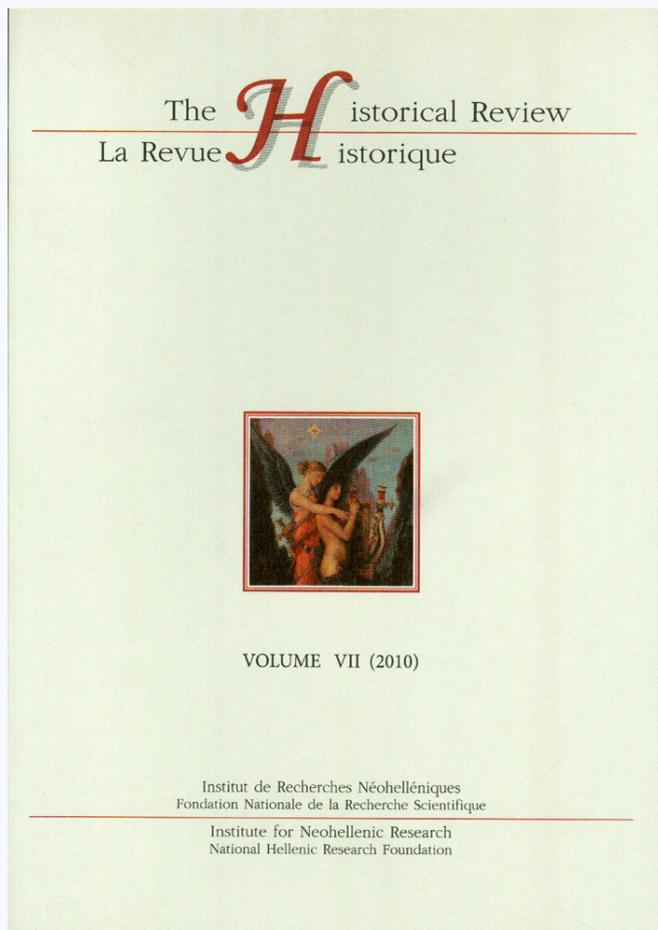


## The Historical Review/La Revue Historique

Vol 7 (2010)

Networking and Spatial Allocation around the Mediterranean, Seventeenth-Nineteenth Centuries



### On the Settlement Complex of Central Greece: An Early Nineteenth-century Testimony

*Dimitris Dimitropoulos*

doi: [10.12681/hr.267](https://doi.org/10.12681/hr.267)

#### To cite this article:

Dimitropoulos, D. (2011). On the Settlement Complex of Central Greece: An Early Nineteenth-century Testimony. *The Historical Review/La Revue Historique*, 7, 323–346. <https://doi.org/10.12681/hr.267>

ON THE SETTLEMENT COMPLEX OF CENTRAL GREECE:  
AN EARLY NINETEENTH-CENTURY TESTIMONY

*Dimitris Dimitropoulos*

---

ABSTRACT: This text presents the settlement complex of Central Greece (mainly Boetia, Fthiotida, Magnesia, Larissa) in the first years of the nineteenth century, as attested in Argyris Philippidis' work, *Μερική Γεωγραφία* [Partial geography]. In total, Philippidis recorded 232 settlements, in a credible manner, as demonstrated by comparison with information from other sources of the period. The examination of this data reveals the very strong presence of mainly Christian settlements of small dimensions, not exceeding 100 homes, located at relatively low elevations. Also notable is the presence of a few cities exceeding 1000 homes of largely Muslim population, as well as "islets" of settlements with Muslim or mixed populations in flatlands. The settlement complex was supported by monasteries, berths, bazaars and inns, which constituted functional components of the financial activities. This text is part of a study being conducted at the Institute for Neohellenic Research concerning the history of settlements in Greece (fifteenth-twentieth centuries).

---

In 1815 Argyris Philippidis, brother of Daniel Philippidis, the co-author of *Νεωτερικής Γεωγραφίας* [Modern geography], wrote a manuscript entitled *Μερική Γεωγραφία* [Partial geography], which remained unpublished until the end of the 1970s.<sup>1</sup> In this manuscript A. Philippidis depicts, with exceptional clarity, knowledge and succinct description, the settlements and the activities of the residents of a large part of Central Greece.<sup>2</sup> Despite the gaps and omissions that can be cited, the writing of Philippidis, in my opinion, permits the reconstruction of the settlement complex of the region that was the focus of his interest. His testimony can therefore serve as the starting point for the registration, identification and mapping of settlement locations in the pre-revolutionary years, as an initial canvas which, while certain verified

---

<sup>1</sup> This geographical work by Argyris Philippidis, along with another work that contains moral teachings and rules, was published by Th. Sperantsas, *Τα περισωθέντα έργα του Αργύρη Φιλιππίδη. Μερική Γεωγραφία - Βιβλίον Ηθικών* [The saved works of Argyris Philippidis: Partial geography - A book of confidence], prologue and ed. Ph. Vitalis, Athens 1978.

<sup>2</sup> For a commentary on the work of Philippidis, see D. Dimitropoulos, "Ο Αργύρης Φιλιππίδης και η *Μερική Γεωγραφία* του. Ένα σχόλιο" [Argyris Philippidis and his "Partial geography": a commentary], *Ο Ερανιστής* XXV (2005), pp. 201-244.

settlement locations have been placed, remains open to additions, completions and improvements from other sources and evidence. At the same time, the settlements cited in *Μερική Γεωγραφία*, in my view, provide the critical mass and geographical dispersion so as to constitute a case for the study and further exploration of the characteristics of the settlement complex in Central Greek for that period.

In an introductory note, Philippidis sets down the geographic boundaries of his description, mentioning that he submits his text:

...for the use of those desiring simply to see Boetia, part of Greece, and all of its gulf, and the Euripus gulf, and part of the first and second Thessaly, also Pelasgous, Viti up to the foot of Kissavos and all of Dimitriada, Magnesia and the villages of the Thermaikos gulf towards the east, and the mountains of Pelion and the neighbouring eastern islands of Argalasti up to the great Limnos.

At the same time, he designates with great accuracy the date and method of composition of his work, “written during 1815 from June 1, and completed in that year, October 15 and written by hand, walking from place to place [...]. 1815”.<sup>3</sup>

Thus Philippidis’ *Μερική Γεωγραφία* covers a large section of Central Greece, extending from today’s prefectures of Boetia, Fthiotida, Magnesia and Larissa, as well as a section of the island regions which neighbour the mainland shores of these districts (specifically, parts of the shoreline regions of central and northern Evia, the northern Sporades, Agios Efstratios and Limnos). The locations included in his description, as he alleges, are those which he visited on foot during a four and a half month period in the summer and autumn of 1815.

### *The Settlements*

The settlement was the central element in Philippidis’ narrative.<sup>4</sup> In total, he records by name 232 settlements, while at the same time he indicates the existence of a few more, which are not identified by name.<sup>5</sup> He also records, but not in the same systematic manner, harbours, monasteries, mountain

<sup>3</sup> Sperantas, *Τα περισωθέντα έργα*, p. 51 (and the photographic reproduction of the handwritten text, p. 19).

<sup>4</sup> In the following text, the transliteration of the names of the settlements follows the Greek Standard of ELOT 743, 2nd edition.

