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SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS IN RURAL THESSALY, 1850–1940

Fenia Lekka, Dina Moustani and George Gassias

Abstract: This article is part of a research project on the transformations that took place between 1850 and 1940 in the province of Thessaly, an extensive rural region of the Balkan Peninsula. It focuses on the changes in the economic, social and demographic levels, highlighting the interrelation of these changes in rural Thessaly from the promulgation of the Land Law (1858) under the Ottoman Tanzimat reforms to the annexation of Thessaly and the implementation of extensive land reforms in the 1920s by the Greek state.

Studies concerning the – predominantly rural – province of Thessaly during the nineteenth century mostly consider its annexation in 1881 by Greece as a milestone in the transfer of landed property from the Ottoman Empire to the Greek Kingdom, the acquisition of Ottoman landed estates by capitalists from the Greek diaspora from 1878 to 1881 being an essential element in this narrative.

This article shall focus, firstly, on this transition, suggesting that the annexation was – in fact – a process that lasted for over a decade in terms of the province's demographic transformation, which concluded with – as well as brought about – the gradual religious homogenisation of the population of Thessaly. Secondly, we shall study the role and profile of landowners, a process that led us to the realisation that even when the 1917 land reform was announced, a significant number of Muslims were still among the owners of Thessalian estates, whereas Greek landowners belonging to or descending from the circle of capitalists of the Greek diaspora were relatively few in number. Rich diaspora Greeks, the Galata bankers in particular, are the most prominent case that will be studied, in an attempt to redefine the relevance of the strategies they employed. Finally, this article seeks to study the novel ideas and bureaucratic mechanisms that, by the 1910s, allowed the Greek administration to begin implementing centralising strategies concerning agriculture, in direct contradiction to the more liberal views that prevailed previously in the nineteenth century that favoured limited state involvement.

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Ottoman Legacies

Thessaly: the Land and the People

Since 1830, Thessaly was the southernmost sanjak of the Ottoman Empire, sharing its southern borders with the Greek Kingdom.[1] It was a bandit-ridden province swamped with military forces, mainly inhabited by Muslims, Christians and Jews, the populations of which experienced significant geographical mobility throughout the nineteenth century.

The Muslims of Thessaly, already in demographic decline since the early nineteenth century,[2] did not form the majority in the Thessalian population, a pattern generally observed in the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire,[3] except for certain *kazas* in Macedonia, where Muslims outnumbered non-Muslims.[4] François Pouqueville noted a similar state of Christian demographic majority in Epirus at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[5] However, the Muslims were predominant in the city of Larissa and they had a strong presence in the smaller towns of Farsala, Agia, Almyros, Tyrnavos and Velestino.[6] They also resided in a few purely Muslim settlements (known locally as *κονιαροχώρια*) and in numerous mixed settlements, in contrast with the small Jewish communities

[1] Tırhala sanjak, the province of Trikala, was the administrative unit that covered the region of Thessaly, named after its central town, Tırhala. It was subdivided in *kazas*, districts, also named after their major towns. The texts uses the terms "province" and "district", respectively.

[2] Dimitris Dimitropoulos, "On the Settlement Complex of Central Greece: An Early Nineteenth-Century Testimony," *Historical Review/La Revue Historique* 7 (2010): 340–42; Richard I. Lawless, "Η οικονομία και ο χώρος της Θεσσαλίας κατά την Τουρκοκρατία," *Τρικαλινά* 1 (1981): 45, 53.

[3] Kemal H. Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830–1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), 22–23, 56.

[4] Namely, the *kazas* of Sarişaban (Chrysoupoli), Kavala, Drama, Yenice-i Vardar (Giannitsa), Vodina (Edessa), Filorina (Florina), etc. Daniel Panzac, "La population de la Macédoine au XIXe siècle (1820–1912)," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 66 (1992): 118.

[5] François Pouqueville, *Voyage dans la Grèce* (Paris: Didot, 1820), 2:114.

[6] According to the Yearbook (*salname*) of Yanya (Ioannina) (1288/1871) presented by Öncel, in the kazas of Farsala and Larissa, Muslims represented 34.24 and 29.67 percent of the male population, respectively, while they represented about 4.18 percent in both the kazas of Trikala and Karditsa (our estimate). Fatma Öncel Yusufoğlu, "Agrarian Relations and Estate (Çiftlik) Agriculture in Ottoman Thessaly (c. 1870–1880)" (PhD diss., Boğaziçi University, 2018), 51–56; Michalis Kokolakis, "Μια οθωμανική περιγραφή της Θεσσαλίας (1871)," *Ίστωρ* 1 (1990): 57–74, has convincingly questioned the methodology applied for the calculation of the total population of the yearbook.

of Thessaly, both Greek-speaking Romaniotes and Ladino Spanish-speaking Sephardim, who were concentrated in the cities of Larissa, Volos and Trikala.[7]

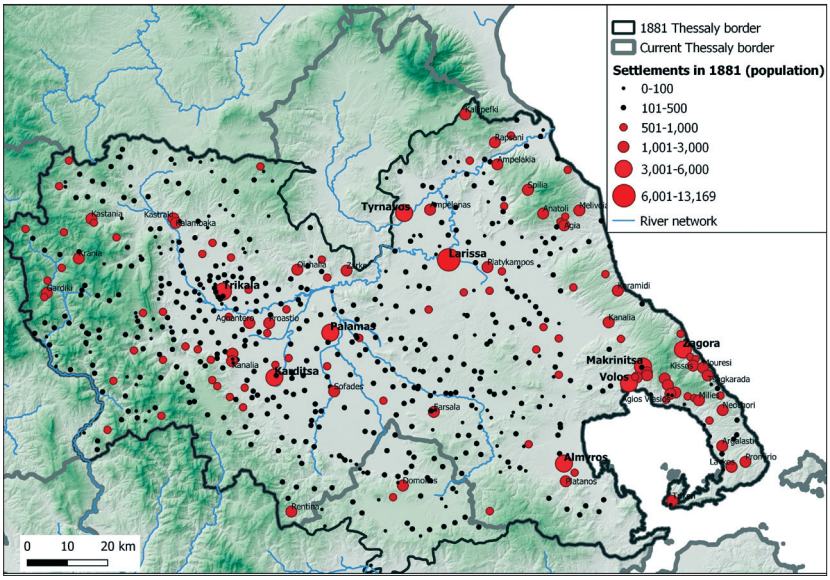

Figure 1. The population of settlements in Thessaly, 1881.

Source: Based on information compiled by the authors from Ministry of the Interior, Department of Public Finances and Statistics, *Πίνακες των επαρχιών Ηπείρου και Θεσσαλίας κατά την απογραφήν του 1881* (Athens: Typ. Adelfon Perri, 1884). Dr Giannis Faraslis, Department of Environment, University of Thessaly, processed the data and created the map for the project.

For the period before the first Greek census in the region in the second half of the nineteenth century, consular reports are probably the only sources that can provide credible population data, as relevant reports from Greek and Western travellers tend to either underestimate or overestimate numbers,[8] while they also

[7] Thessaly's Jewish population does not seem to have surpassed the 10,000 mark during the nineteenth century, but it was larger than the combined total of the Jewish populations of Thrace and Eastern Macedonia. Dina Moustani, "Μπροστά στις νέες προκλήσεις: Οι Εβραίοι της Θεσσαλίας τις παραμονές και την επαύριο της προσάρτησης στο ελληνικό κράτος," *Αρχειοτάξιο* 19 (2017): 63–80.

[8] Vasileios Nikolaidis, *Στρατιωτική γεωγραφία της Ευρωπαϊκής Τουρκίας και ιδίως των ομόρων της Ελλάδος επαρχιών ήτοι Θεσσαλίας, Μακεδονίας, Ηπείρου και Αλβανίας* (Athens, s.n., 1851). For an analysis of Nikolaidis' work, see Spyros Karavas, *Οδοιπορώντας σε Μακεδονία,*

give very approximate figures that give rise to some doubt.[9] Ottoman censuses during the same period, conducted for military and taxation purposes, have little to offer on the total of the Thessalian population.[10]

During the nineteenth century, and especially in the decades that followed the establishment of the Greek state, a fluctuating movement of people, both from as well as towards the Ottoman lands, can be observed. Initially, an influx of Muslims and Jews from the south occurred during and after the Greek Revolution; especially the increase in the population of the capital of Thessaly, Larissa, was significant, with the Jewish population reaching 7,500 in 1834, compared to the 2,000 who lived there during the revolution.[11]

At the same time, dozens of refugee families from Thessaly and Macedonia moved south, entering northern Evia through Xirochori (Istiaia).[12] Secondly, after the failed Greek uprisings in the western part of Thessaly (1854), Christians fled towards Greek territory, Fthiotida in particular.[13] Many of these refugees

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Θεσσαλία και Ηπειρο-Αλβανία εν έτει 1850: Η Στρατιωτική γεωγραφία του Βασιλείου Νικολαΐδη προς χρήσιν του ελληνικού κατακτητικού στρατού (Athens: Vivliorama, 2018).

[9] On the notion of population in the pre-statistical period, see Dimitris Dimitropoulos, "Ιστοριογραφικές χρήσεις των προ-στατιστικών μαρτυριών για τον πληθυσμό," in *Ιστοριογραφία της νεότερης και σύγχρονης Ελλάδας 1833–2002*, ed. Paschalis Kitromilides and Triantafyllos E. Sklavenitis (Athens: Institute of Historical Research, 2004), 2:59–76. On the difficulties of accurately estimating Thessaly's population, see Dina Moustani, "Οι δημογραφικές εξελίξεις σε ένα βιομηχανικό κέντρο: Βόλος, 1881–1922" (PhD diss., University of Thessaly, 2014), 89–97.

[10] During the nineteenth century the Ottoman administration four times attempted to estimate its population through general censuses. Three of them (1831–38, 1844, 1873) concerned specific provinces or recorded only households. The first complete census is considered to be that of 1881/82–1893, which recorded women for the first time. Kemal H. Karpat, "Ottoman Population Records and the Census of 1881/82–1893," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 9, no. 3 (1978): 244–45; Stanford J. Shaw, "The Ottoman Census System and Population, 1831–1914," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 9, no. 3 (1978): 325–28; Cem Behar, "Qui compte? 'Recensements' et statistiques démographiques dans l'Empire ottoman, du XVIe au XXe siècle," *Histoire & Mesure* 13, no. 1/2 (1998): 140.

[11] Centre des Archives diplomatiques de Nantes (CADN), Salonique, B 39. Report on Thessaly in 1850, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (MAE) (Paris), Mémoires et Documents, Microfilm P. 7847, De Boislecomte, 12 July 1834, 354 (document page number).

[12] Lambros Baltsiotis, *Ο εχθρός εντός των τειχών: Η μουσουλμανική κοινότητα της Χαλκίδας (1833–1881)* (Athens: Vivliorama, 2017), 129.

[13] John S. Koliopoulos, *Ληστές: Η κεντρική Ελλάδα στα μέσα του 19ου αιώνα* (Athens: Ermis, 1979), 93–94.

never returned.[14] Thirdly, the annexation of Thessaly by Greece (1881) further increased the migratory movement.

The Muslims constituted a non-homogeneous population group in Thessaly. For the most part, they were divided between Turkish- and Albanian-speaking communities, which at the same time also spoke Greek. Included in the Muslim populations of Thessaly were also Roma communities (Gypsies)[15] and black slaves, men and women scattered across the region of Tyrnavos and in the city of Larissa,[16] where they lived in clearly designated districts.[17] The British diplomat and journalist Valentine Chirol, who travelled to Larissa before the annexation, noted that "Larissa swarms with negroes, children and grandchildren of liberated slaves: many also … have purchased their liberty … while not a few are still in bondage."[18] Around the same time, the city of Volos served as a major black slave port, with ships frequently arriving from Egypt and through Crete, to such a degree that the French vice-consul of Volos protested.[19]

Several Circassian families would later join the Thessalian Muslim population. These arrived in Macedonia and Thessaly from the northwestern Caucasus from 1874 to 1876, after the massive resettlement of a large part of their population in the Danube vilayet and the greater Anatolian mainland via the Ottoman ports of Samsun and Trebizond, as well as in Constantinople,[20] in an effort by

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[14] Georgios K. Lelis, "Πεντακόσιοι θεσσαλοί ψηφοφόροι στη Φθιώτιδα το 1862," *Θεσσαλικό Ημερολόγιο* 53 (2008): 332–52.

[15] Öncel mentions that in 1840, Muslim Gypsies resided in the city of Trikala and non-Muslim Gypsies resided in 12 çiftliks of the kaza and in Kalambaka. "Agrarian Relations," 170, 307.

[16] Prussian diplomat Jabob Bartholdy was astonished by the many black people in the streets of Larissa in the early twentieth century. Bartholdy, *Voyage en Grèce fait dans les années 1803 et 1804* (Paris: Dentu, 1807), 214.

[17] Léon Heuzey, *Οδοιπορικό στην τουρκοκρατούμενη Θεσσαλία το 1858*, trans. Christos Dimitroulopoulos (Thessaloniki: Afoi Kyriakidi, 1991), 33.

[18] Valentine Chirol, *Twixt Greek and Turk; or Jottings during a Journey through Thessaly, Macedonia, and Epirus, in the Autumn of 1880* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1881), 16. For the Ottoman slave population and the slave trade in Ottoman society, see Ehud R. Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition in the Ottoman Middle East* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998).

[19] B. de Tramasure to Walewski, 26 April 1856, MAE, Correspondance politique des consuls, Microfilm P. 729.

[20] Ventsislav Muchinov, "Ottoman Policies on Circassian Refugees in the Danube Vilayet in the 1860s and 1870s," *Journal of Caucasian Studies* 2, no. 3 (2016): 81–94; Sarah A. S. Isla Rosser-Owen, "The First 'Circassian Exodus' to the Ottoman Empire (1858–1867), and the

the Sublime Porte to reinforce the Muslim element in its southern provinces.[21] These Circassians (approximately 750 people) settled in Almyros and the areas around Karditsa and Velestino,[22] that is, in areas of low population density, where the need for manual labour in agricultural estates was more pressing. This attempted settlement, which probably constituted a form of agricultural slavery, to which Circassians were accustomed,[23] ultimately failed, as several of the settlers returned to Constantinople due to "not liking their prospects", as mentioned by Henry Suter, the British vice-consul in Larissa, while several of those who stayed behind succumbed to disease. Notorious for their violent predatory attacks,[24] the Circassians also engaged in raids in Thessaly, often wreaking havoc on the inhabitants of the areas where they settled.[25]

In 1881, even though the population of eastern Thessaly was at its peak, it was western Thessaly that had the highest household size:[26] in the prefecture of Trikala (7.99), Tzoumerka (7.86 in Arta prefecture), Kalambaka (7.57), Karditsa (6.59) and Almyros (6.48). These were the extended family units and multiple family, patrilinear and patrilocal Vlach and Karagouni[27] households.

A significant part of the Christian population living in the semi-mountainous areas of western Thessaly was Vlach-speaking or Greek-speaking pastoral/

Ottoman Response, Based on the Accounts of Contemporary British Observers" (MA diss., University of London, 2007).

