable asset	<i>Yörüks</i> (%)	Sedentary Muslims (%)	Greeks (%)
Flax	0	0	37.03
Cotton	80	26.32	25.17
Madder	20	0	0
Walnuts	0	0	4.62
Fruits	0	32.67	1.04
Broad beans	0	0	6.62
Kitchen & vegetable gardens	0	41.01	25.52

Table 8 Taxes in the Peloponnese in 1460–63 (in *ağçes per annum*)

Taxable asset		Albanians	Greeks
Wheat	Total tithe	161,481	201,049
	Average tithe per family	33	28.3
	Average production per family (kg)	1691	1452.4
Barley	Total tithe	25,190	30,894
	Average tithe per family	5.1	4.3
	Average production per family (kg)	305	258.1
Flax	Tithe	6431	8986
Cotton	Tithe	463	5732
Silk	Tithe	628	26,920
Olive oil	Tithe	36	2144
Honey	Tithe	299	644
Resin	Tithe	1	10
Fruits	Tithe	84	2351
Mulberries	Tithe	–	13
Kitchen gardens	Tithe	–	299
Viticulture	Tithe on vineyards	7554	155,573
Vinification	Tax on wine	344	15,939
Animal husbandry	Tax on swine	4448.5	806.5
	Sheep (heads)	3885	2517
Average tax per family	Total	65.55	111.39
	Excl. poll tax	44.66	85.96

Table 9 Taxes of cultivations in timariots' personal demesne in the Peloponnese in 1460–63 (in *ağçes per annum*)

Taxable asset	Albanians	Greeks
Vineyards	552	79,807
Fruit trees	142	4070
Olive trees	150	4404
Mulberry trees	398	13,460
Pomegranate trees	–	5
Resin trees	–	720
Oak trees	1000	50
Walnut trees	–	25
Pear trees	–	5
Bitter orange groves	–	450
Vegetable gardens	50	250
Kitchen gardens	–	1155

Table 10 Percentages of cereal production in the Peloponnese in 1460–63

Taxable asset	Albanians (%)	Greeks (%)
Wheat	84.71	84.84
Barley	15.29	15.16

Table 11 Percentages of cultivations other than cereals and vines in the Peloponnese in 1460–63

Taxable asset	Albanians (%)	Greeks (%)
Flax	66.42	12.53
Cotton	4.78	8
Silk	6.49	37.55
Oleiculture	1.92	9.13
Honey	3.09	0.9
Resin	0.01	1.02
Oaks	10.33	0.07
Walnuts	0	0.03
Fruits	2.33	8.95
Mulberries	4.11	18.79
Pomegranates	0	0.01
Pears	0	0.01
Bitter oranges	0	0.63
Kitchen & vegetable gardens	0.52	2.38

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