<sup>5</sup> For an analytical catalogue of these settlements (in Greek), see the website at [http://www.eie.gr/nhrf/institutes/inr/structure/sectionb2/Filippidis\\_oikismoi.pdf](http://www.eie.gr/nhrf/institutes/inr/structure/sectionb2/Filippidis_oikismoi.pdf).

passages (dervens), inns and bazaars, which operated in the regions that were within the range of his interest. The 232 settlements recorded in *Μερικὴ Γεωγραφία* are distributed, in terms of contemporary administrative units, in the following prefectures:

Prefecture of Boetia	32 settlements
Prefecture of Evia	18 settlements
Prefecture of Larissa	45 settlements
Prefecture of Lesbos	2 settlements
Prefecture of Magnesia	71 settlements
Prefecture of Fthiotida	64 settlements

This numerical evaluation in no case reflects the density of the settlement complex by region. The representativeness of the prefectures is not equivalent. This is mainly due to the fact that Philippidis, in his work, traversed only portions of the above prefectures (see map p. 344). It also arises from the variations that can be observed in terms of the accuracy of his descriptions and his personal knowledge, which was not the same for all of the regions. Notable is the example of his different approach to Pelion, a region which had a dense population: since it was his home territory, his knowledge enabled him to make more extensive and exhaustive descriptions. The same applies to the broader region of Magnesia, the only contemporary prefecture which Philippidis covered in its totality. In certain circumstances, on the other hand, Philippidis' descriptions are not exhaustive, since there are identifiable omissions of settlements known from other sources within the geographic regions which are the target of his observations. An illustrative example is the passage about Velestino towards Farsala, a region which apparently did not win Philippidis' attention. Leake mentions villages – such as Geremi (now Xerolithi), Soupli (now Agia Triada), Tziragi and Odoklari (unidentified), Hatzomasi (now Yperia), Orfana Kousmpasan (now Nea Lefki) and Plasia –<sup>6</sup> which are missing from Philippidis' text.

Aside from the 232 settlements that he identifies by name, he also occasionally mentions villages that he does not name. These few instances are typically located at the borders of the regions that interest him, being

---

<sup>6</sup> W. M. Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, Vol. IV, reprint Amsterdam 1967, pp. 451-452, and the Greek translation “Ταξίδι στη Θεσσαλία του 1809-1810” [Travels in Thessaly in 1809-1810], transl. V. Argyroulis, commentary K. Spanos, *Θεσσαλικό Ημερολόγιο* XXXVI (1999), pp. 114-115.

also frequently settlements with Muslim populations. These latter ones, as we see also from the maps that Philippidis included in his text, do not enjoy the same attention as the Christian settlements and are sometimes declared to be simply “Turkish villages” without their names being mentioned.

Let us return, however, to the 232 settlements that Philippidis lists by name. Only a small portion of these settlements is not identified with certainty. At this point, we will confine ourselves to some cumulative numerical data:<sup>7</sup>

- 7 settlements (3% of the total) have not been located from later sources.

- 19 settlements (8.2%) are found in the official data of the first half of the nineteenth century, but it has not been possible to locate their exact place on the map and determine their later fate. They are settlements that, in the administrative sense of the term, have ceased to exist. Presumably some of them dispersed or were abandoned by their inhabitants; others perhaps were incorporated into stronger neighbouring settlements. The settlement of Kastro in Skiathos is a verified instance of desertion.<sup>8</sup>

- 14 of the settlements that Philippidis mentions (6%) were abolished by formal acts of the Greek State, primarily in the second half of the twentieth century. The main reason for abolition appears to be, not desertion or abandonment by inhabitants, but their administrative elimination through their incorporation into some larger neighbouring settlement.

These data demonstrate that the vast majority of the settlements that Philippidis mentioned in 1815 continued to exist as independent settlement units two centuries later. In fact, even among those settlements which have ceased to exist as administrative units, a large portion of them, in all likelihood, continue to constitute populated areas, which are administratively incorporated into other settlements. The settlement points have thus remained constant, and the settlements have shown themselves to be exceptionally durable through time. If placed over a contemporary map, the settlement complex, as developed by Philippidis, would show only minor differences with the contemporary one, since towns and important villages would not be missing. Also of interest is the fact that the villages demonstrate exceptional

---

<sup>7</sup> Hypotheses regarding their possible location, likely identity and subsequent development are attempted in the tables that have been posted on the website detailed in note 5 above.

<sup>8</sup> Kastro, which is found on a small peninsula in the northern reaches of the island, was abandoned, according to the local literature, in 1829 and today remains uninhabited and in ruins, while the main town of Chora was moved to the location where it exists today. (T. Evangelidis, *Η νήσος Σκιάθος και οι περί αυτήν νησίδες* [The island of Skiathos and surrounding isles], Athens 1913, pp. 39-40; I. Frangoulas, *Σκιαθίτικα, Α': Ιστορία της Σκιάθου* [Skiathitika, I: History of Skiathos], Athens 1978, pp. 32-33.)

durability even though the primary type of settlement – as we shall see more analytically below – is no more than 100 houses, while a significant portion of these settlements consist of a few dozen homes.

The stability that can be seen in the points of settlement is not reflected, however, in the names of the settlements. As is well known, Greek State authorities carried out, frequently with the cooperation or, in any case, the expressed opinion of local factors, massive renaming, in order to abolish place-names of foreign linguistic origin. This process began with the foundation of the Greek State and continued up to the middle of the twentieth century, with an intensity that varied by period and with emphasis on the successive new regions that were incorporated into the Greek State.<sup>9</sup> Of the 232 settlements, Philippidis mentions that 76 have had their names changed, which is 32.7% of the total.<sup>10</sup> This proportion is considerable and does not deflect significantly from some initial measurements regarding the totality of Greece.<sup>11</sup>

### *Settlements and Population Indicators*

Philippidis systematically provides the reader with information on the number of houses or, alternatively, in a few instances, with the number of

---

<sup>9</sup> The process followed in acts of renaming by the special committee formed at the beginning of the twentieth century has been described by people who participated in the committee, such as S. Kyriakidis, *Οδηγία δια την μετονομασίαν κοινοτήτων και συνοικισμών εχόντων τουρκικών ή σλαβικών όνομα* [Guide to the renaming of communities and neighbourhoods having Turkish or Slavic names], Athens 1926; and N. G. Politis (ed.), *Γνωμοδοτήσεις περί μετονομασίας συνοικισμών και κοινοτήτων* [Expert opinions regarding the renaming of neighbourhoods and communities], Athens 1920. The Institute for Neohellenic Research of the National Research Foundation of Greece, in the context of the programme “Historical Study of Settlements in Greece, 15th-20th Centuries”, has created the Name Changes of Settlements in Greece database, which aims to record the name changes effected through official decisions between 1913 and 1996. It has been posted on the website <http://pandektis.ekt.gr/dspace>.

<sup>10</sup> To this number has not been added variations of official names related to those given by Philippidis, for example, Ritsona vs Philippidis’ Ritziona, Karya vs Kargia, Atalanti vs Talanti, etc.