[21] For the mass migration of the Circassians, see Kemal H. Karpat, "Population Movements in the Ottoman State in the Nineteenth Century: An Outline," in *Contributions à l'histoire économique et sociale de l'Empire ottoman*, ed. Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont and Paul Dumont (Leuven: Peeters, 1983), 402–6; Marc Pinson, "Ottoman Colonization of the Circassians in Rumili after the Crimean War," *Études Balkaniques* 3 (1972): 71–85.

[22] National Archives (TNA), Foreign Office (FO) 195/1108, Larissa, 1 November 1876, Vice-consul Suter to Consul Blunt in Volos.

[23] For agricultural slavery among the Circassians, see Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 11, 81–99, 109.

[24] Angeliki Sfika-Theodosiou, "Απόπειρες εποικισμού Κιρκασίων στη Θεσσαλία (1874–1876)," *Θεσσαλικά Χρονικά* 15 (1984): 243–49; Iakovos Michailidis, *Οι Έλληνες πρόξενοι στη Θεσσαλονίκη: Διπλωματικά έγγραφα (1830–1889)* (Thessaloniki: Afoi Kyriakidi, 2013), 457–59. See also Muchinov, "Ottoman Policies on Circassian Refugees," 86–87; Pinson, "Ottoman Colonization of the Circassians," 78–80.

[25] TNA, FO 195/1108, Larissa, 1 November 1876, Vice-consul Suter to Consul Blunt in Volos.

[26] Ministry of the Interior, Department of Public Finances and Statistics, *Πίνακες των επαρχιών Ηπείρου και Θεσσαλίας κατά την Απογραφήν του 1881* (Athens: Typ. Adelfon Perri, 1884), στ–ζ [vi–vii] ("number of inhabitants per residence").

[27] Christian rural Greek-speaking populations that lived mainly in lowland western Thessaly. Marina Petronoti, "Η σύνθεση της οικονομίας και οι γαμήλιοι θεσμοί των Καραγκούνηδων της δυτικής Θεσσαλίας (1881–1980)," *Ανθρωπολογικά* 6 (1984): 31–40; G.V.

transhumant populations, who moved twice a year from their mountain villages to lowland winter pastures/shelters (*χειμαδιά*),[28] among them Sarakatsani[29] as well as Arvanitovlachi,[30] who played a remarkable role in the economy of the çiftliks,[31] renting winter pastures for their animals' grazing and housing, unlike the sharecroppers who often worked as muleteers for the transport of grain.[32] A major concern of the Ottoman administration since the mid-nineteenth century was the permanent settlement (sedentarisation) of these transhumant Vlach populations as a means of countering brigandage,[33] a process that was accelerated by the annexation of the region and the consolidation of the new borderline.[34]

The Ottoman Land Tenure System

In the mid-1970s, Michel Sivignon was almost certain that Thessaly represented a marginalised province without any financial significance for the vast Ottoman

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Kavadias, *Καραγκούνηδες: Συμβολή στην κοινωνιολογία των δοξασιών* (Athens: Historical and Folklore Society of Thessaly, 1980).

[28] Alan J.B. Wace and Maurice S. Thompson, *Οι νομάδες των Βαλκανίων: Περιγραφή της ζωής και των εθίμων των Βλάχων της βόρειας Πίνδου*, trans. Panos Karagiorgos (Thessaloniki: Afoi Kyriakidi, 1989), 13–40.

[29] We have no definite population numbers for this pastoral populace. In 1874 they reported to Mehmed Ali that their population in Thessaly comprised about 520 families. Koliopoulos, *Ληστές*, 273. Concerning the societal structure of the Sarakatsani, see John K. Campbell, *Honour, Family, and Patronage: A Study of Institutions and Moral Values in a Greek Mountain Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

[30] The Arvanitovlachs or Remenoi (Rrãmãnji), are a subgroup of the Balkan Vlachs. The Frashër region in southern Albania is regarded as their cradle, they speak the Farseriot dialect of the Vlach language (Rramaneshti) and they are exclusively transhumant pastoralists. The term Karagounis is used to describe the Arvanitovlachs of Aitoloakarnania. See Thede Kahl, *Για την ταυτότητα των Βλάχων: Εθνοπολιτισμικές προσεγγίσεις μιας Βαλκανικής πραγματικότητας*, trans. Stefanos Moulasikis (Athens: Vivliorama, 2009), 267–68; Vassilis Gounaris and Asteris Koukoudis, "Από την Πίνδο ως την Ροδόπη: Αναζητώντας τις εγκαταστάσεις και την ταυτότητα των Βλάχων," *Ίστωρ* 10 (1997): 91–137; Eleftherios Alexakis, "Τα τσελιγκάτα και οι μετακινήσεις των Αρβανιτόβλαχων κτηνοτρόφων της Ηπείρου," *Γεωγραφίες* 5 (2003): 114–34.

[31] Socrates Petmezas, "Patterns of Protoindustrialization in the Ottoman Empire: The Case of Eastern Thessaly, ca. 1750–1860," *Journal of European Economic History* 19, no. 3 (1990): 578–79.

[32] Öncel, "Agrarian Relations," 57, 62–63, 66.

[33] Ibid., 67–68. For the (not always) "supportive" relationship between nomadic Vlachs and bandits, especially during the summer, see Koliopoulos, *Ληστές*, 11, 128–29, 145, 163, 167, 200–201, 323.

[34] Wace and Thompson, *Οι νομάδες των Βαλκανίων*, 18, 166–67.

Empire.[35] Although his conclusion was wrong, his report remains quite useful for the contemporary historian of Thessaly since it reminds us that the scientific field of Ottoman Studies developed only recently.[36] According to the fiscal revenues of the Imperial Treasury, the province of Trikala (Tırhala sanjak) generated the highest fiscal income among the provinces of the Ottoman Europe, with 4,227,635 piasters, followed by Filibe (Plovdiv), with 3,891,278 piasters.[37]

It was the barren plain that gave British diplomat David Urquhart the impression of a vast newly discovered cemetery[38] that produced the largest tax revenue for the province; the tithe (*dekati*) was the main source of revenue.[39] The Tanzimat's goal of shifting the tax burden from the countryside to the urban areas was not achieved. Similarly, the Tanzimat governments also failed in their attempt to change the tax-collection process, by assigning this task to hired employees, instead of tax-farmers of public revenue (*mukataa*) who used to undertake this lifelong duty via auction.[40] The only improvement regarding the tax-collection apparatus was the replacement of the lifelong tax-farming with the short-term one, lasting from one to five years.[41] This was a cash-based solution, which followed the same reasoning as the merging of all provincial treasuries into a single one with authority over all the revenues and expenses

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[35] Michel Sivignon, "The Demographic and Economic Evolution of Thessaly (1881–1940)," in *An Historical Geography of the Balkans*, ed. Francis W. Carter (London: Academic, 1977), 379–407, esp. 379–81. Sivignon had already noticed the absence of an in-depth study on the social and economic history of Thessaly in *Θεσσαλία: γεωγραφική ανάλυση μιας ελληνικής περιφέρειας* (1975; Athens: Agricultural Bank of Greece Cultural Institute, 1992), 14.

[36] Richard Lawless has characterised the field of Ottoman Studies as secluded and split. "The Economy and Landscapes of Thessaly during Ottoman Rule," in Carter, *An Historical Geography*, 529.

[37] Dilek Özkan, "Ottoman Perceptions and Considerations on the First Ottoman and Greek Borderlands in Thessaly" (PhD diss., University of Athens, 2016), 266n784 and 267n785.

[38] David Urquhart, *The Spirit of the East* (London: Henry Colburn, 1839), 1:298.

[39] Stanford J. Shaw, "The Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Tax Reforms and Revenue System," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 6, no. 4 (1975): 421–32.

[40] Murat Çizakça, *A Comparative Evolution of Business Partnerships: The Islamic World and Europe, with Specific Reference to the Ottoman Archives* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 153–55.

[41] Shaw, "Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Tax Reforms," 421–23. Andreas Syngros describes his own revealing experience about the auction process of state supplies and public revenues in his memoirs *Απομνημονεύματα*, ed. Alkis Angelou and Maria Christina Chatziioannou (1908; Athens: Estia, 1998), 2:5–13.

of the empire in order for the entire imperial income to be centrally controlled and the state to have the ability to cover central expenses with local revenue sources.[42]

This final detail is crucial in understanding the essence of the revenue capitalisation with which the state dealt with the financial deficiencies throughout the period, thus generally managing to avoid direct borrowing from bankers and financiers.[43] We claim that not only the down payments (*Mu'accele*), deposited by the tax-farmers or the buyers of imperial estates,[44] but also the high-rated short-term advances given by the state creditors, had a common "material" base, which was the tax revenue; these advances were guaranteed by orders of revenue (*havale*) and paid by provincial funds. The struggle to mortgage the most lavish revenues of the empire raged until the end, even after the Ottoman bankruptcy of 1875, when imperial property and chattel, like the sultans' diamond jewellery chest contents,[45] started to be mortgaged due to the lack of other financial resources.

The imperial estates (emlâk-i-Hümayun), located across the fertile plain of Thessaly, were landed estates immediately administered by the Imperial Treasury and which consisted, to a large extent, of confiscated landed estates belonging until 1820, to Ali Pasha of Tepelena and his family as well as his close associates. These estates were also sold or leased out as *malikiane* against a substantial down payment (*muazeli Mu'accele*) and yearly instalments (*muezeli Müeccele*).[46] Between 1840 and 1847, 132 out of 202 such imperial estates in Thessaly were sold at auction. The new owners were 51 percent Muslim and 44 percent non-Muslim, which proves that religion was not a criterion for exclusion from this particular market. Such transactions were allowed,

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[42] Erol Özvar, "Finances and Fiscal Structure," in *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Masters (New York: Infobase, 2009), 217–18.

[43] Edhem Eldem, *A History of the Ottoman Bank* (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Historical Research Centre, 1999), 17.

[44] Uğur Bahadır Bayraktar, "Political Economy of Çiftliks: The Redistribution of Land and Land Tenure Relations in the Nineteenth Century Provinces of Ioannina and Trikala" (MA diss., Boğaziçi University, 2009), 70.

[45] Fenia (Foteini) Lekka, "Χρηστάκης Ζωγράφος (1820–1898): Η επιχειρηματική περιπέτεια ενός διάσημου άγνωστου ομογενή της Κωνσταντινούπολης" (PhD diss., University of Thessaly, 2016), 190–351.

[46] Dimitrios Tsopotos, *Γη και γεωργοί της Θεσσαλίας κατά την Τουρκοκρατίαν* (1912; Athens: Epikairotita, 1983), 56–57; Alkiviadis Papathanasiou, *Το οθωμανικόν Μουατζέλ των εν Θεσσαλία βακουφικών κτημάτων εξεταζόμενον κατά την οθωμανικήν νομοθεσίαν, ελληνικόν νόμον και διεθνές δίκαιον* (Volos: I Thessalia, 1913), 23, 28; Bayraktar, "Political Economy," 69–70.

provided that there was no Muslim population in the vicinity of the çiftlik in question, according to the regulatory framework.[47] The main point of this kind of liquidation was to structure a more intensified, personalised exploitation, in order to cope with the lack of a workforce[48] and to secure stable and efficient taxation,[49] as it will be further analysed. By the same token, vakif estates[50] in the districts of Larissa, Elassona and Karditsa were to be divided, rented and then transferred with contracts, which, in fact, corresponded to estate sales, already since the mid-1850s.[51]

The origin of the non-Muslim owners of Thessalian çiftliks, especially concerning the controversial group of the Galata bankers,[52] needs meticulous, period-specific examination. However, it is certain that their establishment in Thessaly was not as recent as the Treaty of Berlin (1878), as it is commonly believed. As far as the 1860s are concerned, we often come across names of Greek Orthodox Ottoman pashas, like Ioannis Fotiadis and Kostakis Mousouros (high-ranking officials who received landed estates as grants for special services) as well as Galata bankers like Christakis Zographos. The latter acquired his first çiftliks (Mesdani [Agnantero], Paleochori) in 1868.[53] It is also possible that these estates were purchased "legally" at auction (they were never contested and Zographos

[47] Bayraktar, "Political Economy," 72–73.

[48] Sophia Laiou, "Some Considerations Regarding *Çiftlik* Formation in the Western Thessaly, Sixteenth–Nineteenth Centuries," in *The Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, the Greek Lands: Toward a Social and Economic History*, ed. Elias Kolovos et al. (Istanbul: Isis, 2007), 271, 275.

[49] Bayraktar, "Political Economy," 93–97, 147–49.

[50] Vakif estates are broadly known as grants of land endowed to pious foundations. In fact, vakif-çiftliks, as well as emlâks, served greatly in the privatisation and redistribution of land in Thessaly, following the trend of the period. For example, many of Ali Pasha's confiscated estates were transferred from the imperial estates (emlâk-i-Hümayun) to vakifs belonging to high-ranking bureaucrats or members of the imperial family, established in practice as landlords. Fatma Öncel, "Agrarian Labour and Production in Vakıf-Çiftliks of Tırhala from 1860s to 1880s" (paper presented at the 22nd Comité International des Études Pré-Ottomanes et Ottomanes symposium, Trabzon, 4–8 October 2016); Öncel, "Agrarian Relations," 184–86.

[51] Öncel, "Agrarian Relations," 193–99.

[52] For the diaspora phenomenon and its unsustainable overuse in Greek historiography, see Christos Hadziiossif, "Εμπορικές παροικίες και ανεξάρτητη Ελλάδα," *Ο Πολίτης* 63 (1983): 30. For the Galata bankers particularly, Haris Exertzoglou, "Η ελληνική ιστοριογραφία και το ομογενές κεφάλαιο: Προβλήματα μεθόδου και ερμηνείας," *Σύγχρονα Θέματα* 11, no. 35–37 (1988): 152–60.

[53] It is unclear how he acquired them. Christakis Zographos, *Έκθεσις και αυτοπροαίρετοι αποφάσεις* ([Constantinople]: s.n., [1870]), republished as *Διαθήκη Χρηστάκη Ζωγράφου* (Constantinople: Patriarchal Printing Office, 1905), 10.

bequeathed them in his first will, made in 1871, to his male descendants). He then acquired even more çiftliks in 1874 (Zarko, Grizano and an estate in Macedonia), which might have been used as collateral for short-term advances. We know that due to the exhaustion of other public financial resources, the imperial estates[54] were used as collateral for mounting short-term lending to the Ottoman state, a practice still common in the 1870s.[55]

The access to this uncommon, privileged and indirect land market raises three questions. Firstly, did all the creditors of the Porte have this kind of (political) access? Secondly, how many among them were interested in this kind of investment? And thirdly, was the Porte willing to deny its rights to imperial estates in exchange for state loans?

The answer to the first question, according to our research, is that only a few people had access to this capital market, where imperial estates were used as collateral. Apart from Zographos, a former banker to Sultan Murat, and his son-in-law, Konstantinos Karapanos, who drew his prestige and his financial credibility from Zographos, only Georgios Zarifis seemed to have used his political influence[56] in the entourage of Sultan Abdul Hamid II to accumulate landed estates, during the critical 1878–1881 period.

Concerning the second question about the Galata bankers' investment schemes in Thessalian çiftliks, the answer is that it cannot be considered a typical business choice. Besides, the diaspora capitalists in general did not seem to have been particularly attracted to investment opportunities in Greece.[57] The few investments of the Galata bankers in the market for Thessalian land point in that direction.

