

The Historical Review/La Revue Historique

Vol 17 (2020)



Olga Katsiardi-Hering (ed.), Βενετικοί χάρτες της Πελοποννήσου, τέλη 17ου–αρχές 18ου αιώνα: Από τη συλλογή του Πολεμικού Αρχείου της Αυστρίας [Venetian maps of the Peloponnese, late 17th–early 18th centuries: From the Austrian War Archive collection]

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doi: [10.12681/hr.27079](https://doi.org/10.12681/hr.27079)

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To cite this article:

Festas, M. (2021). Olga Katsiardi-Hering (ed.), Βενετικοί χάρτες της Πελοποννήσου, τέλη 17ου–αρχές 18ου αιώνα: Από τη συλλογή του Πολεμικού Αρχείου της Αυστρίας [Venetian maps of the Peloponnese, late 17th–early 18th centuries: From the Austrian War Archive collection]. *The Historical Review/La Revue Historique*, 17, 393–396. <https://doi.org/10.12681/hr.27079>

Olga Katsiardi-Hering (ed.),
BENETIKOI XAPTES THΣ ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ, ΤΕΛΗ 17ΟΥ-ΑΡΧΕΣ 18ΟΥ
ΑΙΩΝΑ: ΑΠΟ ΤΗ ΣΥΛΛΟΓΗ ΤΟΥ ΠΟΛΕΜΙΚΟΥ ΑΡΧΕΙΟΥ ΤΗΣ ΑΥΣΤΡΙΑΣ
[Venetian maps of the Peloponnese, late 17th–early 18th centuries:
From the Austrian War Archive collection],
Athens: National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation (MIET),
2018, 544 pages.

The reconstruction of the settlement patterns and the study of the distribution of the population constitute the major research objectives of historical geography and demography in modern Greek historiography. The lack of primary sources and their low reliability, until the establishment of official censuses after the foundation of the Greek state in the 1830s, constitute the major difficulties in the research. In addition, the consecutive periods of foreign rule (Venetian and Ottoman) of Greek territory, as well as the fragmented geography of the country, contributed to an unequal availability of population data. The Peloponnese in southwestern Greece has a greater availability of primary sources in terms of its population compared to other parts of the country. Thirty-five years since Vassilis Panagiotopoulos' pioneering study on the settlements and the population of the Morea,¹ based on the Venetian census of 1700, that paved

the way for the development of historical demography in Greek historiography, the Peloponnese continues to be studied systematically.

Previously unused sources, renewed research approaches and digital technologies have shed further light on the population and the settlements of the Peloponnese from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries. A study by the Greek Ottomanist Georgios C. Liakopoulos, based on an Ottoman taxation cadastre (ca. 1460–1463) compiled immediately after the conquest of the Morea, offers unprecedented insight into late Byzantine Peloponnesian society and its economy and how they were incorporated into the Ottoman Empire.

Moreover, from an environmental history point of view, innovative research has been conducted on the Peloponnese. The research involves coring in lakes and peat bogs in order to obtain palaeoenvironmental archives, as well as developing a geographical information system database on the economy, agriculture, demography and trade, derived from documents of Byzantine, Ottoman and Venetian provenance, including taxation

¹ Vassilis Panagiotopoulos, *Πληθυσμός και οικισμοί της Πελοποννήσου, 13ος–18ος αιώνας* (Athens: Commercial Bank of Greece Historical Archive, 1985).

cadastres, land surveys and population censuses.²

As far as the modern history of the Peloponnese is concerned, the georeferenced online edition of the map produced by the members of the Morea Expedition (Dépôt de la Guerre, 1852), the team of French scientists who conducted a thoroughly documented survey of the Peloponnese (flora, fauna, archaeology, geology, population, etc.), provides insight into the built environment of the region at the end of the Greek Revolution.³

Finally, there is “The settlement network of the Peloponnese in the age of Greek Revolution” research project being conducted in the Institute of Historical Research/National Hellenic Research Foundation.⁴ Based on archival sources (General State Archives of Greece, Benaki Museum, Ioannis Kapodistrias Archive), records (travelogues and fighters’ memoirs) and data collected from the French Expedition to the Morea, the research programme seeks to chart the settlement patterns of the time, as well as to present a cohesive and, to the greatest extent possible, detailed picture of the size, location and ethnocultural composition of the villages and the cities of the Peloponnese. The project aims to produce a historical study and to create a digital application that will

contain a map and all the pertinent documentation collected during the survey.⁵

Within this thriving context regarding the historical demography and geography of the Peloponnese in the early modern era, the book under review, *Βενετικοί χάρτες της Πελοποννήσου*, was published in 2018. Olga Katsiardi-Hering, professor emerita of modern Greek history in the Faculty of History and Archaeology of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, is the academic editor of this impressive and massive volume. In 1986 Katsiardi-Hering located in the cartographic collection of the Austrian War Archive, part of the Austrian State Archives, a series of original, coloured, hand-drawn and unpublished maps dating from the second period of Venetian rule in the Peloponnese (1685–1715). The maps were moved to the Military-Geographical Institute in Vienna from Venice after its fall to Napoleon and its incorporation into the Habsburg Empire. These unique maps, drawn by specialised Venetian engineers, were part of a large-scale Venetian programme to record the territory of the Morea and to provide solid documentation of the productivity of each area in it, thus facilitating the imperial power in terms of taxation, exploitation of resources, information on the population and settlements.

The volume, whose publication editor is Costoula Sclavenitis, comprises the publication of 12 large-scale maps (53 sheets in all) and is accompanied by a CD containing all the cartographical material. The volume contains 13 articles, by

² See Palaeo-Science and History, an independent Max Planck research group, 2018–2023 (<https://www.shh.mpg.de/1056512/psh>).

