

Research in manuscript studies

A Study of the Early Ottoman Peloponnese in the Light of an Annotated *editio princeps* of the TT10-1/14662 Ottoman Taxation Cadastre (c.1460–1463)

*Georgios C. Liakopoulos,
University of Athens*

My doctoral thesis, completed at Royal Holloway, University of London in 2009 and conducted under the supervision of the late Professor Julian Chrysostomides (d.2008), explores geographic, economic and demographic aspects of the Peloponnese in the first years of the Ottoman conquest (1460), on the basis of an annotated *editio princeps* of the first Ottoman taxation cadastre of the province of the Peloponnese (*Defter-i Livā'-ı Mora*), compiled sometime between c.1460 and 1463. Numbering 284 pages this cadastre was split into two parts in the recent past, and is now preserved in Istanbul, Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, TT10 and Sofia, Национална Библиотека 'Св. Св. Кирил и Методий', Ориенталски отдел, 1/14662.

The mutilated register TT10 measures 37 × 14 cm and numbers 188 pages, five of which are blank (pp. 27, 41, 75, 103 and 177). It is bound with black thick carton decorated with oval-shaped floral patterns. High levels of humidity have caused the ink to bleed on some pages, with the result that some characters are unreadable. In other cases ink traces from one page appear to have migrated to the opposite one, causing difficulties in the decipherment. The register 1/14662 measures 35 × 14 cm and numbers 96 pages, nine of which are blank (pp. 1, 2, 3, 12, 13, 20, 65, 82, and 83). The register's *incipit* and *desinit* are mutilated. Page 40 has been numbered twice as 40/42. The paper in many of the pages is totally or partially yellowed and the ink in places has faded. This however did not affect its legibility. The text in both manuscripts is written in the *tevķī* script, while, when the numbers are written down in letters, preference has been given to the encoded *siyākat* script. The watermark on the paper depicts a pair of scissors measuring 7 × 3 cm, identified with the one used on paper of Florentine (1459–1460) or Neapolitan (1457) provenance.