Regarding the third question on whether the Sublime Porte was willing to sell its imperial estates up to the end of 1880, we can assert that this was not the case at all. Although Thessaly's annexation was initially speculated openly in the press at the time, it becomes clear that whenever an imperial estate was put up for auction it had to be justified, such as, for example, the common claim that this

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[54] Haris Exertzoglou also does not exclude the possibility that the inability of the treasury to service its debt could have led to the acquisition of çiftliks by its lenders. *Προσαρμοστικότητα και πολιτική ομογενειακών κεφαλαίων: Έλληνες τραπεζίτες στην Κωνσταντινούπολη* (Athens: Emporiki Bank Research and Education Foundation, 1989), 92n170.

[55] Already in 1858, one-third of the imperial debt, 6 million pounds sterling, was guaranteed with tax revenue of the following year. Christopher Clay, *Gold for the Sultan: Western Bankers and Ottoman Finance, 1856–1881: A Contribution to Ottoman and to International Financial History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000), 49–51.

[56] On the dominance of politics over the economy, see Spyros Asdrachas, *Ελληνική οικονομική ιστορία, ΙΕ΄–ΙΘ΄ αιώνας* (Athens: Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation, 2003), 1:249.

[57] Exertzoglou, *Προσαρμοστικότητα*, 116–32.

would render the management or the exploitation of the estate more efficient.[58] Similar conclusions can be drawn if we consider the tough negotiations between Zographos and the Sublime Porte in the second half of 1878, concerning a loan, which was partly guaranteed with çiftliks in Thessaly and Macedonia as collateral. According to the terms of the loan, if the capital was reimbursed within five years (1878–1883), the landed estates would remain permanently in the possession of the person already exploiting them, namely Zographos. The large estates, which the banker desired to acquire, as did his son-in-law Karapanos in Arta,[59] were estimated to be of greater value than the loan advanced to the Porte; hence, they had to pay the difference in cash, thus inducing the opposite side to more easily agree to the exchange. These transactions were completed some months after the Treaty of Berlin, from August to November 1878. Abdul Hamid intended to reimburse Zographos using public revenues and not to relinquish the imperial estates, at least up to November 1878. The same conclusion can be drawn also from Zarifis' case; the imperial estates that he tried to acquire in Epirus in 1879–1880 at auction were not relinquished by the Sublime Porte, on the excuse that it was not conducted legally.[60]

The Transition, 1881–1910

The Çiftlik Institution Inherited by the Greek State

Moving on, we will attempt to understand the developments that took place in the Thessalian countryside during the last two decades of Ottoman rule, but also right after, in the post-Ottoman period between 1881 and 1910, regarding landed property rights. In order to address that directly, we should answer a question: which model of land exploitation did the 1858 Ottoman Land Code promote in Thessaly? Our position is that this code, as well as the subsequent developments in the agrarian sector in the next 50 years, followed the same mentality. We claim that they are interconnected through policies that point in one direction only: the consolidation of property rights for the estate holders and the corresponding destabilisation and deterioration of the position of the peasants.

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[58] See Lekka, "Χρηστάκης Ζωγράφος," 437–38.

[59] Katerina Gardika-Alexandropoulou, "Ο Κωνσταντίνος Καραπάνος και οι διαπραγματεύσεις για την προσάρτηση Θεσσαλίας και Ηπείρου, *Δελτίον της Ιστορικής και Εθνολογικής Εταιρείας της Ελλάδος* 26 (1983): 329, 333–41.

[60] Exertzoglou refers to these estates. With regards to the doubts on how they were obtained, see in detail Lekka, "Χρηστάκης Ζωγράφος," 437–38 and Georgios Zarifis, *Οι αναμνήσεις μου: Ένας κόσμος που έφυγε, Κωνσταντινούπολη 1800–1920* (Athens: Trochalia, 2002), 247–52, who never mentions them.

Indeed, nothing concerned Ottoman reformers more after the Congress of Paris (1856) than the possibility of the average Ottoman subject to obtain "roots like a tree"[61] through holding estates as a means of securing their loyalty to the state, the exploitation of uncultivated lands, the increase in tax revenue and the intensification of agriculture. That way, imperial administrators believed, the autonomist ayans, the "powerful of the countryside", who under the right circumstances could command large swathes of the Ottoman peasantry, could never again become a threat.

The contradiction, however, is that around the same time, under the Tanzimat reforms,[62] the institution of the çiftlik was consolidated across much of the Ottoman realm; it was an institution which "defied the distinction between miri and mulk" – namely between imperial-owned and private landed property, respectively.[63] Since the mid-nineteenth century, estate property, apart from existing de facto, would also be established de jure, through the issuing of official titles to landowners, within the framework of the Ottoman reforms.[64] The transformation of public estate land into çiftlik estates by high-ranking members of the Ottoman elite became prevalent at the turn of the nineteenth century, through the transformation of various rights and institutions in the estate-holding regimes (timar rights, tax-farming, reselling of sharecroppers' rights, protection relations, etc.).[65]

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[61] According to Mehmed Emin Âli Pasha, architect of the second reform edict and proxy of Sultan Abdulaziz at the Congress of Paris. See Fuat Andic and Suphan Andic, *The Last of the Ottoman Grandees: The Life and the Political Testament of Âli Paşa* (Istanbul: Isis, 1996), 53; Fuat Andic, "The Political Testaments of Richelieu and Âli Pasha," *Social Science Research Network* (8 June 2009): 14.

[62] Vangelis Kechriotis, "Ρέκβιεμ για την Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία," in *Η συγκρότηση του ελληνικού κράτους: Διεθνές πλαίσιο, εξουσία και πολιτική τον 19ο αιώνα*, ed. Katerina Gardikas et al. (Athens: Nefeli, 2008), 22–23.

[63] Anna Mirkova, *Muslim Land, Christian Labor: Transforming Ottoman Imperial Subjects into Bulgarian National Citizens, 1878–1939* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2017), 64. In fact, these categories were restructured in the nineteenth century in order to define the general category of the land property. See Huri Islamoglou, "Property as a Contested Domain: A Reevaluation of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858," in *New Perspectives on Property and Land in the Middle East*, ed. Roger Owen (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2000), 11.

[64] A quite useful and critical overview of all the theoretical approaches to çiftlik is Öncel, "Agrarian Relations," 9–16. We would like to thank Alp Yücel Kaya for placing this text at our disposal.

[65] Laiou, "Some Considerations," 268–72. With regards to the transformation of the timars into mülk, see Vera Mutafchieva, *Αγροτικές σχέσεις στην Οθωμανική αυτοκρατορία 15ος–16ος αι.*, trans. Ourania Astrinaki and Evangelia Balta (1962; Athens: Poreia, 1990), 122–23 and 196–97. For the system of eternal leasing (malikiane) since 1695, see Ariel

Promoting private property rights on land over the rights of agrarian revenue was in fact a goal that was meant to be attained in accordance with the Tanzimat reforms. The Crimean War of 1853–1856 and the Land Code of 1858 are generally recognised as milestones in the process of wide institutional changes in the empire.[66]

Even though it is very hard to conclusively assess the degree to which these directives were followed across Thessaly and the way they changed the existing agricultural status quo, both the Land Code, as well as the text that regulated its implementation in the sanjak of Trikala (the 1861 regulation), gave çiftlik owners the right to evict their sharecroppers in case the latter left the land that the landowner had granted them uncultivated for three consecutive years. However, one should recognise that what this regulation enforced was not the eviction, which after all would deprive the çiftlik of much-needed labourers; rather, it acted as a device that would bind the sharecropper to his land, at the same time restricting any other activities that could generate income, so that he would be committed to cultivating the land of the landowner, as a means of increasing the stagnant or even failing agricultural yield of the estate. Thus, despite the harmonious mantle of the concept of sharecropping, defined as the association of capital and labour,[67] in practice the regime of sharecropping was one of "corrupted slavery",[68] devised to subdue its sharecroppers, in the province of Trikala.[69]

Different socioeconomic realities moulded various sharecropper relations in the çiftliks, as it becomes apparent in the published archive of the most emblematic Ottoman estate holder, Ali Pasha of Tepelena.[70] After 1881, these

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Salzmann, "An Ancien Regime Revisited: 'Privatization' and Political Economy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire," *Politics and Society* 21, no. 4 (1993): 393–98. Regarding the determining era for the formation of the large estates of the Ayans and especially the action of Ali Pasha, see Vassilis Panagiotopoulos, *Αρχείο Αλή πασά* (Athens: Institute of Neohellenic Research, 2009), 4:99

[66] Huri Islamoglou, "Property as a Contested Domain," 3–61, esp. 11, 20, 27–28, 36; Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, "Land Disputes and Ethno-politics: Northwestern Anatolia, 1877–1912," in *Land Rights, Ethno-Nationality and Sovereignty in History*, ed. Stanley L. Engerman and Jacob Metzer (London: Routledge, 2004), 157–58; Socrates Petmezas, *Προλεγόμενα στην ιστορία της ελληνικής αγροτικής οικονομίας του μεσοπολέμου* (Athens: Alexandria, 2012), 83–85.

[67] Alp Yücel Kaya, "On the Çiftlik Regulation in Tırhala in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: Economists, Pashas, Governors, Çiftlik-Holders, Subaşıs, and Sharecroppers," in *Ottoman Rural Societies and Economies*, ed. Elias Kolovos (Crete: Crete University Press, 2015), 334, 345, 347–48.

[68] Ibid., 348.

[69] With regards to the role of the subaşı, the creditor-usurer of the çiftlik, see Öncel, "Agrarian Relations," 111.

[70] Panagiotopoulos, *Αρχείο Αλή πασά*, 4:97–103. Indicatively. See also vol. 1, doc. 370, 689, vol. 2, doc. 659, 340–42 and vol. 3, doc. 1365, 544–53.

types of realities would cause great confusion as regards their legal status. The çiftliks – these "by-products of the decadence" of the Ottoman Empire, as a well-known Greek scholar characterised them,[71] following the decline paradigm – after 1881 had to be separated from their customary roots, disposed of their non-financial elements and transformed into a modern, absolute estate-holding institution, in order to be incorporated in the Greek social reality.[72]

According to the Convention of Constantinople (2 July 1881), the Greek state recognised all the property rights of the residents of the newly incorporated territories, regardless of their religion. Despite the fact that the precise nature of Ottoman property rights could not be translated in the Roman-based Greek law, most of the Ottoman title deeds were recognised as full property rights, which upgraded their beneficiaries to landowners.[73] However, the incompatibility between the two legal systems and the different power relations that this fostered lay at the heart of the acute social tensions that shook the newly annexed province until the beginning of the twentieth century. The intentional absence of political intervention on the matter led to the involvement of the judicial authorities instead, thus initiating an endless – as well as futile – discourse regarding the nature and validity of the Ottoman property deeds. The bilateral commitments that the Ottoman version of the law featured could not survive within the Greek legal framework, even if they were elementary to begin with.

Although bondage to the soil was not a pressing matter on the part of the landowners, the restriction of the peasant workforce to their lands had been a constant pursuit of theirs during the late Ottoman period.[74] Many landowners attempted to enforce the new full ownership model literally, forcing the normally tenured farmers to sign short-term tenure contracts as a means of turning them into mere agricultural labourers. The peasants, for their part, were not eager to relinquish the last remnants of their customary rights to housing and land,

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[71] Kostas Vergopoulos, *Το αγροτικό ζήτημα στην Ελλάδα: Η κοινωνική ενσωμάτωση της γεωργίας* (Athens: Exandas, 1975), 83. This is an interpretative pattern which misses the function and performance of the çiftliks and the subjects of the historic drama. See George B. Dertilis, *Δύο δοκίμια και τρία σχόλια* (Athens: Kastaniotis, 2000), 118.

[72] Kostas Katiforis, "Η νομική άποψη του ζητήματος των τσιφλικιών στη Θεσσαλία και στην περιοχή της Άρτας (1882–1907)," in *Ο αγροτικός κόσμος στο μεσογειακό χώρο* (Athens: National Center for Social Research, 1988), 521–31.

[73] *Εφημερίς της Κυβερνήσεως (FEK)*, no. 14 A, 13 March 1882, 59–62.

[74] Instead of the 25 sheep that they were allowed to keep according to the 1861 regulation, at times they kept a herd even of 300 sheep per family. Fenia Lekka, "Προσέγγιση στην ιστορία των Ζωγραφείων κτημάτων: συγκρότηση, έγγειες σχέσεις και διάρθρωση των εκμεταλλεύσεων (1874–1909)," *Καρδιτσιώτικα Χρονικά* 6 (2003): 66.

hoping, in fact, to acquire land according to the smallholding regime that was prevalent in Greece at the time.

In nineteenth-century (Old) Greece, large estate holdings owned by Muslim subjects were a common sight. Some regions, like Attica and Evia, were not liberated but were granted on the ground of international treaties just like Thessaly.[75] Many similarities with Thessaly can be traced there. At the time, the main issue remained the validity of the Ottoman property titles and the incomplete cover they offered to their owners, as well as the nature of the effective usufruct rights of the cultivators that survived after 1881. Yet, there were counter-arguments, according to which the sultan's power over state land was theoretical and, in practice, the institution of private estate holding was put into effect.[76] Another similarity, underestimated in the bibliography, was that Muslim estate holders also remained in Evia until the 1860s,[77] as they did in Thessaly until the interwar period in the following century.[78]

In fact, the comparison was more complicated than that. Thessaly, a province mainly comprised of çiftliks directed towards cereal production, had very little in common with the agricultural paradigm of Old Greece, which was dominated either by small family holdings, or commodity-oriented plantations, etc.[79] Large estates were rather uncommon in Attica and Evia whereas in Thessaly they were the rule. Another crucial difference was the priorities that the state had set for each example, as in Old Greece there was a conscious attempt to promote the establishment of small family holdings during and after the Greek Revolution. This endeavour came to an end in 1871, when large expanses of public land were finally distributed to their tillers, a development which coincided with an international tendency towards steady growth, which the Greek state followed closely.[80]

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[75] Zacharias Demathas, Thanasis Kalafatis and Giorgos Mitrofanis, "Γαιοκτησία και παραγωγή: εμπειρικά και ερμηνευτικά ζητήματα," in *Οικονομική ιστορία του ελληνικού κράτους*, vol. 1, *Συγκρότηση εθνικής οικονομίας*, ed. Thanasis Kalafatis and Evangelos Prontzas (Athens: Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation, 2011), 151–52. Sakis Dimitriadis, "Οι μεγαλοκτηματίες της Εύβοιας του 19ου αιώνα" (PhD diss., University of Athens, 2018).

[76] Dimitriadis, Οι μεγαλοκτηματίες της Εύβοιας, 64–91; Georgios P. Nakos, *Το νομικό καθεστώς των τέως δημοσίων οθωμανικών γαιών, 1821–1912* (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 1984), 19.

[77] Dimitriadis, *Οι μεγαλοκτηματίες της Εύβοιας*, 90n183.

[78] Lekka, "Χρηστάκης Ζωγράφος," 499–508, 579, pic. 40.

[79] Christina Agriantoni, *Οι απαρχές της εκβιομηχάνισης στην Ελλάδα τον 19ο αι*. (Athens: Emporiki Bank Historical Archive, 1986), 281.