³ See <http://pavladev.gr/moreasweb/#home>.

⁴ The research constitutes part of the large-scale project “The Greek Revolution of 1821: Digital Archive” (<https://www.rchumanities.gr/1821-act4greece/>), coordinated by the Research Centre for the Humanities (RCH).

⁵ See http://www.eie.gr/nhrf/institutes/ihr/protovoulia_21_IHR_NHRF/.

historians, archaeologists, cartographers and philologists.

Katsiardi-Hering, in the introduction, entitled “Cadastral maps of the ‘Regno di Morea’ or ‘imperial maps’? An introduction”, narrates the history of the maps from Venice to Vienna as war booty, and examines the cartographical context within which these maps were produced as well as the historical framework of Venetian rule of the Morea.

Anastasia Papadia-Lala, professor of modern Greek history and specialist in the history of Greeks under Venetian rule, in her article “Society and communities in the Peloponnese during the second period of Venetian rule”, shapes the administrative and social history of the Peloponnese from 1685 to 1715, presenting an overview of the communal institutions implemented by Venice in the Morea.

George Toliás, a historian specialised in the history of cartography, in “Images of the administrative structure of the ‘Regno di Morea’: Three Venetian manuscript maps of the Peloponnese, 1692–1707”, examines three general maps of the Peloponnese compiled by the Venetians within the context of organising the space of the newly possessed lands for administrative and political purposes. In the next article, “The Venetian maps of the Peloponnese of the year 1707: ‘Pianta geografica del Regno di Morea’ and ‘Del Regno di Morea’”, Evangelos Livieratos, emeritus professor of engineering, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, examines the maps from a mathematical and geometrical point of view, analysing the depiction of coastline patterns which demonstrates the high expertise of the Venetian surveyors. The way the geophysical space is represented in the reports of Venetian

governors-general and officials is studied by philologist Agamemnonas Tselikas in his article “The geophysical space of the Peloponnese according to the Venetian provveditori’s reports during the second period of Venetian rule”.

Other articles focus on certain administrative units of the Morea under Venetian rule. The late history professor Konstantinos Dokos, who passed away in 2019, examines “The map of Vostitsa” (modern day Aigio in the northwestern Peloponnese). The author examines the settlement patterns depicted on the map, a cartographical sketch of the region, thus providing a thorough examination of the territory 25 years after the publication of the Venetian Vostitsa cadastre, which he edited along with Giorgios Panagopoulos.⁶

Historian Alexis Malliaris, in “The Venetian cadastral map of the territorio of Patras (1689)”, examines the topography and the geophysical environment around the city of Patras as well as its settlement patterns and their territorial boundaries. Historian Angeliki Panopoulou, in her article “Da mar a mar’: A proposition for the defence of the area of Corinth at the end of the 17th century”, focuses on a map depicting the fortifications of Acrocorinth, as well as the region’s settlements, land and water resources, designed by the engineers in order to provide suggestions to the Venetian administration on how to ensure its northern border in the Morea.

⁶ Konstantinos Dokos and Giorgios Panagopoulos, eds., *Το βενετικό κτηματολόγιο της Βοστίτσας* (Athens: Agricultural Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation, 1993).

In “Reading the ‘Disegno del territorio d’Argos’”, historian Eftychia D. Liata claims that the map can be considered as a geophysical one defining the boundaries of the inland areas and of the entire territorio of Argos in relation to its neighbouring territorii.

Historian Siriol Davies examines “The territory of Tripoli”, arguing for the invaluable significance of the map, which depicts data for the settlements, especially those that had been deserted, that cannot be found in other historical sources. Archaeologist John Bennet, in “The territories of Modon and Navarino”, sheds light on the aforementioned regions, which were of great importance for Venice from its very first expansionist moves in the Eastern Mediterranean. The author thoroughly examines the built environment and the settlement patterns in the maps. Architect Haris Kalliga, in “Pianta di Malvasia in Morea”, examines a drawing depicting the castle on the peninsula of Monemvasia. The importance of this fortification for the Venetians resulted in the creation of copies for distribution to military leaders for use in warfare.

An afterword in two parts concludes this informative volume. In the first, Dimitris Belezos transcribes all the toponyms depicted on the maps of the Androussa, Leondari and Phanari territorii. Additionally, Maria Mamali examines, in “The ‘catastico ordinario’ of the territorio of Fanari: A brief descriptive note”, a record compiled by the Venetians on the availability and the productivity of the region’s sources so that they could be

exploited. In the second part, Katsiardi-Hering presents a catalogue of 57 hand-drawn maps of Greek regions kept at the Austrian War Archive.

Βενετικοί χάρτες της Πελοποννήσου constitutes a major breakthrough in modern Greek historiography regarding the historical demography and geography of Greece under Venetian rule. Thanks to Katsiardi-Hering’s insistence and initiative, a valuable edition on the Venetian maps was brought to fruition 32 years after she discovered them in Vienna.

The significance of the volume is twofold. On the one hand, it designates the importance of maps and the depictions of space as part of the Serenissima’s policies in the Eastern Mediterranean, in particular in the Morea. More than a century before the production of the detailed map of the Peloponnese by the French Expedition to the Morea, Venetian engineers had already managed to produce accurate maps depicting its built environment, resources and geophysical environment. This contribution is related to the second aspect of the volume’s importance. Thus, *Βενετικοί χάρτες της Πελοποννήσου* constitutes a valuable source for the study of historical demography, settlement patterns, migration, environmental history, economic and rural history, all aspects of the so-called *human ecology* in the longue durée of the Peloponnesian landscape.

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