<sup>11</sup> An initial count has shown that, from 1912 to 1961, of a total of approximately 11,000 settlements of the Greek State, 3400 were renamed, that is, 31% of the total. See L. Kallivretakis, “Η σήμανση του χώρου. Κυκλαδικά τοπωνύμια (13ος-20ός αι.)” [The marking of spaces: Cycladic place-names (13th-20th centuries)], in *Κυκλάδες Ιστορία του τοπίου και τοπικές ιστορίες. Από το φυσικό περιβάλλον στο ιστορικό τοπίο* [Cycladic history of the land and local histories: from the natural environment to the historical realm], ed. Lina Mendoni and N. Margaritis, Athens 1998, p. 59.

families of the settlements he lists. He thus offers evidence of the population of villages and towns based on his own knowledge and, most likely, his personal perception based on his contact with the locale and the people. As a consequence, we are dealing with authentic and valuable information, especially because other sources for the period are neither adequate nor particularly credible.

Nonetheless, Philippidis' priority was not to evaluate with accuracy the population, but to give a full picture of the size of every village or town. Typically, all of the numbers that he includes end with either zero or five, a fact that constitutes strong evidence that they were not derived from an actual count. Furthermore, the fact that we are dealing with an estimate of the size of the settlement is explicitly admitted by Philippidis himself in phrases such as "up to houses", when he wants to show that the houses of a settlement approach but do not surpass a certain number; "over houses", when he wants to show that it surpasses that number slightly; and more rarely "up to and more houses", most probably to show that the likelihood of surpassing a certain number is great. As a result, we are dealing with orders of size that offer an estimate of tens or hundreds of houses when we are dealing with large settlements; the author's decision to gradate in a consistent and systematic manner his estimates – speaking of 10, 20, 30, 50 or 100 houses, etc. – provides consistent evidence of the size and, as a consequence, the population of the settlements. It should be noted that this practice applies also to the information concerning the distances separating neighbouring settlements. In this case, Philippidis designated the distance in full hours, avoiding chronological subdivisions. As a result, the practice that Philippidis in general followed was to filter his information and present the reader with the results. In this manner, an information complex was formed, which, while lacking in accuracy, nonetheless provides the reader with a coherent body of basic information.

Table 1 presents the distribution of the 232 settlements that Philippidis mentions, based on the number of houses that he attributes to them (in order to facilitate the uniform examination of the information, the small number of settlements for which the author gives the number of families, rather than the number of houses, have been included in the corresponding gradations of the table).

Table 1  
Distribution of settlements based on their size

Number of houses/families	Settlements	%
Up to 20	34	15.7
20+ up to 50	74	34.3
50+ up to 100	37	17.1
100+ up to 200	27	12.5
200+ up to 500	27	12.5
500+ up to 1000	10	4.6
1000 and above	7	3.3
TOTAL	216	100.0
Without numerical indicator	16	—

Note: In the distribution of houses the following practice has been followed: when Philippidis mentions that a settlement has “above” 50 houses or families, it is included in the category 50+ up to 100 houses; when he mentions “above” 100, it is included in the category 100+ up to 200, etc. By the same token, when he mentions that a particular settlement has up to 50 houses, that is included in the category 20+ up to 50 houses, etc.

Source: Sperantsas, *Τα περισωθέντα έργα*.

The data from the Table 1 show that, at least according to the estimates of Philippidis, small-sized settlements not exceeding 100 houses or 100 families predominated in this region of Greece; the number of settlements of this size corresponds to 67.1% of the 216 settlements for which he gives numerical elements. A notable portion of these settlements are, in practice, microscopic clusters of houses that did not exceed 20 residences (15.7%), which, in all likelihood, were larger, since the absence of mention concerned mainly those settlements that, due to their size, were either considered not worth mentioning or escaped the notice of the passerby. The number of settlements that according to Philippidis had 100-500 houses (54 settlements or 25% of the total) is also significant.

By contrast, a few settlements – a total of ten – have between 500 and 1000 houses, and indeed it is interesting that, even though island regions are not central to his narrative, four out of seven settlements in this category are on islands. Towns having more than 1000 houses are: Larissa (up to 8000 houses), Evripos, now Chalkida (more than 2000 houses), Livadeia (more than 2000),

Limni on Evia (more than 1200),<sup>12</sup> Thebes (more than 1000), Limnos (more than 1000) and Skopelos (more than 1000). Zitouni, now Lamia, which Philippidis characterized as “the first country of Greece”, should in all likelihood have been included in this last category, but he did not give an estimate of its population. Other sources of the period, however, agree on the existence of a strong urban centre; Pouqueville wrote that it had 1810 families (1060 Turkish families, 700 Greek and 50 bohemian), while Leake said 3000 Turks and 2000 Greeks, and I. Leonardos 3000 Greeks.<sup>13</sup> It should also be noted that Philippidis did not estimate the number of houses for two other strong settlements: Ampelakia (500-600 houses, according to other sources of the period) and Almyros (around 300 houses).

The numerical data do not disagree with those arising from other comparable sources for the period. The processing of the information, for instance, provided by Pouqueville for a larger region covering the main portion of Central Greece and smaller portions of Thessaly, Epirus and western Macedonia shows that, for a sample of 1261 settlements, 72.7% had up to 49 houses and 85.9% from 1 up to 99 houses. Also, 11.6% of the settlements had 100-499 houses, 1.5% from 500-999 houses and only 1.0% more than 1000.<sup>14</sup> If the numerical data from the work of Pouqueville are compared with those of Philippidis, as summarized in Table 1, it becomes clear that the two authors converge in terms of their general direction, which appears to mark the reality of the region of Greece at the beginning of the nineteenth century: the majority of settlements were of small dimensions and did not exceed 100 houses, a significant portion had from 100 to 500 houses, a few had 500 to 1000 houses, and only a very few cities had more residents than this last figure.

Despite this agreement, it is well defined in Pouqueville that the presence of smaller settlements is stronger. Two reasons, I believe, bring about the creation of this difference. The first reason is connected with Pouqueville’s observational field, which includes regions such as western Central

---

<sup>12</sup> The number of houses in Limni is impressive. Indeed, Philippidis (Sperantsas, *Τα περιωθέντα έργα*, p. 55) claims that, during the era of Sultan Abdul Hamit, many of its residents migrated to Skiathos, a fact that is confirmed from other sources.

<sup>13</sup> F.-C.-H.-L. Pouqueville, *Voyage de la Grèce*, Vol. IV, Paris 1826, p. 82; Leake, *Travels*, Vol. II, pp. 1-2; I. Leonardos, *Νεωτάτη της Θεσσαλίας χωρογραφία* [Contemporary chorography of Thessaly], ed. K. Spanos, Larissa 1992 (1st edition, Pesti 1836), p. 40.

<sup>14</sup> The figures come from the enumeration by D. Anogiatis-Pele, “Δημογραφικές πληροφορίες για την Ελλάδα από περιηγητές (1800-1820)” [Demographic information about Greece from travellers (1800-1820)], *Μνήμων* X (1985), pp. 8 and 22, table 6. See also Dimitris Dimitropoulos, “Η κατάσταση των Ελλήνων. Ο πληθυσμός” [The state of the Greeks: the population], in *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού, 1770-2000* [History of Neohellenism, 1770-2000], ed. V. Panayotopoulos, Vol. I, Athens 2004, p. 80.