[80] Christina Agriantoni, "Η ελληνική οικονομία στον πρώτο βιομηχανικό αιώνα," in *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού 1770–2000*, ed. Vassilis Panagiotopoulos (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 2003), 4:62–63.

These favourable conditions changed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The great depression from 1875 to 1895 led the Greek economy on a downward spiral, which resulted in the bankruptcy of 1893. The agricultural sector took a major blow. Cereal production decreased in the 15 years after 1881 and public revenue from agriculture fell radically.[81] Harilaos Trikoupis' effort to turn the Greek economy into a modern capitalist one had as its centrepiece the attraction of available capital from the Greek diaspora. His protection policy towards the large estates if Thessaly was part of this strategy, but it was proved ineffective, and this problem remained unsolved until the first quarter of the twentieth century. The structural weaknesses of large-estate agriculture, which proved stubborn to the implementation of modernising policies, turned out to be insurmountable. Between the economy of subsistence and one of the market, the first would dominate.

It has been calculated that out of the overall 12,258,800 stremmata of the province,[82] almost half were owned by large landowners. Of those six million stremmata, four million were arable and constituted the major cereal-producing region in the Greek realm. However, even those covered only 42 percent of the domestic consumption needs, with the rest being imported.[83] In other words, the large estates of Thessaly did not live up to the task of making Greece self-sufficient in wheat and cereal production. Throughout this period only a few improvements were made in the way the large estates were run while the sharecroppers still used traditional cultivation methods.[84] Moreover, large parts of these estates were still rented to transhumant shepherds as pastureland[85]

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[81] Manos Perakis, "Η αντικατάσταση της δεκάτης από το φόρο των αροτριώντων ζώων: Η πρώτη φορολογική αλλαγή του Χαρίλαου Τρικούπη," in *Ο Χαρίλαος Τρικούπης και η εποχή του: Πολιτικές επιδιώξεις και κοινωνικές συνθήκες*, ed. Kate Aroni-Tsichli and Lydia Tricha (Athens: Papazisis, 2000), 282–83; Petmezas, *Προλεγόμενα*, 98–99.

[82] The provinces of Trikala, Kalabaka, Karditsa, Magnissia, Larissa and Domokos.

[83] Ministry of Finance, *Μελέτη περί της εν Θεσσαλία εγγείου παραγωγής* (Athens: National Printing House, 1896), 7–10; *Υπόμνημα του Θεσσαλικού Γεωργικού Συλλόγου περί ενισχύσεως της σιτοπαραγωγής* (Larissa: s.n., 1904); Prontzas, *Οικονομία και γαιοκτησία στη Θεσσαλία (1881–1912)* (Athens: National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation, 1992), 188–296, and Prontzas, *Οικονομία και γαιοκτησία στη Θεσσαλία (1881–1912): Τα τεκμήρια* (Athens: National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation, 1992), 34.

[84] Leonidas Kallivretakis, *Η δυναμική του αγροτικού εκσυγχρονισμού στην Ελλάδα του 19ου αιώνα* (Athens: Agricultural Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation, 1990), 237–40.

[85] On the relationship between nomadic Vlach cattle breeders and çiftlik in Thessaly in the Ottoman period, see Fatma Öncel, "Transhumants and Rural Change in Northern Greece," *International Review of Social History* (2020): 1–35, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020859020000371.

and Thessaly was still, in general, a sparsely populated province, riddled with swamps and the scene of clashes between sharecroppers and landowners.[86]

Nevertheless, if we were to pin the anachronistic aspect of the Thessalian çiftlik on one factor, it should not be the indifference that the large estate holders exhibited towards the modernisation of agriculture and the incorporation of innovative elements, as it has already been claimed;[87] instead, it should be placed on the inability to express collective visions[88] and realise that the regulatory parameter would be scarce and expensive labour and not the land.

Thus far, we have attempted to show that çiftliks, this embarrassing parenthesis of Greek landed property history, were a "dark age" towards the establishment of smallholdings, were portrayed in a negative light and whose productive and financial parameters, as well as the anthropogeography of the estate holders, were largely unknown. Sofoklis Triantafyllidis, a leading figure in the agrarian movement, had realised that the real picture would only be revealed if the statistical data followed the division into çiftliks, rather than municipalities and communities, as it happened with both of the informal statistics published up to that point, the source of which was the municipal and police authorities.[89]

Landowners and their Strategies

We shall attempt, next, to carefully examine the most significant cases of Greek Orthodox capitalists who bought Thessalian çiftliks, in relation to the strategy they employed, starting with Konstantinos Zappas (Labovo [Labovë e Madhe], Argyrokastro [Gjirokaster], 1814–Mantes-la-Jolie, France, 1892), who ended

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[86] Panagiotis Gennadius, "Γεωργική μεταρρύθμισις," *Ελληνική Γεωργία* 2, no. 1 (1886): 7–8; Charles Cheston, *Η Ελλάς τω 1887* (1887; repr., Athens: Karavias, 1990), 122; Ministry of Finance, *Μελέτη*, 7–10; D. Grigoriadis, "Η Θεσσαλική γεωργία," *Τα Νέα Γεωπονικά* 7 (1900): 85–88; *Υπόμνημα του Θεσσαλικού Γεωργικού Συλλόγου*.

[87] See, indicatively, George B. Dertilis, *Ιστορία του ελληνικού κράτους, 1830–1920* (Athens: Estia, 2005), 1:384–85.

[88] For a periodisation of the agrarian question, see Kate Aroni-Tsichli, *Αγροτικό ζήτημα και αγροτικό κίνημα: Θεσσαλία 1881–1923* (Athens: Papazisis, 2005).

[89] He referred to the "Study" of the parliamentary committee on the agrarian question, published in 1896, and to the table which Dimitrios Tsopotos drew up on account of the Volos Trade Association in 1905: *Στατιστική γεωργική της Θεσσαλίας* (Volos: Volos Trade Association, 1907); Sofoklis Triantafyllidis, *Οι κολλίγοι της Θεσσαλίας: Μελέτη περί μορτής* (Volos: Panthessaliki, 1906), 15–16.

up owning 14 çiftliks that amounted to 218,000 stremmata, which he purchased from 1879 to 1889. In fact, 90 percent of them were bought from 1879 to 1882; Zappas attempted to acquire large tracts of contiguous land in order to freely develop his enterprise; this was a strategic choice similar to one Zographos made, as will be discussed later. Zappas did not operate in the Ottoman Empire but he was known as a benefactor in Constantinople. He managed landed estates and industries that he leased and later owned in the Danubian Principalities, along with his cousin, Evangelis (1800–1865), the famous national benefactor. He tried to do the same in Thessaly, using similar methods to Zographos, as will also be discussed below, like hiring agronomists (Aristidis Mouratoglou was hired right after he bought his first çiftliks) or funding their studies (such as Zappas of Spyridon Chasiotis in Paris and Zographos of Panagiotis Gennadius in the United States), mechanising agricultural production but also urging peasants to intensify their agricultural efforts by establishing pecuniary rewards for those with the best quality products. From 1879, Zappas experimented with the introduction in his estates of a promising industrial fibre, ramie or Chinese grass (Boehmeria nivea), the production of which would be absorbed by a textile factory that he had planned. However, the cancellation of this venture was not his fault but was attributed to the fact that the plant could not possibly fetch a satisfactory price internationally until the early years of the twentieth century.[90]

Only a few Galata bankers bought land in Thessaly; in fact, there were no more than five. Most of the rest of the Greek Orthodox buyers who originated from various centres of the Greek diaspora only bought one or two estates each, such as Panagis Harokopos, Georgios Maratheas, Ioannis Stavridis and Panagis Topalis from the Danubian Principalities, Ioannis Oikonomou from Trieste and Georgios Averoff, Dimitrios Kassavetis and Aristidis Kartalis from Alexandria.

[90] For an analytical historical background of his purchases in Thessaly and the agronomists of the time involved, see Lekka, "Χρηστάκης Ζωγράφος," 458–65, 480–82.

Table 1.
Significant Greek Orthodox large landowners in Thessaly, late 1880s

Name/place of business	Date purchased	Number of landed estates	Initial area when bought (in stremmata)	Ownership upon death	Landed estates purchased by descendants	Final area	Prefecture
Christakis Zographos, Constantinople	ca. 1868–1881	11	489,952	Yes	2, totalling 26,969 stremmata, bought in 1901	516,921	Trikala (Trikala and Karditsa)
Konstantinos Zappas, Danubian Principalities	1879?–1889	14	217,955	Yes	No offspring	217,955	Trikala (Trikala and Karditsa) and Larissa
Georgios Zarifis, Constantinople	1879	1	25,000	No	No	25,000	Trikala (Karditsa)
Stefanovik-Skylitsis (Schilizzi) brothers, Constantinople and London	1887–1888	28	536,200	No	No. They sold 2, amounting to 25,000 stremmata, in 1889	511,200	Trikala and Larissa
Theodoros Mavrogordatos, Constantinople	1881–ca. 1899	2	24,000	–	–	24,000	Trikala (Karditsa)
Total		56	1,293,107			1,246,125	

Source: Fenia (Foteini) Lekka, "Χρηστάκης Ζωγράφος (1820–1898): Η επιχειρηματική περιπέτεια ενός διάσημου άγνωστου ομογενή της Κωνσταντινούπολης" (PhD diss., University of Thessaly, 2016), 492–97.

As for the Galata bankers, each one of them represented a completely distinct case and they cannot be classified in one category. Zarifis (the most influential member of this group around 1878) considered the çiftliks to be a rather marginal business activity. His interest was in the income they yielded, not in any further investment to increase their production.[91] In the provinces of Thessaly and Arta, both ceded to Greece in 1881, Zarifis bought a çiftlik, the village of Sofades, in the kaza of Karditsa, in 1879. This estate was not among the imperial lands and Zarifis eventually sold it two years later to its sharecroppers. There were two more

[91] With regards to the two çiftliks he acquired in Mesopotamia and East Thrace and their distance management, see ibid., 439n1399, from which the bibliography was taken.

çiftliks in southeastern Thessaly, which appeared to have been in his possession after August 1881, both of which were sold within a decade.[92]

On the contrary, Theodoros Mavrogordatos' involvement with the çiftliks was connected with his overall business plans in Thessaly. Mavrogordatos bought one of his two çiftliks right after he signed a contract with the Greek state regarding the construction of the Larissa–Volos railway line.[93] After the purchase of the second çiftlik, shortly before the turn of the century, he completely renovated the stewards' lodge. His efforts to mechanise the production in his land often attracted the attention of the press.[94] The names, in fact, of Zographos, Zappas and Mavrogordatos are often associated in the newspapers with big, innovative projects in the agricultural sector, such as the foundation of a machine factory.[95]

The Stefanovich Schilizzi brothers got involved in the Thessalian land market accidentally, as a result of the unpaid loans that the founder of the dynasty, Zannis Stefanovik Skilitsis (1806–1886), had given in 1882 to an estate holder of Thessaly, an absentee Armenian pasha who had owned 31 villages in Thessaly since 1875.[96] This loan led to the transfer in 1887 of a huge landed property, of more than 500,000 stremmata, to his sons and Stefanovich Schilizzi heirs, Dimitrios (1839–1893) and Pavlos (1843–1901), who lived in Constantinople, and Ioannis (1840–1908), who resided in London. In 1888, they extended their

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[92] Contrary to Sofades, none of these two estates is mentioned as part of the family patrimony in the *Memoirs* of Zarifis' grandson. See Zarifis, *Οι αναμνήσεις μου*, 247–52. One of these estates (Kalyvia, Sourpi) was supposedly sold in 1888 to 105 families from Sourpi (Triantafyllos Spanos, *Ιστορία-φυσιογνωμία της Σούρπης Μαγνησίας* [Sourpi: Sourpi Municipality, 2005], 46–47), while according to another version, this estate has always been a big village (Viktoras K. Kontonatsios, "Η περιοχή του Αλμυρού στην Τουρκοκρατία," *Αχαιοφθιωτικά Β΄* [Almyros: Municipality of Alymros, 1997], 1:343). As for the other estate (Velanidia), the toponym Ktima Zarifi ("Zarifis' estate") is the only remaining indication of Zarifis' presence.

[93] Lefteris Papagiannakis, *Οι ελληνικοί σιδηρόδρομοι (1882–1910): Γεωπολιτικές, οικονομικές και κοινωνικές διαστάσεις* (1982; Athens: Cultural Foundation of the National Bank of Greece, 1990), 115–16.

[94] Kallivretakis, *Η δυναμική του αγροτικού εκσυγχρονισμού*, 287.

[95] *Φάρος του Ολύμπου*, 9 January 1883.

[96] General State Archives (GAK)–Larissa, Agathangelos Ioannidis' notarial archive, auction's report no. 7968/28 August 1888, sales contract no. 155/27 March 1887 of the Geek Embassy in Constantinople. We wish to thank Stavros Gouloulis for his permission to use the original document, as well as Kostas Theodoropoulos for his precious advice on the documents. For the identity and financial status of Abraam Pasha Karakechagia (Abraham paşa or Abraham Eramyan, Constantinople, 1833–1918), see Lekka, "Χρηστάκης Ζωγράφος," 398–99, 495–98.

land business by buying three more Thessalian çiftliks from Muslim estate holders. When the Greek state decided, in 1901, to take over the Stefanovich Schilizzi estates in Thessaly, the dynasty's surviving heir owned only 26 out of 34 villages they once held. The rest had been sold gradually since 1889. These developments confirm the dominant view, namely that many of the Greeks that bought large Thessalian estates were venture capitalists and land brokers that lacked real investment interest, as it also becomes obvious in the Zarifis case.

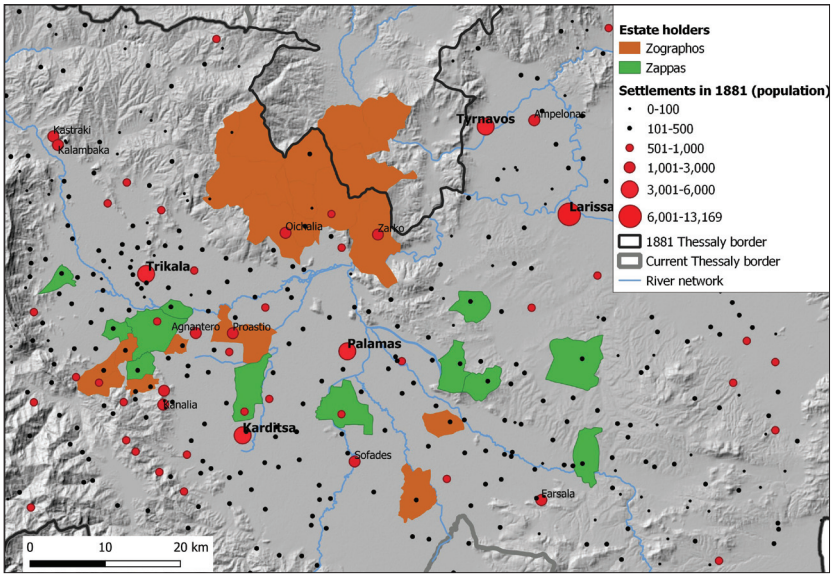

Figure 2. The Zographos and Zappas estates in Thessaly, late nineteenth century.