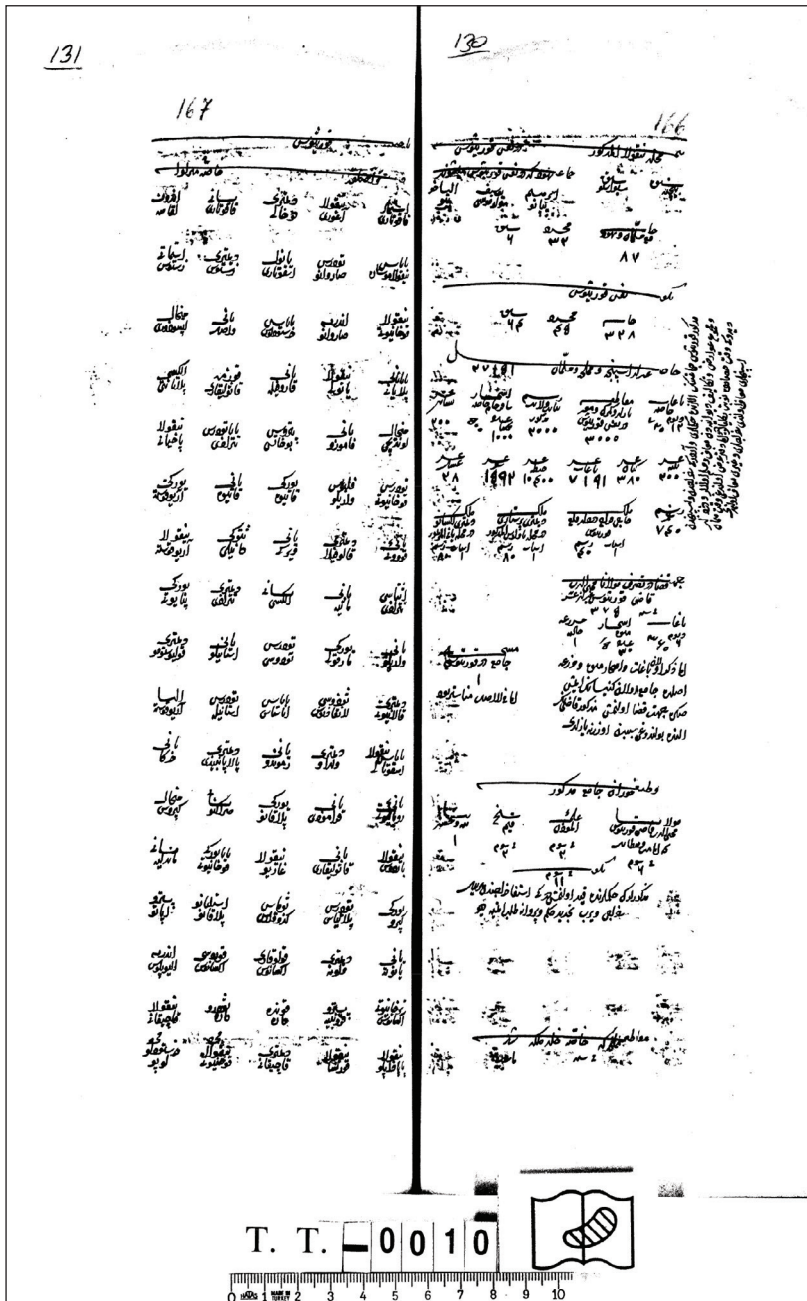


Fig. 1 MS Istanbul, Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, TT10, pp. 166–167.

The image shows two pages of a handwritten manuscript, likely a liturgical book, written in Church Slavonic. The left page is numbered 31 and the right page is numbered 30. Both pages contain multiple staves of text and musical notation. A library stamp is visible at the top of the left page.

Page 31 (Left):

- Top section: Text in Church Slavonic with musical notation. Includes a library stamp: "С-НА БИБЛИОТЕКА АРХ. ЕП. П. 15".
- Middle section: Text in Church Slavonic with musical notation.
- Bottom section: Text in Church Slavonic with musical notation.

Page 30 (Right):

- Top section: Text in Church Slavonic with musical notation.
- Middle section: Text in Church Slavonic with musical notation.
- Bottom section: Text in Church Slavonic with musical notation.

Fig. 2 MS Sofia, Национална Библиотека 'Св. Св. Кирил и Методий', Ориенталски отдел, 1/14662, pp. 30–31.

The missing first page of the TT10 must have stated, following the convention, the compilation date and the scribe's name. The register records that the governor of the Peloponnese (*mīrlivā'-ı vilāyet-i Mora*) at the time was Sinān Beg bin Elvān Beg,¹ who, according to Ottoman chronicles, held this post between 1460 and 1463. The document, therefore, must have been produced in those years. Evidence contained in the TT10-1/1462 shows that the Ottomans levied taxes on the inhabitants of thirty eight-castles, which are also recorded in Stefano Magno's report enumerating the castles occupied by the Venetians in 1463. This year, therefore, serves as a safe *terminus ante quem* for the compilation of the cadastre.

The methodology adopted in the study is as follows: the manuscripts were transcribed, edited and annotated. Some problems appeared in particular with the different linguistic strata of toponymy and anthroponymy, including Greek, Albanian, Slavic, Frankish and Hebrew. The Turkish-speaking scribe, presumably assisted by a native speaker, put remarkable effort in rendering as accurately as possible the place and people's names in the Ottoman alphabet. For the most part he used the diacritical dots in the text and, in some cases, even the *harekāt* (signs used to represent short vowel sounds). Nevertheless, he clearly adjusted the names to the phonetic rules of the Turkish language.