Greece and Epirus, where the still small or, rather, microscopic village was dominant, while, by contrast, Philippidis gives weight to Thessaly and mainly Magnesia, where the settlements were larger. The second reason, however, must be sought in the origins of the available sources, since Philippidis based himself on his personal perceptions, while Pouqueville included data from some registries of indeterminate origin. These latter sources, since they in all likelihood were used for tax purposes by the Ottoman administration or Greek communities, record entities for taxation and not actual houses, with the result, on the one hand, that the numbers preserved presumably depart from actuality, and, on the other, included every residential unit that was an object of taxation, independent of its size.

The totality of houses, or of families, of the 216 settlements for which Philippidis provided numerical data adds up to 39,719.<sup>15</sup> The conversion from this number to reliable population data is not easy. In all likelihood, however, their population must have approached 160,000 to 200,000 inhabitants. As a result, it appears that the region of Central Greece included in Philippidis' observational field, given the conditions of the period, contained an important human resource.

#### *Comparison with Other Sources – Checking Credibility*

The first question generated by a sojourn through Philippidis' writings regarding the settlement populations has to do with the credibility of his evidence. The answer to that question cannot be isolated from the level of knowledge and the cultural environment of the place and time when Philippidis wrote his work. Obviously, it is not possible to apply contemporary criteria for the credibility of recording populations to the case of *Μερική Γεωγραφία*. Moreover, Philippidis nowhere states that his population information is the result of counting. He simply communicates his sense of the region and its inhabitants. Hence, the question is whether this sense conveys the reality and if it conforms with population information at a comparable level with similar origins. The region of Magnesia constitutes a good case for such a check, since, on the one hand, the descriptions of *Μερική Γεωγραφία* for this locale are exhaustive and, on the other hand, other evidence and data exist dating from roughly the same period, allowing for comparison. Table 2 gathers evidence on this issue, which dates from the end of the eighteenth century to the decade of 1830.

---

<sup>15</sup> This number is the total of the numerical data provided by Philippidis. It does not take into account his statements mentioned above in which he declared that the number of houses in a particular village is smaller or larger than the one he noted.

Table 2  
Evidence for the population of settlements in Magnesia

Settlement	Dimitrieis 1791	W. M. Leake 1805-1810	A. Philippidis 1815	I. Oikonomou 1817	G. Konstantas 1828	I. Leonardos 1836	G. Konstantas 1838
Agios Georgios		400	400+		350		400
Agios Georgios Velestinou			80+	100	120		300
Agios Lavrentios	400	400	300+		350		400
Anilion	100		150+		180		
Argalasti	400	400-500	500+		600		500
Bir			30+		80		
Bistinika (Xinovrysi)			80+				30
Drakia	600	600	400-		100	300	600
Kamara			20+		20		
Kanalia		200	200+		300		300
Kapourna (Glafyra)		50	80+		200		80
Karampasi			50-		150		
Katichori	100		150+		250		150
Katzilochori			20+		50		
Keramidi			150+		200	200	200
Kerasia			70-80-		150		80
Kissos			250+		350		
Lafkos			500+		600		300
Lampinou			50+		100		
Lechonia, Dothe			60+40 +*				
Lechonia, Pera		400**	60+40 +*		300**		
Makria Rachi			100+		120		
Makrinitisa***	1400	1200	800+		1500	1000	1000
Metochi			70+		200		60
Milies	300	300	300+		350		350
Mitzela			150+		300		
Mourisi			100+		200		
Nechori	280	280	200+		300		300

*On the Settlement Complex of Central Greece*

333

Settlement	Dimitrieis 1791	W. M. Leake 1805-1810	A. Philippidis 1815	I. Oikonomou 1817	G. Konstantas 1828	I. Leonardos 1836	G. Konstantas 1838
Niaou (Afetes)			80+		100		150
Pinakates	100	100	120+		200		150
Pori			80+		200		30-40
Portaria	600	700	300+		600	1000	600
Promyri			250+		700		250-300
Propantos			100+		200		200
Servan[ates]					20		
Seskoulon		50	150+		200		
Stageates***			80+		150		100
Strof[i]los			3 houses		80		
Syki			80+		100		100
Trikeri	300	300-400	300+		550		400
Tsangarada	400		400+		500		400
Veneton			50+		150		50
Volos [Ano]****	700	700	600-		600		700
Volou, Kastro			100+*		200	100	
Volou, Perivolia					50		
Vyzitsa	100	100	120+		200		200
Xorichti			15-20+		80		40
Zagora	500	500	800+		600	500	500

Notes:

\*: A. Philippidis cites families.

\*\*: The estimates of W. M. Leake and G. Konstantas most likely are in regard to the two settlements of Lechonia.

\*\*\*: The Stageates are in some cases mentioned as a quarter of Makrinita. Leake presumably included it in the number of houses he provided, since he mentioned four quarters.

\*\*\*\*: Leake combined Kastro and Perivolia in the number of houses he gives for Volos (see Leake, *Travels*, p. 373). For Perivolia, he agreed with A. Philippidis that summer homes of Turks from Kastro existed there.

Sources: D. Philippidis and Gr. Konstantas, *Νεωτερικῆς Γεωγραφίας* [Modern geography], Vienna 1791, reprinted, ed. Aikaterini Koumariou, Athens 1988.

Leake, *Travels*.

Sperantsas, *Τα περιωθέντα έργα*.

I. Oikonomou Larissian Logiotatos, *I. Αληθινή ιστορία του Λουκιανού Σαμοσατέως, II. Ιστορική τοπογραφία ενός μέρους της Θεσσαλίας, 1817* [The true history of Lucian Samosateos, II. Historical topography of a portion of Thessaly, 1817] ed. M. M. Papaioannou, Athens 1989.

Leonardos, *Νεωτάτη της Θεσσαλίας χωρογραφία*.

G. Thomas, *Η ανέκδοτη χωρογραφία της ανατ. Θεσσαλίας από το Γρηγόριο Κωνσταντά. Ένα χειρόγραφο του 1838* [Unpublished chorography of eastern Thessaly by Gregorios Konstantas: a manuscript of 1838], Volos 1991.

V. Skouvaras, "Η Θεσσαλομαγνησία στα 1828" [Thessalomagnesia in 1828], *Από το λειμώνα της παράδοσης. Πηλιορείτικα Α'* [From the fields of tradition: Pilioritika I], Athens 1981, p. 188.