Source: Fenia (Foteini) Lekka, "Χρηστάκης Ζωγράφος (1820–1898): Η επιχειρηματική περιπέτεια ενός διάσημου άγνωστου ομογενή της Κωνσταντινούπολης" (PhD diss., University of Thessaly, 2016), 568–69; Dr Giannis Faraslis, Department of Environment, University of Thessaly, processed the data and created the map for the project.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the case of the important Greek Ottoman banker Christakis Zographos (Kestorati [Qestorat], Argyrokastro [Gjirokaster], 1820–Paris, 1898). As previously discussed, Zographos bought many landed estates in Thessaly after 1868. According to the spatial distribution of his assets, we can draw the conclusion that in comparison with the Zarifis case,[97] the Ottoman Empire (real estate property, capital assets) and Egypt (capital assets, bonds) represented

[97] Exertzoglou, *Προσαρμοστικότητα*, 140–43. The establishment and the interests of the Zarifis family in Istanbul would last, of course, more than four decades. Leonidas Zarifis'

for him a respectable part of his global interests, which, in fact, never devalued until his death. However, his choices were fundamentally different from Zarifis' in two ways: firstly, he obtained çiftliks in Thessaly, opting to invest in agriculture and industry. Secondly, he kept a portfolio[98] of Greek assets and bonds, which were nominally worth more than 1.5 million French francs before 1892.[99] The liquidation of the largest part (he maintained only 33 percent in 1896 and 15 percent in 1897) of this portfolio can be related to his substantial investment in his sugar factory in Thessaly (1892–1894), as well as to the insecure financial environment after the Greek bankruptcy of 1893, which led him away from buying Greek bonds. His industrial investment affected the composition of his patrimony and assets, as it amounted to over 40 percent of his total property, while 63 percent of the value of his landed property was concentrated in the Thessalian plain.

Table 2.
Christakis Zographos' landed property, 1897

Location	Value (in francs)	Percentage
Thessaly	7,919,637	63.5
Macedonia	633,151	5.1
Constantinople	3,587,609	28.8
Athens	306,968	2.5
France	24,006	0.2
Total	12,469,370	100

Source: Fenia (Foteini) Lekka, "Χρηστάκης Ζωγράφος (1820–1898): Η επιχειρηματική περιπέτεια ενός διάσημου άγνωστου ομογενή της Κωνσταντινούπολης" (PhD diss., University of Thessaly, 2016), 557–60.

Between 1868 and 1881, Zographos had acquired 11 çiftliks, which amounted to up to 490,000 stremmata, on the outskirts of Karditsa and Trikala; many of them were contiguous, as he wished. The arable farmland in the Trikala parts of his

settlement in Athens was timed immediately after the defeat in Asia Minor in 1922. Zarifis, *Οι αναμνήσεις μου*, 396.

[98] According to Exertzoglou's estimate, the values of Zarifis' Greek portfolio never surpassed 600,000 French francs. His role in relation to the Greek money market was limited to the placement of Greek sovereign bonds in the Constantinople stock market or the occasional investment in Greek assets, which he sold later after a relatively short period of time. Exertzoglou, *Προσαρμοστικότητα*, 116–32, 140.

[99] In 1892, this sum represented 28 percent of his total portfolio and about 8 percent of his total property. National Hellenic Research Foundation, Institute of Historical Research, Zographos' Archives, "Journals 1891–1892, 1896–1897".

estates amounted to only 53,000 stremmata, or 16 percent of his total holdings, whereas the remaining land was utilised as pasture, rented out to transhumant Vlach pastoralists at a high price.

The scarcity of arable land was the main reason why Zographos, from 1878 to 1881, turned his attention almost exclusively to the adjacent southerly plain of Karditsa. The lands (imperial or private) that were up for sale did not offer many opportunities for profit although it is clear that he sought to obtain land that could become arable, suitable for large-scale farming exploitation. He pursued his goal in every possible way: he outbid his opponents in auctions, he mobilised wealthy people of high social standing in the state apparatus, he approached crucial local level players, etc. Even after 1881, 102,000 stremmata of his land remained in Ottoman territory. In 1901, his sons purchased two more çiftliks of 26,000 stremmata. His ultimate goal to make them commercial and industrial seats of his businesses had become obvious since the end of the 1870s, and it was gradually realised by intensifying the mechanisation of cropping and harvesting,[100] the introduction of small- and large-scale stockbreeding and new crops, the vertical integration of production through the establishment of two factories – a rice mill in 1887 and a sugar factory – and, of course, trade, both inward and outward, to mention only the most important points of this sustained effort.

The Zographos and Zappas cases have been described here only in order to show that significant cases of large estate holders cannot be accommodated within the dominant interpretative scheme of absentee, unconcerned venture capitalists from the Greek diaspora. These two capitalists were not attracted by the prospect of great agricultural yields in the region; what seemed truly appealing to them was the potential production that could be achieved with the contribution of their infinite capital. Our opinion is that this category of land buyers has been exaggerated in terms of numbers and has been vaguely referred to as a group of capitalists, despite the fact that the business choices of its

[100] Serious mechanisation and modernisation initiatives, undertaken during the office of the agronomist Panagiotis Gennadius (1875–1877), are discussed in the literature. See Kallivretakis, *Η δυναμική του αγροτικού εκσυγχρονισμού*, 237–38. These efforts would intensify in the following decades, as did also the involvement of famous agronomists, like Petros Kanaginis and Stavros Papandreou, in the management of the Zographos estates. See Dimitris G. Panagiotopoulos, *Πέτρος Καναγκίνης: Η συμβολή του στην αναμόρφωση του περιβάλλοντος της υπαίθρου στον μεσοπόλεμο* (Athens: Estia, 2013), 36, 49–58. More specifically, account books dated from 1894 to 1904, as well as commercial correspondence from the first decade of the twentieth century, mostly concern hydraulic works and ploughing engines, steam-powered road rollers, etc. Lekka, "Χρηστάκης Ζωγράφος," 11–12, 399–400.

individual members were quite distinct.[101] The obsessive approach to unlocking the modus operandi of çiftliks never allowed academics to analyse important issues, like the capitalists' identity, the specific time period and duration of their investments, their motives, the business strategies they followed, their goals and results, as well as the kind of parallel financial activities they developed around the çiftlik system.[102] Meticulous research on one of those capitalists, Zographos, reveals the extensive stratification of this heterogeneous group of landowners. After all, a meticulous cataloguing of the agricultural estates of Thessaly and their owners, at the moment that the province became part of the Greek state, remains a research desideratum.[103]

In 1896 the smallest landed estate amounted to 3,000 stremmata and the largest 53,000 stremmata.[104] The largest estates of Thessaly were located on the

[101] Katerina Galani, "The Galata Bankers and the International Banking of the Greek Business Group in the Nineteenth Century," in *The Economic and Social Development of the Port-Cities of the Southern Black Sea Coast and Hinterland, Late 18th–Beginning of the 20th Century*, ed. Edhem Eldem, Sophia Laiou and Vangelis Kechriotis (Corfu: Ionian University, 2017), 65–67.

[102] A few studies have stressed the unidimensional approach to the agrarian question, which emphasises its legal-political aspect while it undervalues the socioeconomic one, as a consequence of the ambiguous attitude of the Greek state. See Amalia Chiotaki, *Η συμπεριφορά του τραπεζικού κεφαλαίου σε μια αγροτική κοινωνία (τέλη ιθ΄ αι.): Η περίπτωση της Τράπεζας Ηπειροθεσσαλίας στην Άρτα* (Athens: National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation, 1994), 97–98; Prontzas, *Οικονομία και γαιοκτησία*, 286.

[103] According to all the available data, apart from the Galata bankers and the expatriates located in the other Greek diaspora centres that have already been mentioned, large landed estates were also bought by Greek that were based in Old Greece (for example, by Konstantinos Agathoklis, Dimitrios Malliopoulos, Nikolaos Athanasiou, and Konstantinos Nikolaou, who were all from Fthiotida), in adjacent Ottoman territories (Athanasios Kazampakas from Veroia, Chatziefthymios Papavasileiou from Kozani, Nikolaos Pichtos from Metsovo and Konstantinos Stavridis from Ioannina), as well as from other regions of Thessaly, either lowland or mountainous (Konstantinos Vlitsakis from Trikala, Dimitrios Topalis and Dimitrios Tsopotos from Volos, Kleantis Anastasiou from Agia, Apostolos Vasiardanis from Mesenikolas, the Zoglopitis brothers from Rachoula and Xenofon Tsamagkidis from Rentina in the Agrafa region. Lekka, "Χρηστάκης Ζωγράφος," 488–98 and table 38, 573–77.

[104] Ministry of Finance, *Μελέτη*. For some statistical problems of this "Study," see N.D. Pappos, *Ζητήματα αγροτικής οικονομίας εν Θεσσαλία* (Athens: Petrakos, 1907). We still do not know the exact extent of the Thessalian çiftliks in stremmata. In 1881, the Austrian Military-Geographical Institute estimated they amounted to approximately 12 million stremmata. The large estates owned by the Galata bankers were estimated at approximately 1.3 million stremmata, including forests and prairies. For different estimates of these areas, see Prontzas, *Οικονομία και γαιοκτησία*, 109. For specific estimates, see Ministry of National Economy,

lowlands of the province, especially in the crescent between Trikala, Karditsa, Domokos, Farsala, Velestino, Larissa, Tyrnavos and Zarko. These were mostly destined for cereal production. In those areas, also, we come across fragmented ownership rather than the consolidated large ownerships of the rich Greek expatriates.

Indeed, the discourse regarding the Galata bankers who owned estates points to just about 60 çiftliks out of a total of 400; in other words, it pertains about 15 percent of the whole landed property as this was recorded by a parliamentary committee constituted to investigate the agrarian question in 1896. Among the çiftlik owners of Thessaly at the end of 1880s are Jewish moneylenders, Christian landowners from Trikala, Volos and Larissa, monasteries, Catholic orders as well as wealthy residents from Agrafa.[105] After all, a considerable number of Ottoman landholders still resided in Thessaly, while the private estates of the sultan also remained intact.[106]

In fact, no group could compare to the Muslim estate holders in terms of numbers, as they owned more than 40 percent of the çiftliks in this particular part of Thessaly in 1889. Journalist Christos Christovasilis commented ironically on this situation in his newspaper column, characterising Thessaly as an "Ottoman estate" (*κτήμα οθωμανικόν*), since, as he said, the sultan's citizens collected much more income than the Greek state. Similar comments about the supremacy of Albanian and Turkish estate holders in Thessaly – the sovereign's mother herself being one of them – can be found in some newspapers up to the end of the nineteenth century.[107] Despite the commonly accepted opinion that the Muslim land properties were massively sold off, the notary archives of Larissa,[108] Farsala[109] and Karditsa reveal that some Muslims chose to retain their landed properties and operate them through stewards and local representatives; nevertheless, a percentage of them, usually those who did not migrate until the end of the century, still chose to increase their landed property.

Department of Statistics, *Γεωργική απογραφή του έτους 1911* (Athens: National Printing House, 1914).

[105] See n. 104.

[106] Historical and Diplomatic Archive of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs (AYE), Folder 1884:7.2 and Folder 1885:7^{A}.1.

[107] For example, *Ακρόπολις*, 4 November 1889, and *Σκριπ*, 30 May 1898.

[108] Indicatively, GAK–Larissa, Notarial archive of Agathangelos Ioannidis, proxy no. 23665/4 October 1899.

[109] Kalliopi Tsoumani, "Πολιτική αλλαγή και οικονομία: Αγοραπωλησίες γης στην επαρχία Φαρσάλων (1881–1912)" (MA diss., University of Thessaly, 2006), 59–60.

Table 3.
Ownership of estates in southwestern Thessaly based on owners' religion, 1890

Religion	Number of estates	Percentage
Muslims	40	41
Christians	35	36
Jews	1	1
Mixed	1	1
Unknown	20	21
Total	97	100

Source: Fenia (Foteini) Lekka, "Χρηστάκης Ζωγράφος (1820–1898): Η επιχειρηματική περιπέτεια ενός διάσημου άγνωστου ομογενή της Κωνσταντινούπολης" (PhD diss., University of Thessaly, 2016), 573–77.

From Instability to Transformation

Demographic Evolution, 1881–1920

In 1881 Thessaly was a sparsely populated province (with 23.98 inhabitants per square kilometre) in comparison to the average population of the Greek state (with 32.94 inhabitants per square kilometre).[110] Its more densely populated parts – in the Pelion region in southeastern Thessaly, in the Plain of Trikala in western Thessaly and Lower Olympus and Ossa areas – were not located in the lowlands but more in semi-mountainous areas.[111]

Table 4.
Estimated population in Thessaly, 1881–1940 (based on census returns)

Year	Population			
	Total	Muslims	Jews	Christians
1881	254,744	24,120	2,523	236,172
1889	300,964			
1896	346,376			
1907	370,661	2,795	2,572	
1920	438,408			
1928	493,213			
1940	573,417			

[110] Ministry of the Interior, *Πίνακες των επαρχιών*, δ [iv].

[111] According to Sivignon, several lowlands were desolate, such as in eastern Thessaly and in the southern part of the western Thessaly Plain. Sivignon, *Θεσσαλία*, 118–19.

Sources: For 1881: Ministry of the Interior, Department of Public Finances and Statistics, *Πίνακες των επαρχιών Ηπείρου και Θεσσαλίας κατά την Απογραφήν του 1881* (Athens: Typ. Adelfon Perri, 1884), 56; for the censuses of 1889 (16 April) and 1896 (5–6 October), tables of de facto and de jure population without further analysis were published. Giannis Bafounis, *Η Ελληνική στατιστική τον 19ο αιώνα: Στατιστική και πλάνη είναι λέξεις συνώνυμοι* (Athens: EMNE–Mnimon, 2006), 51–52, 57. For 1907: Ministry of the Interior, Census Service, *Στατιστικά αποτελέσματα της γενικής απογραφής του πληθυσμού κατά την 27 Οκτωβρίου 1907* (Athens: National Printing House, 1909), 1:ξγ' [lxiii]. For 1920: Ministry of National Economy, General Statistics Service, *Απογραφή του Πληθυσμού της Ελλάδος κατά την 19 Δεκεμβρίου 1920. ΙΙ. Στατιστικά Αποτελέσματα διά την Θεσσαλίαν και Άρταν* (Athens: National Printing House, 1929), 2:ια' [xi]. For 1928: Ministry of National Economy, General Statistics Service, *Στατιστικά αποτελέσματα της απογραφής του πληθυσμού της Ελλάδος της 15–16 Μαΐου 1928* (Athens: National Printing House, 1933), 1:κγ' [xxiii]. For 1940: Ministry of National Economy, General Statistics Service, *Πληθυσμός της Ελλάδος κατά την Απογραφήν της 16ης Οκτωβρίου1940* (Athens: National Printing House, 1950) : ε–ζ' [vi–vii].