The edition of the text was followed by a process of collecting and locating the geographical data of the manuscripts. The register records eighteen districts (*nāhiyyet-i x*) (*x* standing for the toponym), their local centres (*nefs-i x*), villages (*karye-i x*) and arable or cultivated lands with no settlements on them (*mezra 'a-ı x*). Fiscal units belonging to one particular *tīmār*, *ze 'āmet* or *hāşş* are listed consecutively under the heading *tīmār-ı x*, *ze 'āmet-i x* or *hāşşhā-ı x* (*x* standing for the name of the timariot), respectively. The identification of the 667 place-names contained in the cadastre has been hindered by the fact that many of the settlements are now abandoned and others have been renamed, particularly the toponyms of non-Greek etymology, i.e. Albanian, Slavic or Turkish. So far 449 localities have been identified (67.3%). The study was followed by the construction of a set of thirty-eight maps, which illustrate the data. These maps have been processed in the ArcGIS 9 ArcMap™ by ESRI™ software package using GIS (*Geographical Information Systems*) technology, combining several variables, such as ethnic, demographic and economic distribution.

The demographic and fiscal data were examined in the context of quantitative history. The TT10-1/14662 cadastre registers the non-Muslim units encumbered with the *per capita* tax, i.e. the *ispence*. The basic fiscal unit was the family, namely the household or hearth (*hāne*), headed by an adult male. The *ispence* in this instance amounted to 25 *aķşes* annually. The single adult men,

1 TT10, 76.

recorded as *mücerred*, paid also 25 *ağçes*. On the other hand, the widows (*bīve*) in charge of a household paid only 6 *ağçes*. By virtue of paying the *ispence*, widows were included in the register, while the rest of the female population, males under age, or male adults physically disabled or mentally ill, were not registered and therefore not obliged to pay the *ispence*. The cadastre divides the settlements into Greek (*Urūmiyān*) and Albanian (*Arnavudān*), or mixed, on the basis of different rate of taxation, which favoured the Albanians. It is possible that this differentiation dated from an earlier period and reflected the services rendered to the state at the time. The population of the Early Ottoman Peloponnese was studied on the basis of this ethnic division with further scrutiny on the topics of the filial and fraternal relationships within the household of both communities, and the settlement pattern.

As far as the economy is concerned, the taxes encumbered are categorised as follows: (a) taxes *per capita*, (b), taxes on crops, (c) taxes on stock-rearing, (d) taxes on private property, (e) revenue from personal holdings, (f) *mukāṭa* 'as, and (g) other taxes. The application of the *īmār* fiscal and administrative system in the core lands of the Ottoman Empire, where the Peloponnese belonged, is studied in the context of each timariot's allocation. In the agricultural production the figures given in the registers seem to be estimates calculated before or after the harvest. The only case where the crop's value is estimated on the basis of a unit of measurement is in Raḥova village, where an Adrianople *modius* (*müdd-i Edrene*) and bushel (*keyl*) are employed.² After the detailed presentation of each district's revenue, the wider context of the Peloponnesian economy is illustrated with tables and charts constructed for this purpose. Nearly one third of the taxes levied, 30.54%, constituted the tithe on wheat. On the other hand, the second highest imposition was the *ispence*, which averaged 23.84%, followed by an impressive 20.51% of the viticulture.

The findings of the thesis show that the main settlement pattern of the mid-fifteenth-century Peloponnese was the fortified large village or town dating back to the Franco-Byzantine era (thirteenth-fifteenth centuries). The largest *īmārs* were established around such a fortified centre, which functioned as the local administrative capital and market. The Albanian newcomers altered this image by adding a significant number of small satellite settlements, some of which were temporary. The TT10-1/14662 cadastre seems to be in agreement with the picture given by the contemporary sources, namely, the existence of Greek towns *vis-à-vis* remote Albanian villages.

A revised version of the thesis will appear in the Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt Series published by the Royal Asiatic Society and Tarih Vakfı (London and Istanbul, in press).

2 TT10, 26.