The sources from the period include data of uneven quality and density regarding the village populations of Magnesia, since some dealt with the issue systematically, while others, here and there, provided sporadically some quantitative estimates. The most important of these sources, aside from *Μερική Γεωγραφία*, are as follows:

- a) *Νεωτερικῆς Γεωγραφίας* by Daniel Philippidis and Gregorios Konstantas, (well known as Dimitrieis, Vienna 1791). The authors were from Milies and, as a consequence, were well acquainted with the region. Their information on the population, however, is fragmentary, since, it appears, that issue was not among their priorities.
- b) The work of W. M. Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*. Its four volumes were published in London in 1835, but the data it contains derived from the author's travels in the region in 1805. Of interest is the fact that Leake's information on the population coincides almost entirely with that of Konstantas and Philippidis' *Γεωγραφίας*. Specifically, of the twelve instances of settlements whose populations are cited in both sources, the authors' estimates in ten of them are identical, while in the other two, their differences are minor. It follows that, likely, Leake tacitly derived his data from *Νεωτερικῆς Γεωγραφίας* itself or from persons familiar with it.
- c) The report that G. Konstantas wrote in 1828, on orders from I. Kapodistrias. In this report, Konstantas records the totality of villages in the region and provides an estimate of their populations. The numbers he included as a rule exceed those of other sources and those which he himself cites ten years later in the *Γεωγραφία* [Geography] he co-authored. This divergence is explainable in that the author, when he wrote his report, was distant from the region, working as a teacher in the Aegina Orphanage and, clearly, included whatever data he recalled from memory. Furthermore, it was predictable that it would overestimate the Greek population, since the report was apparently intended

– as shown from the discovery of a French translation –<sup>16</sup> to be submitted to the European Great Powers in order to promote the demand of the newly founded Greek State for including the region within its domain.

- d) The manuscript *Γεωγραφία* composed by the now elderly Konstantas in 1838, at the request of King Otto. The work remained unpublished. In this text, Konstantas' estimates of village populations occasionally coincide with the older ones, stated by the same author, a decade earlier, but more frequently differ. Specifically, Konstantas provides population estimates for 30 settlements, both in his text of 1828 and that of 1838: in 1838 he cites smaller populations in seventeen cases, large populations in five, and the same populations in eight. Thus it seems that Konstantas, when he finally had returned to his region in 1838, re-estimated the village populations of the area and gave a picture that, in all likelihood, was closer to the real situation. It is interesting that the divergences are usually minor, but in some cases significant differences can be observed. Hence, for example, while in 1828 he estimated Drakia to have 100 houses, in 1838 he talked of 600, or, by contrast, in 1828 Promyri was presented as having 700 houses, and 250-300 in 1838; Veneto 150, and then 50; Metochi 200, and subsequently 60; Pori 200, then 30-40, etc.
- e) *Νεωτάτη τῆς Θεσσαλίας χωρογραφία* by I. Leonardos. The work was published in 1836, but its population citations are limited to a few settlements. In 1817 Oikonomou, in his *Ιστορική τοπογραφία ἐνὸς μέρους τῆς Θετταλίας*, cited only the number of houses for the settlement of Agios Georgios in Velestino.

The numerical data that the authors include show that, with the exceptions of Konstantas-D. Philippidis and Leake already noted, copying has not been detected. If one attempts to compare the numerical data that Philippidis provided with that of other sources, it turns out that, while their estimates often diverge significantly, occasional convergences can be identified. Of particular importance is the comparison of Philippidis' data with that of his compatriot, Konstantas, since the latter also included in his listings nearly all the villages of the region. The frequency with which the estimates of Philippidis converge or diverge from those of Dimitrieis, Leake and Konstantas is presented in Table 3.

---

<sup>16</sup> S. Papadopoulos, "Ένα υπόμνημα του Γρηγορίου Κωνσταντά για το Πήλιο" [A memorandum by G. Konstantas about Pelion], *Επετηρίς Ιδρύματος Νεοελληνικών Σπουδών* V (1987-1988), pp. 85-98.

Table 3  
 Convergences and divergences among A. Philippidis and Konstantas-Philippidis,  
 Leake and Konstantas regarding village populations

Settlements	Philippidis – Dimitris	Philippidis – Leake	Philippidis – Konstantas, 1828	Philippidis – Konstantas, 1838
Mentioned in both:	15	16	44	31
Population = with A. Philippidis	3	5	2	8
Population > with A. Philippidis	6	5	39	18
Population < with A. Philippidis	6	7	3	5
Divergence:	12	12	42	23
Up to 50%	6	7	14	11
50-100%	5	5	10	7
More than 100%	1	1	18	5

Sources: Cf. the sources for Table 2.

The first impression from reading Table 3 is that divergence predominates. Indeed, A. Philippidis' estimates for the populations of the villages of Magnesia, when compared to other sources of the period, show differences, either in overestimating or underestimating the populations. That assessment would be precise if we were dealing with data of a statistical nature. But that is not the case with our sources, particularly, indeed, because that was not the concern of those who composed them. They articulated generalized estimates deriving either from simple observation of the region or from their general knowledge of the region. In addition, the sense of divergence is heightened by the fact that the numbers are small. Thus, if one source cites a village as having around 20 houses and another 40, the difference comes to 100%, but that percentage probably distorts the reality, since the writers did not claim to have counted accurately the houses of the settlement, but simply wanted, through a numerical indicator, to give a picture of their size. In this way, while they give the impression of disagreeing entirely, in reality they converge, in

substance, in the estimate that they found themselves in a small village with a small number of houses.

Nonetheless, the numerical indications of Table 3 have, to my mind, some value. First of all, they show that there are numerous convergences between the estimates of A. Philippidis and those of the Dimitrieis, Leake and the 1838 text of Konstantas. By contrast, the 1828 report by Konstantas differs significantly, since it systematically overstated populations. Note, indeed, that the changes which Konstantas presented in 1838, from what he had maintained ten years prior, usually bring his estimates closer to those of Philippidis. For example, Philippidis maintained that the village of Promyri had about 250 houses, and Konstantas in 1828 that it had 700 houses, but in 1838 about 250-300. Similar is the example of the village of Trikeri. Here Philippidis mentioned that there were more than 300 houses, while Konstantas, in his first text, has 550 and 400 in his second. There are, of course, some instances where Konstantas' second estimate is distant from that of Philippidis (such as the villages of Agios Georgios in Velestino, Lafkos, etc.).

A second feature is that few divergences exceed 100%. This feature indicates that the general picture that the authors had of the settlements was in rough terms the same. For example, a belief common to all was that Makrinitza constituted, in that period, the strongest settlement of the region, clearly having more residents than Volos, while they agreed on their estimate that the populations of such villages as Zagora, Portaria and Tsangarada were significant. Nevertheless, some strong villages of Pelion can be identified for which Philippidis' estimates diverged significantly from the other available sources. For example, while all of the sources agree that Zagora had 500-600 houses, Philippidis estimated them to be more than 800. In reverse mode to Makrinitza, while the other sources put the number of houses from 1000-1500, Philippidis estimated them to be roughly 800,<sup>17</sup> but also in Portaria, for which Philippidis made an assessment of 300 houses, while the rest converge on 600-700.

The greatest divergence from Philippidis' data arises if they are compared with what Konstantas presented in 1828, which is due to reasons already noted. In the other three sources, the convergences are stronger and all three appear in similar proportion. This feature, in combination with the relatively stable number of houses which are attributed to the settlements, is an indication

---

<sup>17</sup> To some degree, the difference is due to the fact that Philippidis estimated separately the approximately 80 houses of the settlement of Stageates. The settlement, which as mentioned earlier some regarded as a quarter of Makrinitza, is also estimated separately by Konstantas in both of his texts.

that we do not have important population changes in the region of Magnesia during the approximately 50 years between the publication of *Νεωτερικῆς Γεωγραφίας* in 1791 and the composition of Konstantas' *Γεωγραφία* in 1838.