Despite the favourable terms and the guarantee on the part of the Greek state to preserve the lives, wealth and religion of "all those who remained under Greek rule", under the Convention of Constantinople in 1881,[112] most of the Muslim population gradually left Thessaly. Indeed, from 1878 (when the Congress of Berlin put an end to the Russo-Turkish War) to 1886, several hundred thousand Muslims fled the "lost" provinces of the Balkans, seeking security in territory still under the Ottoman rule. The Muslims of Thessaly and Arta were the first to depart, along with the Muslims fleeing Dobruja after the province was annexed by Romania,[113] and Bulgaria, while later the Turks of Crete became the next group to start migrating towards imperial territory, following the Greco-Turkish War of 1897 and the subsequent foundation of the autonomous Cretan State.[114]

The Muslims of Thessaly, however, did not flee en masse in 1881, as was the case with the Muslims of Arta, who had already departed the town before the arrival of the Greek forces.[115] In August 1881, while Karditsa and Trikala were welcoming Greek soldiers, the French consul in Thessaloniki reported that only a few Muslim families had arrived from Thessaly: "It appears to me they have not migrated permanently. They will be waiting for the time of annexation and,

[112] *FEK*, no. 14 A, 13 March 1882, 59–62.

[113] Alexandre Toumarkine, *Les migrations des populations musulmanes balkaniques en Anatolie (1876–1913)* (Istanbul: Isis, 1995), 33.

[114] Ibid., 36.

[115] For the massive movement of the Muslims of Arta further north, see Lambros Baltsiotis, "Από τη Narda στην Άρτα: μουσουλμάνοι και αλλαγές συνόρων," in *Narda–Οθωμανική Άρτα: Η μετάβαση από την ύστερη οθωμανική περίοδο στην ελληνική πόλη*, ed. Elias G. Skoulidas (Arta: Skoufas, 2016), 148.

depending on the circumstances under which that will happen, their leaders still in the country will decide whether they shall return or flee."[116] Indeed, their leaders – mainly the agas and beys of Larissa – as well as their personal choice, would be the determining factor for Thessalian Muslims. As the British vice-consul in Larissa, Henry Zohrab Longworth, would note two months after Larissa was annexed: "There is no doubt that if the Moslem notables can be induced to stay, the Mahometan population as a whole will not quit the country. Much, therefore, depends on the decision of the Beys."[117] He would be more specific in December 1881:

> only some 3,000 seem to have transferred their residence into Turkish territory because of the annexation. By a rough calculation the number may be reckoned to consist of 600 families, nearly the half of whom quitted the country owing to being dependent for support on the salaries and pensions of the Ottoman government; while the rest did likewise due to indefinite causes, such as inordinate pride, criminal fear and religious fanaticism.

It is apparent that the people who "filled the lower grades of life in the towns of Larissa, Trikala, Armyro and Volo" left first, while 5–6 families had already returned "and they repent now bitterly of having abandoned their homes".[118]

During the next five years, various wealthy Muslims of Thessaly would attempt to partake in Greek politics, a fact that illustrates their attempts to act as representatives of their community. In the national elections held on 20 December 1881, two MPs were elected among the Muslims of Larissa Prefecture, Halil Dervis Bey and Serif Bey, both wealthy landowners actively involved in politics,[119] who were followed by more Muslims representatives in the local elections held two years later in various rural areas in Thessaly.[120]

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[116] MAE, A. Dozon, 1 August 1881, Microfilm P. 733.

[117] TNA, FO 195/1377, Larissa 26 October 1881.

[118] TNA, FO 195/1377, Larissa 3 December 1881. Some months earlier, a few Muslim families had returned to Arta. Angeliki Sfika-Theodosiou, "Η προσάρτηση της Θεσσαλίας: Η πρώτη φάση στην ενσωμάτωση μιας ελληνικής επαρχίας στο ελληνικό κράτος (1881–1885)" (PhD diss., Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 1988), 34.

[119] Both were fluent in Greek. Sfika-Theodosiou, "Η προσάρτηση," 52, 63. For the entrepreneurial life of Halil Dervis Bey, see Anastasia Danika, "Δυο μουσουλμάνοι βουλευτές της Λάρισας: Δερβίς Χαλήλ βέης και Χασίπ Σερέφ βέης (1882–1900)," *Θεσσαλικό Ημερολόγιο* 72 (2017): 343–52.

[120] Mehmet Mahmut served as mayor of Nessonos Municipality from 1881 to 1891 and Hussein Hasan was elected mayor of Farsala.

However, a series of violent incidents targeting them underlined that Muslims in general were not just considered a foreign body in Thessaly, but rather a hostile one. But apart from low intensity events like random violence, insults, damage of property, arson and damage to Ottoman mosques and cemeteries that accompanied the transition, there were a few cases of extreme violence. During the first quarter of 1882, the period when the treaty was being ratified, three murderous attacks blemished the seemingly smooth and peaceful transfer of power,[121] despite the fact that they were of a rather local character, of no regional significance. In March the kadi of Agia, Dervish Effendi, and his whole family were murdered in their home,[122] an act attributed to a personal vendetta, as it was proven that the perpetrators – five Christian farmers/herders – did not loot anything of value. One of them, an 18-year-old boy, had been working as a domestic servant in the victim's household for six years.[123] On the same night, a Muslim miller from Keserli (Sykourio) village was murdered, while his son was injured and his mill burned to the ground. The following month, the same fate would befall Halil Islam, a landowner from Farsala, and his wife Hamidé.[124] It is important to note that from 1881 to 1885, in 129 sale contracts deposited in the Farsala registry, at least one of the parties was a Muslim.[125] It seems that rural Thessaly remained a rather dangerous place during this period, a fact that would serve the electoral agenda of Nikolaos Georgiadis, an independent candidate for parliament in Volos Province, who promoted public safety as an absolute priority.[126]

Therefore, partly agreeing with Nicole Immig's suggestion, according to which Muslims emigrated from Greece primarily due to social and economic reasons,[127] we argue that the threat to life and property was the main factor

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[121] A thesis supported by Sfika-Theodosiou and local historians, such as Yanis Kordatos and Dimitrios Tsopotos. Yanis Kordatos, *Ιστορία της Επαρχίας Βόλου και Αγιάς από τα αρχαία χρόνια ως τα σήμερα* (Athens: 20ος Aionas, 1960), 941–63. Tsopotos, *Γη και γεωργοί της Θεσσαλίας*.

[122] CADN, Athènes A 149, F. Robert, 18 March 1882. It is important to note that the Muslim community of Agia, while demographically strong, did not elect any mayor or even municipal councillor in 1883, when the municipal archives commence.

[123] CADN, Athènes A 149, F. Robert, 1 June 1882.

[124] CADN, Athènes A 149, F. Robert, 10 April 1882.

[125] Tsoumani, "Πολιτική αλλαγή και οικονομία," 35.

[126] CADN, Athènes A 149, Nikolaos Georgiadis, 27 November 1881, "To the electorate of the Province of Volos".

[127] Nicole Immig, "The 'New' Muslim Minorities in Greece: Between Emigration and Political Participation, 1881–1886," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 29, no. 4 (2009): 513, 516.

in the decision taken by the Muslims to remain or flee.[128] Stefanos Katsikas identified the search for safety from "discriminatory policies and anarchy" as a basic parameter, also stating that emigration movements "were occasionally facilitated by Ottoman religious officials who came from the Ottoman Empire and encouraged Muslims in Greece to emigrate".[129] The mutual aversion, exasperated by the sense of defeat in the Muslim population and the feeling of disappointment among the Christian farmers, a situation which in several instances – particularly in western Thessaly – was expressed in extreme ways,[130] should not be attributed solely to general social and financial reasons.

Consequently, in May 1882, the rate of displacement of the Muslim population increased yet again.[131] Fraissinet's agent calculated that approximately 2,000 left the area in September.[132] Another massive exodus took place in 1883, when severe floods affected Thessaly and destroyed vast fields already ploughed and ready for sowing for the next season, at a moment when the three-year grace period – during which the Muslims could maintain their Ottoman citizenship – was set to expire. It comes as no surprise that the mufti of Larissa left the area that same year, along with about a thousand more Muslims.[133] Almost with regret, the French vice-consul noted that: "Il est vraiment regrettable que le Gouvernement Hellénique ne soit pas parvenu

[128] It is rather telling that Immig makes no mention of these criminal activities, despite focusing on the specific period (1881–1886) and the motives for Muslim emigration. Immig, "The "New Muslim Minorities in Greece," 511–22. On the contrary, Sfika-Theodosiou ("Η προσάρτηση," 174–75), in her brief account of these criminal instances, does not mention the identity of the prominent Muslim victims; she also attempts to explain their motives as "vengeance on the part of the Christians, who – despite their hatred for specific persons – would not have been able to carry out crimes of such a degree of planning". Her statement that "local Greek authorities came to the opinion that this was the work of Ottoman propaganda", would be invalidated in part two years later – at least concerning the incident involving the kadi's family – when those found guilty would be executed by beheading. *Εθνικόν Μεγαλείον*, 27 June 1884.

[129] Stefanos Katsikas, "*Millet* Legacies in a National Environment: Political Elites and Muslim Communities in Greece, 1830s–1923," in *State-Nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Greece and Turkey: Orthodox and Muslims, 1830–1945*, ed. Benjamin C. Fortna, Stefanos Katsikas, Dimitris Kamouzis and Paraskevas Konortas (London: Routledge, 2012), 61–62.

[130] Concerning the reactions of farmers and çiftlik cultivators, particularly in Zarko and Sofades prefectures from 1881 to 1884, see Aroni-Tsichli, *Αγροτικό ζήτημα*, 54–63, 67.

[131] CADN, Athènes A 149, F. Robert, 7 May 1882.

[132] MAE, Microfilm P. 733, A. Dozon, 4 October 1882.

[133] *Θεσσαλία*, 3 September 1883.

à conserver cette population de quarante-cinq mille âmes qui représentait en général les meilleurs cultivateurs de la Thessalie."[134] Félix Robert appropriately reiterated a widespread social anxiety: the departure of the Muslims of Thessaly was intrinsically linked to the decline of local agricultural and financial output in general. The local press expressed a similar view: "Supposedly, within three months, not a single Ottoman will be left in the newly acquired Greek provinces, much to the detriment of agriculture."[135] It is quite possible that Longworth's estimate of only about 10,000 Muslims remaining in the whole of Thessaly, while – by the summer of 1884 – about 35,000 emigrated from Thessaly to Aydin in Asia Minor, was accurate.[136]

Migrant Muslims from Thessaly seem to have taken three main routes: Firstly, to Izmir (Smyrna), to the interior of the province of Aydin, and Bursa. According to figures provided by Justin McCarthy, drawn from Aydin Province, the Muslim population in the these vilayets increased by 196,493 from 1890 to 1906;[137] secondly, to Constantinople,[138] and thirdly, to Macedonia, contributing to the doubling of its Muslim population, its percentage increasing to 42 percent in the 1880s from 36.1 percent in 1831.[139] Nevertheless, the general assumption that Muslims left Thessaly after quickly selling their properties[140] is not supported by studies of landed property. In his study, Evangelos Prontzas estimates the total wealth of Ottoman families residing in Larissa with çiftliks in Thessaly in 1892 at between 709,000 and 778,000 golden Ottoman liras.[141] What

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[134] The vice-consul insists on this number, despite having knowledge of the heavily reduced numbers produced by the census. CADN, Athènes A 149, F. Robert, 11 November 1883.

[135] See, for example, *Ανεξαρτησία*, 21 August 1883.

[136] Sfika-Theodosiou, "Η προσάρτηση," 76.

[137] Justin McCarthy, "Greek Statistics on Ottoman Greek Population," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 1, no. 2 (1980): 75.

[138] According to Karpat, "between 13 April 1899 and 13 March 1900 some 21,257 new immigrants arrived in Istanbul from Bulgaria, Bosnia, Romania, Montenegro, Thessaly and Russia". Kemal H. Karpat, *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History: Selected Articles and Essays* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 667–68.

[139] Panzac, "La population de la Macédoine," 125.

[140] See for example, Efi Allamani, "Η Θεσσαλία στα τελευταία πενήντα χρόνια της τουρκικής κυριαρχίας (1832–1882)," in *Η τελευταία φάση της ανατολικής κρίσεως και ο Ελληνισμός (1878–1881): Πρακτικά Διεθνούς Ιστορικού Συμποσίου* (Athens: Association for Southeast European Studies, 1983), 87; Giorgos Papageorgiou, "Η Θεσσαλία: Πολιτικές και κοινωνικές πραγματικότητες, 1833–1881," in Panagiotopoulos, *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού*, 4:303.

[141] Prontzas, *Οικονομία και γαιοκτησία*, 154–55.

is less known, however, is that a large swathe of wealthy Muslims who seemed to have departed simply crossed the northern border and settled in Ottoman territory, leaving the control of their estates in the hands of intermediaries, as their fellow Muslims from newly annexed provinces in Serbia did around the same time.[142] In addition to Yanina (Ioannina) in Epirus and Thessaloniki, Serfiçe (Servia) was an important kaza in terms of the emigration of Thessalian Muslims, as former Thessaly governor Halil Bey noted,[143] a fact confirmed by French scholar Victor Bérard, who travelled through Macedonia from 1890 to 1892.[144]

The annexation of 1881 was, in terms of demographic change, a process that lasted for over a decade. From 1881 to 1907 the Thessalian population increased from 254,000 to 370,000 inhabitants, with the population density reaching 30 people per square kilometre.[145] The 1907 Greek census provides an extremely low number of Muslims (2,795) and Jews: "Mohammedans in numbers worth mentioning only reside in the prefectures of Thessaly: Larissa (1,393), Magnesia (737), Karditsa (375) and Trikala (290) and in Attica (242, most of them aboard a ship in the port of Piraeus)".[146] One would expect the massive exodus of Muslims, although temporarily halted by the Greco-Turkish War of 1897, to have caused a significant decrease in the population of Thessaly. On the contrary, this massive emigration remains almost unnoticeable in the census data (fig. 3). This increase in the population of Thessaly was decidedly slower in Larissa, an administrative centre of the area. However, the population influx there does demonstrate a steady increase from 1881 to 1907 (table 5).

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[142] For example, in Niš, according to the British consul, the number of Muslims fell from 8,300 in 1876 to 300 in 1879. Karpat, "Population Movements," 420.

[143] TNA, FO 195/1377, Serfidje [Servia], 18/30 November 1881.

[144] Victor Bérard, *Τουρκία και Ελληνισμός: Οδοιπορικό στη Μακεδονία*, trans. Babis Lykoudis (Athens: Trochalia, 1987), 208.

[145] Sivignon, *Θεσσαλία*, 152.

[146] As for the Jews "they mostly reside in the prefectures of Corfu (2,188), Larissa (1,089), Magnesia (924), Trikala (559), Arta (409), Attica (412) and Evia (286), while very few live in other prefectures and none in the prefectures of Fokida, Evrytania, Arkadia, Lakedaimon, Lakonia and the Cyclades". Ministry of the Interior, Census Service, *Στατιστικά αποτελέσματα της γενικής απογραφής του πληθυσμού κατά την 27 Οκτωβρίου 1907* (Athens: National Printing House, 1909) ξγ' [63].