#### *The Religious Parameter*

Data relating to religious issues were a fundamental concern for Philippidis. His interest was focused on two matters: a) the religion of the inhabitants, and b) the religious classification of Christian settlements, through their registration in the metropolitan church to which they belonged. The first datum is recorded consistently for nearly all of the settlements, while the second is recorded less systematically, but nevertheless for an adequate number of them. As has already been noted above, Philippidis did not deal with settlements occupied by Muslims – “Turks” or “Ottomans”, to use his own vocabulary – with the same attention he gave to those occupied by Christians. Thus, he frequently omitted mentioning the names of Turkish settlements or the number of homes of which they consisted, while in his cartographic sketches, as already noted, he sometimes simply declared them to be “Turkish villages”, without further clarification. Aside from this selective treatment and the underestimate of the Muslim population, his evidence is valuable because it records in general terms the proportion of Christians and Muslims in a broad area of the Greek realm on the eve of the 1821 Revolution, providing at the same time a picture of the graduation of their presence in the towns and countryside. A numerical estimation of Christian, mixed and Muslim settlements, in relation to their size, is presented in Table 4.

Table 4  
Distribution of Christian, mixed and Muslim settlements

Number of houses/ families	Christian	Mixed	Muslim	Not designated
Up to 100	132	7	4	2
100+ to 500	47	4	2	1
500+ to 1000	8	1		1
1000+	1	5		1
Without numerical indication	7	3	6	
TOTAL	195	20	12	5
%	84.0	8.6	5.2	2.2

Source: Sperantsas, *Τα περισωθέντα έργα*.

According to the account in Philippidis' text, and with the assistance of the summary attempted in Table 4, the following national and religious groups identified in the region can be noted:

- a) The vast majority (84.0%) of the 232 settlements recorded by Philippidis were occupied by Christians. 8.6% of the settlements were occupied by a mixed Christian and Muslim population,<sup>18</sup> while there was also a small portion of settlements, only 5.2%, which were occupied exclusively by Muslims. The presence of a Jewish population was noted for two cities only: Chalkida and Larissa.<sup>19</sup>
- b) Christian settlements are totally predominant among the small settlements not exceeding 100 houses. The presence of mixed settlements is stronger among the larger villages with up to 500 houses, as well as among the towns with 500-1000

<sup>18</sup> The punctuation that the publisher of *Μερική Γεωγραφία* chose would require us to include in settlements with a mixed population one more, Drakia. Specifically, he transcribed the following passage: "This region has up to 400 houses, Christian for the most part. They are large and good, as in Portarias..." (Sperantsas, *Τα περισωθέντα έργα*, p. 156). I believe that the correct punctuation is: "This region has up to 400 houses, Christian. Most of them are large and good, as in Portarias...". Hence on the relevant table, the settlement is considered to be Christian.

<sup>19</sup> Philippidis was prejudiced and nurtured great antipathy towards the Jews. He thus embellished them with characterisations like "merciless race of humanity" and "God-cursed" and "abhorrent to humanity"; see Sperantsas, *Τα περισωθέντα έργα*, pp. 122-123.

houses. The situation is totally the opposite for cities exceeding 1000 houses, where all – with the exception of the island town of Skopelos – have a mixed, Christian and Muslim population. The facts that come out of Philippidis' inventory confirm the distinction between Christian agricultural countryside and Muslim towns. The latter, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, had acquired a mixed population, as the strong "siege" that they had undergone offered the possibility for the Christian element to infiltrate into their shell and stabilize within it.<sup>20</sup>

- c) Aside from what, for the times, were strong towns of more than 1000 houses, mixed Christian and Muslim populations were concentrated in isolated residential settlements, built as a rule at low elevations, which, although not having numerous residents, appear to have had a dynamism. Such vigour is indicated by their subsequent development, since among them were included Almyros, Istiaia, Atalanti, Domokos, Farsala, Velestino and Volos (the latter with two distinctive sections, a Christian town and a Turkish fort). By contrast, the few unmixed Muslim settlements that were explicitly named by Philippidis consisted rather of clusters of villages in the contemporary prefectures of Larissa and Magnesia,<sup>21</sup> were in flatlands, had few houses and were found at a small distance from some urban centre with a strong Muslim presence (for example, the settlements of Bampas, Megalo and Mikro Kisirli near Larissa; Strofilos, Pera and Dothe Lechonia near Volos).
- d) Estimates of the region's total Muslim population are not easy. This difficulty arises largely from the fact that the main body of Muslims was concentrated in towns and other relatively large settlements with mixed populations, where in general the proportions of the two religious groups were not clarified. This problem is intensified by the sparse information about Muslim settlements

---

<sup>20</sup> On this issue, see V. Panayotopoulos "Ο οικονομικός χώρος των Ελλήνων στα χρόνια της οθωμανικής κυριαρχίας" [The economic realm of the Greeks in the years of Ottoman dominance], in the collective volume *Πληθυσμοί και οικισμοί του ελληνικού χώρου. Ιστορικά μελετήματα* [Populations and settlements in the Greek realm: historical studies], Τετράδια Εργασίας 18, Athens 2003, pp. 29-31, 41-42, 47.

<sup>21</sup> Turkish place-names, according to the map composed by H. Kiepert, are given for the plain of Larissa, the plain of Almyros, the central mountains and the southern section of the plain of Karditsa. To the contrary, they are not given at all for the coastal mountain chains of the Aegean from Lower Olympus to Pelion and are missing entirely from the western section of the Sophaditikos Valley; H. Kiepert *Die neue Griechische-Türkische Grenze, Zeitschrift für Erdkunde*, Berlin 1882; see M. Sivignon, *Θεσσαλία. Γεωγραφική ανάλυση μιας ελληνικής περιφέρειας* [Thessaly: the geographic analysis of a Greek region], transl. Julie Anastopoulos, Athens 1992, pp. 122 and 124.

that, as noted above, Philippidis offered in his inventory. By all means, the predominance of the Muslim element remains unquestioned in some large cities. For example, while Larissa, according to the author of *Μετρική Γεωγραφία*, had “up to 8000 houses”, the city’s local Christian families were about 400 and Jewish families 200, but there were also many “foreign guests”, that is, Christians who had settled in the town from other regions. Likewise, the total number of houses in Chalkida was more than 2000, and while the Christian families were limited to around 150, there was an undetermined, but in any case limited number of Jews.<sup>22</sup>

At any rate, the Muslim element at the beginning of the nineteenth century was continuously in decline. This decline is manifest, in the first instance, with the shrinking population, which apparently began to grow from at least the middle of the eighteenth century.<sup>23</sup> As Philippidis noted, for example, in Hatzompasi, while “initially everyone was Turkish, now only two or three families remain”, in Kileler the Turks “were initially many, now...have become few”, and in Velestino “they were killed, one after another, and very few, and misfortunate, have remained”.<sup>24</sup> The decline of Muslims, however, is evident in the notations of their poverty and the decay of their places of worship in such regions as Farsala or Loufklar (now Kalamaki in Larissa).<sup>25</sup> Also of effective significance in the decline of the Ottoman element is the repeated observation about the predominance of the Greek language, which the Muslims are said to have adopted in their everyday dealings among those living in the towns and villages of Zitouni (“The Turks there all speak the language of the Christians”), in Talanti (“In the language which [the Turks] speak, no one knows that they are Turkish”), in Domokos (“Their language

---

<sup>22</sup> See Sperantas, *Τα περιωθέντα έργα*, pp. 116, 120, 122 (for Larissa), pp. 53-54 (for Chalkida).