Table 5.
Population of the cities of Thessaly according to Greek census, 1881–1907

Year	Volos	Larissa	Trikala	Karditsa	Total	Share of total population (%)
1881	4,987	13,169	5,563	4,504	28,223	11.0
1889	11,029	13,640	14,820	6,798	46,287	15.4
1896	16,788	15,373	21,149	9,416	62,726	18.1
1907	23,563	18,001	17,809	9,664	69,037	18.6
1920	30,046	21,084	20,194	12,618	83,942	19.1
1928	47,892a	23,899	18,682	13,883	104,356	21.2
1940	54,919	32,686	18,892	14,024	120,521	21.0

Note: a The number also includes the 6,186 refugees settled in the Nea Ionia district. Ministry of National Economy, General Statistics Service, *Στατιστικά αποτελέσματα της απογραφής του πληθυσμού της Ελλάδος της 15–16 Μαΐου 1928* (Athens: National Printing House, 1933), 1:μζ' [47].

How was the demographical gap filled after the annexation? Answering this question would require meticulous processing of purely demographical sources, at least as far as the 1880s and 1890s are concerned, which are only available for Volos. Sources considered "secondary" could possibly shed some light on these influxes. Through notary archives, it is evident that in the period immediately after the area's annexation, families of animal herders (the Ziogas family from Bitola, for example) bought both houses and various pastures in the Toivasi (Kalochori) area of Larissa.[147] Vlachs from Perivoli, an area close to Grevena, would soon follow.[148] Besides purchasing land straight away, these herders kept renting vast lands for their herds to graze on, as is specifically recorded by Zosimas Esfigmenitis, a monk and scholar, in 1891 concerning the villages of Kerasia and Velestino (in the southeast of Thessaly).[149] Correspondingly, families from the Peloponnese settled in Kazaklar (Ampelonas),[150] purchasing fields at

[147] The GAK of Larissa, Magnesia and Trikala all contain notarial archives.

[148] Pavlos Lalos, "Συμβόλαια αγοραπωλησίας του 1882 από Οθωμανούς σε Έλληνες στο Τόιβασι της Λάρισας," *Θεσσαλικό Ημερολόγιο* 73 (2018): 360–68.

[149] *Προμηθεύς* 3, no. 28 (1891): 222; Aikaterini Polymerou-Kamilaki, "Ο Ζωσιμάς Εσφιγμενίτης και η λαογραφία της Θεσσαλίας," *Θεσσαλικά Χρονικά* 11 (1976): 197–98.

[150] Emigrants from the Peloponnese, from Mantineia and Tegea in particular, had settled in Kazaklar (Ampelonas) a few years before the area was annexed by Greece, apparently being familiar with the area through their participation in the revolutions of 1854 and 1878, as inferred by Aikaterini Polymerou-Kamilaki, "Πελοποννήσιοι στην περιοχή της

the same time as two black Ottoman women sold their lands there.[151] In Farsala, the buyers of land were mostly Christians, natives of the Farsala and Domokos areas, fewer came from the regions of Epirus and Thessaly, while only a small number originated in the rest of Greece.[152]

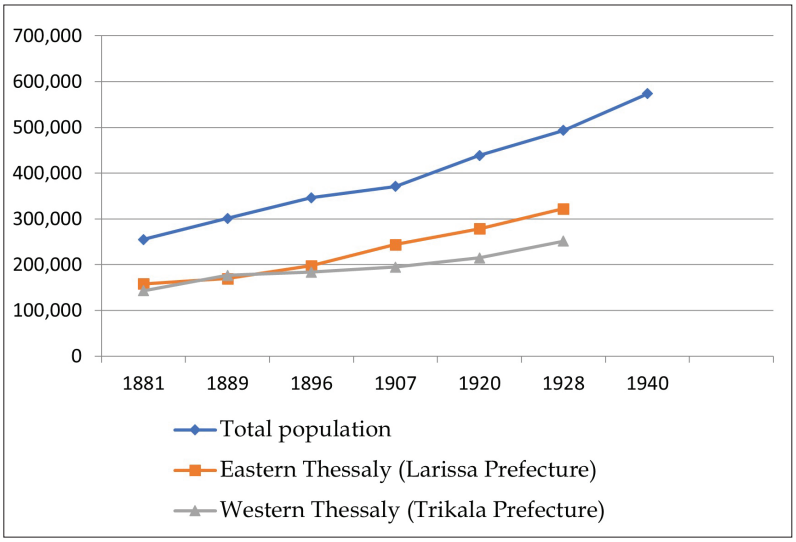

Figure 3. The Thessalian population according to Greek censuses, 1881–1940.

Source: Greek census data (see table 4).

In searching for places of both origin and settlement using a sample of elementary school registries in the Trikala area, it becomes apparent that apart from Trikala, most pupils from 1898 to 1910 came from Metsovo and Krania (Vlach villages). A decade later, Krania was the major place of origin for the

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Λάρισας μετά την προσάρτηση της Θεσσαλίας (1881)," in *Πρακτικά Γ΄ Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Πελοποννησιακών Σπουδών* (Καλαμάτα, 8–15 Σεπτεμβρίου 1985) (Athens: Society for Peloponnesian Studies, 1987–1988), 3:497.

[151] Anastasia Danika, "Λαλούντες μόνον την οθωμανικήν: Η ανάγκη για διερμηνέα στον μουσουλμανικό πληθυσμό της Λάρισας την περίοδο 1882–1898," *Μνήμων* 35 (2016): 309. Two years later, eight Christian families settled in the same village "who came from a village called Mahalitsi [Michalitsi, now Karacabey] in the East (close to Bursa) … The cause for their departing their homes was the troubles they suffered by the numbers of Circassians gathered in that area." *Εθνικόν Μεγαλείον*, 14 December 1884.

[152] Out of 296 contracts in total, 246 buyers were Christian, while 50 were Muslim. Tsoumani, "Πολιτική αλλαγή και οικονομία," 64–65.

pupils of the 1st Elementary School in Trikala, followed by Dragovitsi (Polithea), Tzourtza (Agia Paraskevi), Doliana, the Vlach villages of the Aspropotamos area and Kalambaka.[153] Similarly, a preliminary study of the Karditsa city registry (*δημοτολόγιο*) for 1915 provides the following areas of origin for those inscribed in the civil registry of Karditsa: Sofades, Palamas, Metsovo, Samarina, Zarko, Kalambaka, Kottori (Katafytou), etc.[154]

In eastern Thessaly, the registry of the municipality of Pagasai (as the municipality of Volos was officially called) in 1885, the oldest surviving registry in Thessaly, demonstrates how the residents of Pelion had been "coming to the lowlands" as far back as the 1860s and 1870s, making up the majority of those registered (41.41 percent).[155] Following them were the citizens originating from Epirus (10.94 percent) and other parts of Thessaly (7.51 percent),[156] whereas the citizens originating from Volos (12.01 percent) in essence made up the Muslim minority that remained in the city after the annexation.[157]

The homogenisation of the population in Thessaly, as a consequence of the gradual departure of the Muslim element after the annexation, led to a overwhelmingly Christian population. The influx of immigrants from non-adjacent areas like the Cyclades and the Peloponnese would lead to mixed villages, a phenomenon that became even more common after the Greco-Turkish War of 1897. When the Ottomans briefly occupied the region during this war, dozens of villages were abandoned, mainly the mixed *κονιαροχώρια* villages, while Tyrnavos, Larissa, Farsala, Velestino and Domokos were severely affected.[158]

The return of the Thessalian refugees from the short-lived Turkish conquest to their – often destroyed – villages, as well as the settlement of new claimants, which probably included a considerable number of veterans of the recent war,

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[153] GAK–Trikala, Trikala 1st Elementary School, Students registries, 1898–1925.

[154] Civil Register of Karditsa, 1915 (Karditsa City Museum, Municipal Archives).

[155] Dina Moustani, "Η συγκρότηση μιας νέας πόλης: ο Βόλος το 1885," *Τα Ιστορικά* 64 (2016): 136–37.

[156] It seems that the Thessalian migrants preferred Larissa to Volos. Despite the departure of the Muslims, Larissa indeed managed to maintain its population, mainly through internal immigration (see table 5).

[157] For the Muslim community in Volos after the annexation, see Dina Moustani, "Αφομοίωση και διάκριση: Οι κοινότητες των Οθωμανών και Εβραίων στο Βόλο μετά την προσάρτηση," in *Continuities, Discontinuities, Ruptures in the Greek World (1204–2014): Economy, Society, History, Literature. 5th European Congress of Modern Greek Studies*, ed. Konstantinos A. Dimadis (Athens: European Society of Modern Greek Studies, 2015), 2:298–303.

[158] Vasilis K. Spanos, "Από τον δικαστικό απόηχο του ελληνοτουρκικού πολέμου του 1897," *Θεσσαλικό Ημερολόγιο* 8 (1997): 113–30.

would be more than enough to compensate for the decrease of population caused by the Muslim exodus.

In summarising these various population movements that continued until the end of the nineteenth century, it can be said that the resulting demographic stability was due to the increased influxes towards the urban centres: between 1881 and 1896 the aggregate population of the four largest cities of Thessaly (table 5) increased from 11 to 18 percent of the total population of the province, a share that increased further, although less rapidly, until 1920, when 21.8 percent of the overall population of Thessaly resided in urban centres.[159] With regard to the rural areas, there are indications of frequent labour shortages in the first few decades after annexation. Thus, we often come across attempts of the big landowners of the area, like Christakis Zographos and Georgios Plataniotis, to counter these shortages by inviting families from abroad to work on their fields. In October 1883 the prominent Athenian newspaper *Αιών*, relaying information originally published by the *Θεσσαλία* newspaper in Volos, reported that 400 German-speaking families from Dobruja in Romania were expected to arrive in Thessaly. Sixty of the families were to be employed on Zographos' landed estates; they were to be transported from Constanța on steamships chartered by Zographos at his own expense.[160] The rest of the immigrant families had supposedly come to a similar agreement with Mavrogordatos and other large estate-owners whose names were not mentioned.[161]

Along the same lines, in 1895 immigrants from the Caucasus came to Greece, after the Greek government promised to resettle them on the landed estates of Thessaly. This promise was not realised, and the Athens-based Anatoli Asia Minor Association provided for their repatriation.[162] Similar attempts, both unsuccessful, to settle Caucasian immigrants on the landed property of Georgios Plataniotis, in the region of Daoukli (Xyniada) in Domokos, were reported in 1900 and 1905.[163]

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[159] Ministry of National Economy, General Statistics Service, *Στατιστικά αποτελέσματα της απογραφής του πληθυσμού της Ελλάδος της 15–16 Μαΐου 1928* (Athens: National Printing House, 1933), 1:ριθ' [119].

[160] In the event, this migration never occurred.

[161] Lekka, "Χρηστάκης Ζωγράφος," 369.

[162] Mamoni Kyriaki, "Το αρχείο του Μικρασιατικού Συλλόγου Ανατολή," *Μνημοσύνη* 7 (1978–1979): 129; Andreas Athanasiadis, *Τρεις προσπάθειες εγκατάστασης Καυκασίων στην Ελλάδα* (Pontokomi: s.n., 2009).

[163] *Καιροί*, 30 April 1900. Archive of Anatoli Asia Minor Association, folder: ΙΓ 9: 4 July 1906.

Until the first decade of the twentieth century, the population of Thessaly, especially in the western part of the province, appears to have been stable, fluctuating only a little in comparison to the Ottoman-era numbers.

The steep increase in the population after 1907 was not the result of a boom in births but rather of a massive refugee influx, initially from Eastern Rumelia and Thrace in 1906–1907, followed by the arrival of the Asia Minor refugees from 1922 onwards. Indeed, 31,032 people resettled in Thessaly, most of them in the four major urban centres of the province (63.4 percent), demonstrating a preference for the industrial heart of Thessaly, the city of Volos (11,229, 36.19 percent) and Larissa (5,037, 16.23 percent).[164] In the interwar period, the rural population of Thessaly declined, while its urban population increased up to 23.78 percent of the total population.[165]

State Intervention in Thessaly, 1890–1911

As early as 1886, prominent agronomist Panagiotis Gennadius, who was previously employed on the Zographos estates, criticised the deplorable state of Thessaly, urging the state to intervene.[166] In 1891, Spyridon Chasiotis, a young agronomist and professor in the Kassavetios Agricultural School, came to the same conclusion, although in a more specialised manner, proposing that the Ministry of the Interior introduce a more appropriate type of wheat to Thessaly.[167] Following the state bankruptcy in 1893, the public discourse for reform intensified. Increasing agricultural production in Thessaly, particularly in cereal, was prioritised. The agronomist Aristeidis Mouratoglou, who had also served as a professor in the Kassavetios school, devised a definite list regarding Thessaly's needs: 1) large investment schemes; 2) an increase in the workforce;

[164] In Trikala, 2,531 (8.15 percent) refugees were registered and 874 in Karditsa (2.81 percent). Ministry of Health, Welfare and Relief, *Απογραφή προσφύγων ενεργηθείσα κατ' Απρίλιον 1923* (Athens: National Printing House, 1923), ιδ' [xiv], 32–34, 48.

[165] This particular percentage concerns the overall urban population of Thessaly in 1928 and not only the four largest cities included in table 5. This distinction is present in the same census, according to which a population of 5,000 or more is regarded as urban. See Ministry of National Economy, General Statistics Service, *Στατιστικά αποτελέσματα της απογραφής του πληθυσμού της Ελλάδος της 15–16 Μαΐου 1928*, 1:ριθ' [119] and for the differentiation of the population, κζ' [27].

[166] "Οι Θεσσαλοί πένονται, οι Θεσσαλοί είναι οι δυστυχέστεροι των Ελλήνων," Gennadius, "Γεωργική μεταρρύθμισις," 1–8.

[167] Dimitris Zographos, *Ιστορία της παρ' ημιν γεωργικής εκπαιδεύσεως* (Athens: National Printing House, 1936), 63–85.

and 3) specialised businessmen/tycoons with some knowledge in economics.[168] On their part, the large estate owners in Thessaly had realised that under this modus operandi, the productivity of their lands within these economic circumstances was marginal. Some of them decided to sell them either directly to their sharecroppers or indirectly through the state. At times they even gave them away to the state.[169] With the Kassavetis and Zappas bequests (1888–1892) of 27,000 stremmata and 218,000, stremmata, respectively, as well as the purchase of the 511,000-stremma Stefanovich Schilizzi estate (1902), the Greek state effectively became the biggest landowner in Thessaly, with a total of 756,000 stremmata.[170] Around the same period, the number of sharecroppers who bought land also increased.[171] In 1907, the number of large estates in Thessaly had fallen to only 260 (fig. 4). Smallholdings had become prevalent in the province.[172] By the first decade of the twentieth century, there were as many independent villages (*κεφαλοχώρια*, *ελευθεροχώρια*) as çiftliks in Thessaly, whereas in 1881 the ratio was two çiftliks for each independent village.[173] State intervention was crucial to this change. On the contrary, however, there were still sides that supported the çiftlik as an institution, like Dimitrios Tsopotos, an agronomist and estate owner himself, who, in an attempt to prove the viability and value of çiftlik, tried to show how çiftlik sharecroppers could evolve into small landholders.[174] This was another instrumentalised (mis)interpretation, among others.

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[168] Georgios Karapanagiotis, *Μελέτη περί του διακανονίσεως του Θεσσαλικού Αγροτικού Ζητήματος* (Athens: Typ. Paraskeva Leoni, 1901); Antonios Spiliopoulos, *Το οικονομικόν πρόβλημα: Η έγγειος παραγωγή της Θεσσαλίας* (Athens: Typ. Kratous, 1903). Also see the article by Athanassios Mouratoglou in *Θεσσαλία*, 25 August 1905, which is contained in the Stephanos Dragoumis archive. American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Archives and Personal Papers, Stephanos N. Dragoumis Papers, folder 188.2.