<sup>23</sup> See Leake, *Travels*, Vol. III, p. 347 (for Elassona), pp. 353-354 (for Tirnavo), Vol. IV, pp. 279-280 (Trikala), etc. Also R. Lawless, “Η οικονομία και ο χώρος της Θεσσαλίας κατά την Τουρκοκρατία” [The economy and region of Thessaly during Turkish rule], *Τρικαλινά* I (1981), pp. 45, 53; Sivignon, *Θεσσαλία*, pp. 124-125. It appears, indeed, that particularly from the period when Ali Pasha was installed in power and following, the departure of the Turkish population from districts of Thessaly swelled.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. correspondingly Sperantas, *Τα περιωθέντα έργα*, pp. 126 and 129.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 114, 137. Leake also noted other cases of small villages, such as Ketzeli (now Microthebes) and Aidinion, near Almyros, which earlier were settled by “Koniari” Turks and by his time had Greek populations, despite the fact that land ownership remained largely in Turkish hands. Leake, *Travels*, Vol. IV, pp. 357-358.

is all Christian”) or in Lechonia (“They do not speak the language of their parents, but Romaic”).<sup>26</sup>

### *Plain and Mountain Settlements*

The identification of the large majority of the settlements mentioned in *Μερική Γεωγραφία* affords the possibility of following their location in geographical relief. Specifically, it is feasible to determine the elevations of 195 settlements (Table 5 presents their distribution). It is also noted that, since the identification of the settlements did not arise out of on-site research, but from a variety of recorded data, the elevations refer to the locations of the settlements as those are conveyed by recent, census-type sources. These elevations, of course, in general terms are identical to those of the same-named settlements from the beginning of the nineteenth century, except in cases where there were shifts to neighbouring positions without any indications in the written sources.

Table 5  
Distribution of settlements and populations based on elevation

Elevation	Settlements							Houses-Families	
	a	b	c	d	e	Total	%	Total	%
Up to 100 m.	49	12	2	5	7	75	38.3	18,716	48.6
101 - 200 m.	27	6	2	2	4	41	20.9	7220	18.7
201 - 300 m.	16	10	1		2	29	14.8	3308	8.6
301 - 400 m.	14	4	2		1	21	10.7	2923	7.6
401 - 500 m.	6	6	1			13	6.6	2525	6.6
501 - 600 m.	3	8	1			12	6.1	3165	8.2
Up to 600 m.	3	2				5	2.6	640	1.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>38,497</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Not determined	32	2			2	36		1222	

Notes:

a: Settlements that have up to 100 houses-families

b: Settlements that have more than 100 and up to 500 houses-families

c: Settlements that have more than 500 and up to 1000 houses-families

d: Settlements that have more than 1000 houses-families

e: Number of houses-families not noted

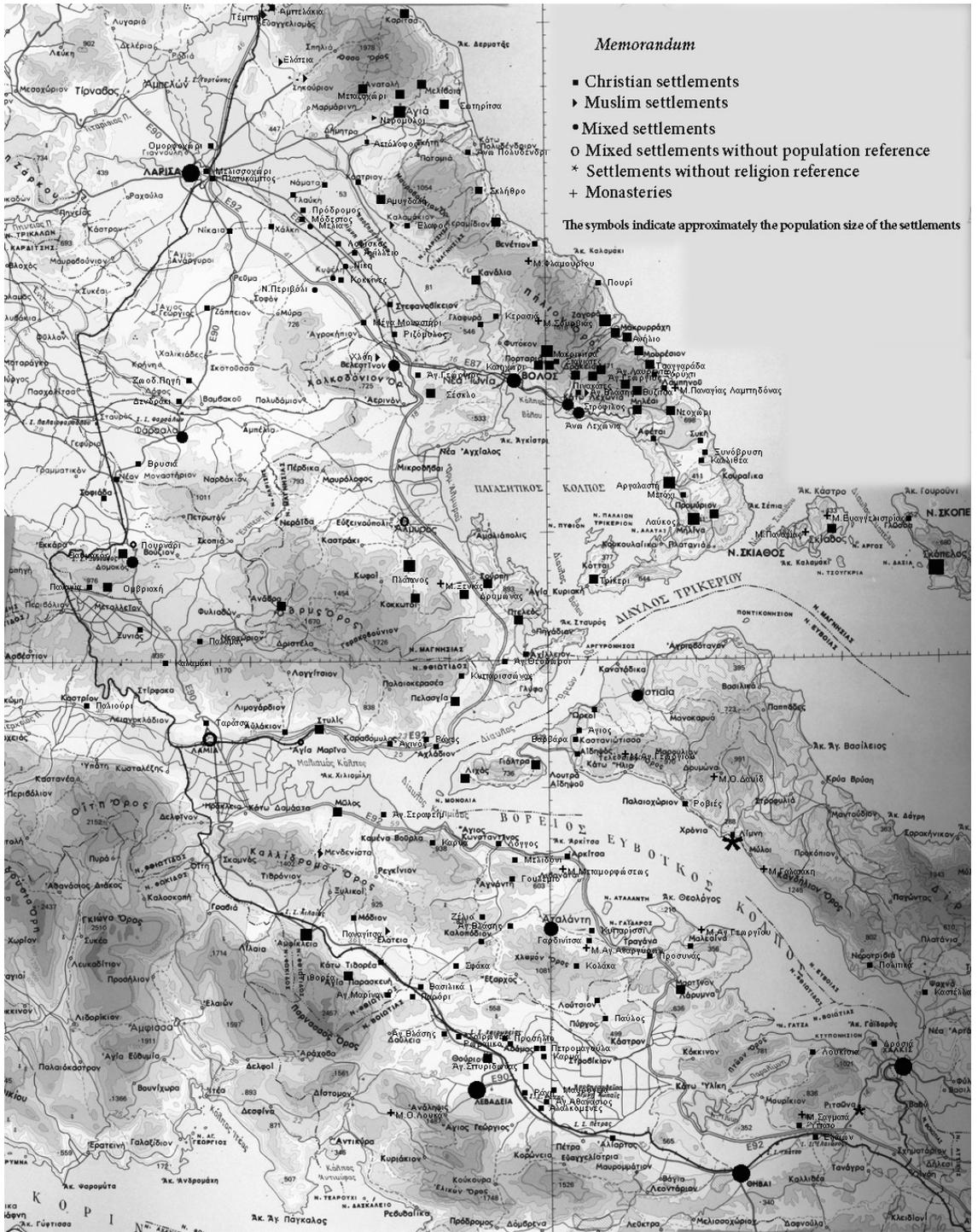
Sources: Sperantsas, *Τα περισωθέντα έργα*; M. M. Stamatelatos and Fotini Vamva-Stamatelatou, *Επίτομο γεωγραφικό λεξικό της Ελλάδος* [Abridged geographic dictionary of Greece], Athens 2001.