[169] Petmezas, *Προλεγόμενα*, 102.

[170] Aikaterini Karvela, "Μηχανισμοί εγκατάστασης αγροτικών πληθυσμών: Πρόσφυγες και εγχώριοι στη Θεσσαλία 1907–1911" (PhD diss., Ionian University, 2005), 121; Zappeion Committee, *Περιουσία εν Ελλάδι και υποχρεώσεις επιβεβλημέναι εκ της διαθήκης: Διαχείρισις της περιουσίας από του 1892 μέχρι του 1900* (Athens: National Printing House, 1902), 21; *FEK*, no. 17 A, 1 February 1902.

[171] In the 1907 census of the Volos Trade Association, Tsopotos recorded 42 cases where the peasants had purchased çiftlik lands. *Στατιστική γεωργική της Θεσσαλίας*, 4.

[172] Stephanos N. Dragoumis Papers, folder 239. Petmezas, *Προλεγόμενα*, 102.

[173] Independent villages were "small peasant holdings cultivated by individual peasant households in the simple villages (*κεφαλοχώρια*) differentiate from large estates, çiftliks, cultivated by sharecroppers in the çiftlik villages. Kaya, "On the Çiftlik Regulation," 337.

[174] Dimitrios Tsopotos, "Το αγροτικόν ζήτημα," *Αναγέννησις* (Trikala), 18 January 1911.

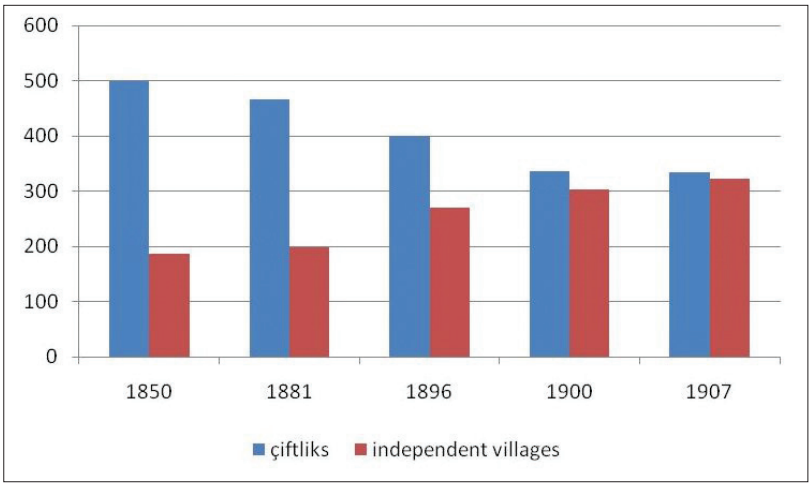

Figure 4. The evolution of landed property in Thessaly, 1850–1907

Sources: For 1850, Alp Yücel Kaya, "On the Çiftlik Regulation in Tırhala in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: Economists, Pashas, Governors, Çiftlik-Holders, Subaşıs, and Sharecroppers," in *Ottoman Rural Societies and Economies*, ed. Kolovos Elias (Crete: Crete University Press, 2015), 337; for 1881, Andreas Andréadés, "Les progrès matériels de la Thessalie depuis sa libération," *La Revue de Grèce* 1, no. 1 (1918): 17; for 1896, Ministry of Finance, *Μελέτη περί της εν Θεσσαλία εγγείου παραγωγής* (Athens: National Printing House, 1896), 1–9; for 1900, N.D. Pappos, *Ζητήματα αγροτικής οικονομίας εν Θεσσαλία* (Athens: Petrakos, 1907), table 3; for 1907, Dimitrios Tsopotos, *Στατιστική Γεωργική της Θεσσαλίας* (Volos: Statistical Department of the Volos Trade Association, 1907), 5–7.

The state was initially ambivalent towards such developments. In 1896, the Deliyannis government passed legislation mainly to facilitate the purchase of land by çiftliks; however, the law was never implemented. In 1906, the Theotokis government attempted to modify the legal definition of the term "morti" (*μορτή*), namely the prearranged share of the production that a sharecropper had to cede to his landlord, which resulted in the dissatisfaction of both the estate holders and the sharecroppers.[175]

The following year, the pressing need to rehabilitate the refugees from Eastern Rumelia forced the Greek government to establish the Thessalian Agricultural Fund, the first state service that specialised in the settlement of both refugees and locals on private land. Indeed they were settled in existing settlements, like

[175] Aroni-Tsichli, *Αγροτικό ζήτημα*, 110–11; Petmezas, *Προλεγόμενα*, 97–98.

those of the Stefanovich Schilizzi estates, as well as in new settlements created to accommodate them, as was the case in Nea Anchialos and Nea Efxeinoupoli, each hosting 500 and 200 families, respectively.[176] In the Larissa area, 300 families settled in Karya, 300 in Nea Philippoupoli and 200 in Nea Vodena (Flamouli), near Trikala.[177] However, although the fund was the first to grant small plots, its scope did not include agronomic innovation and capital support so as to achieve the much-needed increase in cereal yield.

At the same time, the distribution of land to refugees and local peasants reignited the sharecroppers' expectation for the expropriation of all large estates in Thessaly. Social tensions became much more acute. The landowners that had remained in Thessaly, most of whose holdings were smaller than the Zographos estate, reacted to the new circumstances[178] while sharecroppers formed their own associations and were, at times, supported by members of the bourgeoisie.[179] The agricultural associations staged frequent rallies, with the whole mobilisation peaking with the Kileler revolt in March 1910.[180]

This rebellion highlighted the need to resolve the agricultural question. In the following general elections, in August and November 1910, the agricultural parties in Thessaly won most of the seats in the region. Agricultural reform and the expropriation of the large estates comprised their fundamental claims. In March 1911, the constitution voted by the Second Revisionary Parliament expanded the scope of property expropriations in Greece, thus paving the way for the compulsory purchase of large landed estates in Thessaly.[181]

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[176] The Nea Anchialos settlement finally occurred in May 1908, after the new settlement was finished. *Ο Εργάτης*, 22 May 1908. Karvela, *Μηχανισμοί εγκατάστασης*, 228–46.

[177] CADN, Athènes A 252, A. Jouve, 4 November 1907. Nea Philippoupoli and Flamouli are now form part of the municipality of Trikala.

[178] In particular, see, *Υπόμνημα των γαιοκτημόνων Βόλου επί του περί μορτής νομοσχεδίου 1906*, Stephanos N. Dragoumis Papers, folder 184.

[179] *Υπόμνημα των καλλιεργητών των Ζαππείων κτημάτων*, Stephanos N. Dragoumis Papers, folder 184.

[180] Antonis Antoniou and Dimitris Sakkis, "Θεσσαλικό αγροτικό ζήτημα: Η πορεία των κινητοποιήσεων," in *Θεσσαλία: Θέματα Ιστορίας* (Larissa: Local Associations of Municipalities and Communities of Thessaly, 2006), 1:255–72.

[181] Ilias Nikolakopoulos and Nikos Oikonomou, "Το εκλογικό βάπτισμα του Βενιζελισμού: Εκλογές 1910–1912," in *Συμπόσιο για τον Ελευθέριο Βενιζέλο* (Athens: ELIA; Benaki Museum, 1988), 45–73; Stephanos N. Dragoumis Papers, folder 70.2. GAK–Larissa: Archives of Dimitrios Hadziyiannis: 1910–1920; Gunnar Hering, *Τα πολιτικά κόμματα στην Ελλάδα, 1821–1936* (Athens: National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation, 2008) 2:777–84.

Implementing the Agrarian Reform

Over the next decade, the state intensified its efforts. A bloc of social forces explicitly demanded the modernisation of Greek society. Eleftherios Venizelos, the leader of the Liberal Party, led this effort.[182] The Ministry of Agriculture was established to implement the agrarian reform across the country and laws were passed to establish rural cooperatives (1910–1917). After the defeat of the Greek army in Asia Minor in 1922, the urgent need to rehabilitate over one million refugees accelerated the implementation of the reform. Creating smallholdings was a key element of the reform and refugees and local farmers were compensated with landed property in the rural areas of Thessaly, Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace.[183]

The Ministry of Agriculture accelerated the pace towards an extensive land distribution programme,[184] which was first implemented in Thessaly. Between 1917 and 1923, 156 large estates in the prefecture of Trikala-Karditsa and 98 in the prefecture of Larissa-Volos were expropriated.[185] The ministry coordinated the procedure on a central level whereas expropriation offices were established in the provinces.

The procedure comprised the following steps:[186] First, the peasants had to create a farmers' cooperative. Then, the expropriation committee, whose members were agronomists and judges, had to specify the expropriated land, the part of it that would remain in the owner's possession, and distribute the rest to the cooperative's members, fixing the extent of each parcel. The next step was the indemnity of the landowner at a price initially proposed by the committee and ultimately decided by the courts. In a final step, the ministry delivered the property titles to the new owners.

Research in the archives of the Ministry of Agriculture is still in progress. The documents give detailed information about the expropriation procedure for each former çiftlik. The new property arrangements resulted in a complete

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[182] Christos Hadziiossif, "Εισαγωγή," in *Ιστορία της Ελλάδος του 20ου αιώνα*, ed. Christos Hadziiossif (Athens: Vivliorama, 1999), 1:1:30–39.

[183] Vassilis Koutsoukos, "Το πλαίσιο εφαρμογής της προσφυγικής αποκατάστασης και η επιβολή εθνοτικής και χωρικής ομοιογένειας στη Θρακική επαρχία (1922–1930)," *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών* 19 (2015): 161–90.

[184] Babis Alivizatos, *Κράτος και γεωργική πολιτική* (Athens: Ministry of Agriculture, [1939]).

[185] GAK–Athens, Ministry of Agriculture: Files of the Topographic Service, folder 160: 1935–1941.

[186] Ibid., folder 448: 1937–1939. Ministry of Agriculture, "Κανονισμός των τοπογραφικών εργασιών" (Athens, 1937–1939), 73–82.

breakdown of the complementary relationship between arable land and pasture.

Table 6 shows the area of the former çiftliks examined so far. The average surface of these expropriated estates, roughly calculated on the basis of these figures, is approximately 10,000 stremmata. Compared to the average extent of 15,500 stremmata proposed by the parliamentary committee on the agrarian question in 1896, it reveals a trend of the decline in the average size of agricultural property that would last until the start of the agrarian reform.

Table 6.
Area and number of estates under expropriation in Thessaly, 1917–1923

Stremmata	**Number of estates**
up to 5,000	147
5,001–10,000	74
10,001–15,000	54
15,001–20,000	37
20,001–25,000	23
25,001–30,000	11
30,001–35,000	5
35,001–40,000	2
Total	353

Source: The "Transforming the Rural and Political Landscape: The Implementation of the Land Reform in Thessaly and Macedonia" project, which is being conducted at the Institute for Mediterranean Studies (IMS)/Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas (FORTH) under Socrates Petmezas. The project is based on the files of the Department of Land Policy of the Ministry of Agriculture held at the General State Archives–Athens.

Mapping the expropriated estates is the next important step in our research. Of the 353 estates that were expropriated, the largest were: Megalo Eleftherochori, covering 44,000 stremmata and located in a semi-mountainous area near Tyrnavos, and Damasi, close to the first, in the province of Elassona, covering 46,500 stremmata. Belonging to Ottomans, they comprised extensive woodlands and pastures and were situated on the 1912 border. We have also located the 46,500-stremma Neochori (Oichalia) estate, which at the time of expropriation belonged to the family of Christakis Zographos' daughter Theano and to the Kottikas family of Trikala.[187]

[187] This was a well-known family in Trikala, since one of its members, Ioannis Kottikas, was elected MP in November 1910 and March 1912 for the constituency. GAK–Athens,

Table 7 shows the different categories of estate owner that were expropriated from 1917 to 1922. It reveals that a high percentage of Ottoman landowners had remained until the expropriation. The question whether the recorded Muslim landowners in Thessaly resided in the province and how they managed their property requires further study.[188]

Table 7.
Thessaly landowners, 1917–1922

Landowners	**Number**	**%**
Greeks (individuals and families)	115	32.6
Church and monasteries	84	23.8
Ottomans (individuals and families)	82	23.2
Greek state, communities and municipalities	48	13.6
Greek state co-owned with church and monasteries	12	3.4
Jews (individuals and families)	6	1.7
National Bank of Greece	3	0.85
Foundations	3	0.85
Total	353	

Source: Same as table 6.

In addition, information from the services that implemented the land distribution also points to a social category of the landowners, who controlled landed properties of about 5,000–20,000 stremmata, some from the earliest days of the annexation. They did not enjoy the status of Zographos or Zappas and remain largely unknown. Finally, it is clear that church landownership was exclusively concentrated in the semi-mountainous regions of Elassona, Kalambaka, Agrafa and Karditsa. Simultaneously, the process of establishing 191 settlements for the farmers continued.

By 1940, 1,938,952 stremmata had been distributed to 40,484 families and 906,217 stremmata were still in the hand of large landowners.[189]

Ministry of Agriculture: Files of the Department of Land Policy, Folders: Damasi, Megalo Eleftherochori, Neochori.

[188] GAK–Athens, Ministry of Agriculture: Files of Department of Land Policy, Thessaly.

[189] GAK–Athens, Archives of the Greek Ministry of Agriculture: Department of the Topographic Survey, folders: 160, 169.

Furthermore, along with the topographers who coordinated the land distribution procedures, agronomists were active too, working to increase the efficiency of grain production. In 1923–1924, yields reached a low point.[190] Choosing the appropriate species and the suitable seed, and ensuring that the farmers would have access to it, were the priorities. In 1925, a specialised research agronomist station was founded which would evolve into a research institute. This institute, which was transferred to Thessaloniki in 1927, succeeded in providing the new farmers with more productive species.[191] Increasing cereal production was the central political issue in the interwar period. The smallholders were supported by a government agency (KEPES) that coordinated the distribution of new seed and payment for their production.[192] By 1940, domestic cereal production could cover 74 percent of consumption. Thessaly managed to double its cereal production between 1911 and 1940.[193]

From 1896 to 1940, Thessaly's landed estates were replaced by smallholdings while cereal productivity increased. The state played a leading role in this process, which radically changed the rural landscape.

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[190] Babis Alivizatos, *Η μεταπολεμική εξέλιξις της ελληνικής γεωργικής οικονομίας και η επ' αυτού επίδρασις της αγροτικής πολιτικής* (Athens: s.n., 1935), 60–61.

[191] *Το Ινστιτούτον Καλλιτερεύσεως Φυτών 1923–1933* (Thessaloniki: s.n., 1933).

[192] Socrates D. Petmezas, "The Policy of Wheat of Self-sufficiency and its Impact upon Rural Modernization in Greece, 1928–1960," in *Agriculture in Capitalist Europe, 1945–1960: From Food Shortages to Food Surpluses*, ed. Carin Martiin, Juan Pan-Montojo and Paul Brassley (New York: Routledge, 2016), 87–104.

[193] Agricultural Bank of Greece, *Το έργον μιας δεκαετίας, 1930–1939* (Athens: s.n., 1940), 25.