<sup>26</sup> Sperantsas, *Τα περισωθέντα έργα*, pp. 77, 95, 110, 165-166.

The extraction and processing of information regarding elevations of the settlements included in *Μερική Γεωγραφία* permits us to make some observations:

- a) The majority of the settlements, 59.2% in all, was located at an elevation that did not exceed 200 metres. 32.1% of the settlements were in the 201-500 metre bracket. A few settlements (6.1% of the total) were at an elevation of 501-600 metres, while only 5 settlements were at an elevation of more than 600 metres: Palamas, Derveni (now Kalamaki), Karia, Gkoura (now Anavra) and Selitzani (now Anatoli). Of those five settlements, the last two had a population of 200 houses; Goura, in fact, is mentioned as a village that earlier had more than 1000 houses, but already in 1815 was in decline.
- b) The majority of the small settlements, 64.5% of those in the category of up to 100 houses, were at an elevation of up to 200 metres. For the larger settlements of 101-500 houses, the numerical data is the reverse, since here 37.5% of the settlements in this category had elevations not exceeding 200 metres. In the larger settlements of 501-1000 houses, matters are divided, since about half of them were built at an elevation not exceeding 200 metres, while the rest had higher elevations. Finally, for towns with populations of more than 1000 houses, all were built at an elevation lower than 200 metres.
- c) In regards to the distribution of the population per elevation, the data in Table 5 show that half of the total population lived in settlements built at an elevation lower than 100 metres, while the great majority of the residents (67.3%) lived in settlements that did not exceed 200 metres. A gradual decline in population is observed as the elevation rises, ending in regions above 600 metres, which were occupied by 1.7% of the total population.

According to Philippidis' description, which as noted covers a large portion of Central Greece on the eve of the 1821 Revolution, the majority, both of houses and populations, were established at an elevation that did not exceed 200 metres. At higher elevations were settlements of all sizes, but the establishment of the large towns of this era strengthened even more the percentage of the population that lived in this elevation zone. It is also necessary to note that, as shown in the settlement locations on a geophysical map, the large plain regions of Larissa, Almyros, Lamia, Thebes and, in part, Livadeia, gathered a rather small number of settlements, which are also of small size. By contrast, the bulk of settlements was concentrated in semi-plain regions, on hills and foothills of mountains. However, generally, settlements were established at an elevation of more than 600 metres very rarely, and only one at a height of more than 780 metres. A special case was that of



*Memorandum*

- Christian settlements
- Muslim settlements
- ◼ Mixed settlements
- Mixed settlements without population reference
- \* Settlements without religion reference
- + Monasteries

The symbols indicate approximately the population size of the settlements

MAP 1: Christian and Muslim settlements referred to Agris Filippides.

Mount Pelion, which was densely settled with a distribution of numerous and well-populated Christian villages.<sup>27</sup> Very likely, Philippidis' knowledge of the Pelion region, which was his homeland, and his exhaustive description enhance the image of a dense population. In any case, this image is entirely confirmed by other sources of the period, as we saw above in Table 3.<sup>28</sup>

Interest also arises from the fact that 35 medium-sized villages of somewhat larger size, with 101-1000 houses, were established at elevations greater than 200 metres. These settlements constituted the basic components of the settlement base of the Christian population, since important human resources as well as significant economic activities were concentrated there. In any case, the image of the settlement complex of the Christian population, with a strong presence at lower elevations, at least as it emerges from Philippidis' description, is totally contrary to the commonly accepted view that portrayed the Christian populations as having taken refuge and settled in mountain regions.<sup>29</sup>

Recapitulating, we can say that the impression given by Argyris Philippidis' testimony allows us to form an image of the settlement complex of Central

---

<sup>27</sup> Of the Pelion villages, only the villages of Lechonia and Strofilos had Muslim populations. In regards to Lechonia, the evidence, despite its uncertain credibility, converges on the fact that the Muslim population took up residence there from Skiathos in the 1660s, when the Venetians briefly occupied Kastro (see Sp. Lambros, "Επιφάνιος Δημητριάδης ο Σκιάθιος" [Eriphanios Dimitriadis Skiathos], *Νέος Ελληνομνημων XIII* (1916), p. 434; Frangoulas, *Σκιαθίτικα*, pp. 92-93; V. Skouvaras, "Λεχωνίτικα" [Lexonitika], *Από το λειμώνα της παράδοσης. Πηλιορείτικα Β'* [From the fields of tradition: Pelioreitika II] Athens 1983, p. 195). Regarding Strofilos, Skouvaras, "Καραμπασιώτικα" [Karabasiotika], *Από το λειμώνα της παράδοσης*, p. 184, notes that, according to tradition, the Turkish residents of the village had settled there after the Orlov period from 1774-1790. He also mentions the narratives of elderly residents of the village at the beginning of the twentieth century, according to which 1800 Christian families who had come from Agrapha and worked in Turkish fields also lived in the village, but were slowly annihilated by the Lechonite Turks, mainly with the outbreak of the 1821 Revolution.

<sup>28</sup> Sivignon, *Θεσσαλία*, p. 126, following traditional historiographies, considers Pelion and Pindus as refuges for the persecuted and repeats the views he attributes to travellers, without specific reference, that the villages were deserted due to executions, with the residents leaving because they were unable to pay the exorbitant taxes.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. indicatively the positions of A. Vacalopoulos, "La retraite des populations grecques vers des régions éloignées et montagneuses pendant la domination turque", *Balkan Studies* IV (1963), pp. 265-276. For a refutation of these views, see V. Panayotopoulos, "Η 'αποχώρηση' πληθυσμών από την πεδιάδα στο βουνό στα χρόνια της Τουρκοκρατίας. Ένας εξηγηματικός μύθος σύνθετων δημογραφικών φαινομένων" [The "departure" of

Greece, but requires further checking and confirmation from other sources of the period – sources which, unfortunately, in the main, have a narrative character and present similar problems of credibility and accuracy. One of the basic characteristics of this settlement complex, which arises from the sources and confutes the views which have prevailed in earlier, traditional historiography, is the very strong presence of mainly Christian settlements of small size, which were established at relatively low elevations. The kind of settlement constituted the backbone of a settlement complex that, while not characterized by large population concentrations, at the same time did not manifest large settlement gaps, since there was a high density of sparsely populated settlement cells. The settlements appear to form an extensive complex, sustaining connections and means of transportation, supported by points of commercial contact, such as small berths or bazaars, concerning the movement of commercial goods. Monasteries were significant points of communication, since their religious character allowed them to be points of reference for wider regions. The cities or larger villages played a vital role in the context of this network, since, aside from being Ottoman administrative centres, they concentrated the services and activities that the small settlements did not have the ability to support. The progressive dominance of the Christian element, to the detriment of the retreating Ottoman population, constitutes the basic parameter of the new era that dawned in the first decades of the nineteenth century and would be demarcated by the 1821 Revolution.

*Translated by Stan Draenos*

*Institute for Neohellenic Research / NHRF*

---

populations from the plains to the mountains during Turkish rule: an explanatory myth of a complex demographic phenomenon], proceedings of the conference *Ο αγροτικός κόσμος στον Μεσογειακό χώρο* [The agricultural world in the Mediterranean region], Athens 1988, pp. 203-205.