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ASSESSING THE DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC PARAMETERS THAT DETERMINED THE RESIDENTIAL HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL CENTRAL GREECE: THE CASE OF WESTERN STEREA HELLAS*

Abstract. The principal objective of this study is to investigate the demographic and economic parameters that shaped the settlement dynamics of medieval Central Greece (Sterea Hellas) over a broad chronological span extending from the 12th to the 16th century. Given the fragmentary and often insufficient nature of surviving Byzantine-era sources, the most effective means of avoiding vague generalizations is to adopt a long-term analytical perspective, using the comparatively rich Ottoman data from the mid-15th to the 16th century as a basis for retrospective interpretation. Throughout this period, the spatial organization of the region – particularly the contrast between the mountainous and semi-mountainous zones of Aetoloakarnania and Evrytania and the lowland plains of Fthiotida – profoundly influenced patterns of agricultural production and pastoral activity. Documentation from the late Byzantine period regarding settlement structures remains limited, with narrative sources, primarily historiographical in nature, offering only sporadic and anecdotal references. By contrast, the Ottoman fiscal censuses (tahrir defters) provide a far more systematic dataset, recording local tax revenues and offering detailed information on the composition of the taxable population, thus enabling a more grounded reconstruction of settlement and economic patterns in the region.

The available evidence points to a relatively smooth transition following the establishment of Ottoman rule in the region. In this context, the consolidation of political authority contributed

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to the stabilization and even revitalization of the local urban network and the broader settlement landscape, suggesting that the process of Ottoman integration fostered a degree of continuity and structural reinforcement rather than abrupt disruption.

Keywords: residential history, cities, villages, Byzantine-era sources, Ottoman census inventories

1. Introduction – Methodology

The central objective of this study is to investigate the demographic and economic parameters that shaped the settlement history of medieval Central Greece (Sterea Hellas) over a broad chronological span, extending from the 12th to the 16th century. The analysis rests on a fundamental distinction common to all pre-industrial societies – namely, the organization of habitation into urban and rural settlements – while also accounting for the specific geographical features of the region, dominated by mountainous and semi-mountainous terrain in the areas corresponding to modern-day Aitolokarnania, Evrytania, Phocis, and Fthiotida. This methodological framework is not without its challenges, primarily due to the nature, fragmentary condition, and limited scope of the available Byzantine sources, which rarely provide systematic information on aspects of social and economic history or the structure of the settlement network. Given these limitations, a long-term analytical perspective is adopted, with particular emphasis on the more robust and quantifiable data preserved in the Ottoman fiscal censuses (tahrir defters) of the 15th and 16th centuries. These sources offer a valuable basis for reconstructing earlier developments and mitigating the risk of vague generalizations. The utilization of data derived from early Ottoman sources, in conjunction with their correlation to testimonies from the preceding Byzantine period, is expected to illuminate crucial aspects of the demographic history of the era. Such an approach may provide answers to a broad spectrum of questions, including the spatial distribution of populations and the conditions that shaped it, the reconstruction of the region's settlement pattern – whether through the survival or abandonment of particular sites – demographic size and mobility, as well as the factors that influenced their development. The earliest available quantitative data derives from the Ottoman cadastral survey BBA/MM 10, conducted in 1454/1455, which offers a comprehensive depiction of the settlement network within the territories corresponding to the modern prefectures of Aitolokarnania and Evrytania¹. For the region corresponding to modern-day Phthiotida, the principal

¹ M. DELİLBAŞI, M. ARIKAN, *Hicri 859 Tarihli sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-i Tirhala*, Ankara 2001. The register has survived only in fragmentary form. Originally, it encompassed data pertaining to the entire sanjak of Tirhala (Thessaly–Sterea Hellas), yet the extant portion preserves information primarily from the cities and districts of Larissa, Trikala, Phanari, Agrapha, and, beyond Thessaly

source of information is the summary register H 890, compiled in the year 890 of the Hijri calendar (1485), which provides essential insights into the settlement and fiscal structures of the area². The composition of the population in the region in the immediate aftermath of the Ottoman conquest is examined in the study of M. Kiel, who presents and analyzes data drawn from the earliest Ottoman population surveys conducted in the Sanjak of Karleli – specifically the tahrir registers of 1489, 1521, and 1562³. Population and economic data from the early decades of the 16th century have been examined in the seminal work of T. Gökbilgin, who analyzed the summary fiscal registers for the years 1521 and 1528⁴. More recently, H. Kolovos and M. Sarigiannis have contributed to the field through their study of the summary tax register for the year 937 of the Hijri calendar (1530/1531), as well as four detailed inventories concerning the *cizye* (capital tax) imposed on the Christian population of the Vilayet of Agia Mavra, corresponding to the years of the Hijri calendar 1056 (1646/1647), 1058 (1648/1649), 1060 (1650), and 1061 (1650/1651)⁵.

2. The case of Sterea Hellas

2.1. Historical overview

The historical trajectory of Sterea Hellas throughout the medieval centuries (12th–15th) was marked by continuous shifts in sovereignty, underscoring the region's strategic significance in terms of controlling both terrestrial and maritime routes, as well as its role within the broader political and ecclesiastical geography. By the

proper, Deskate, Metsovo, and several settlements in Pieria, Radovisdi in the Tzoumerka mountains, Karpenisi, and mountainous Naupaktia (Kravara). Missing are the sections concerning the cities of Elassona and Pharsala, the whole of Magnesia, and the larger part of the Pharsala district. The surviving material, however, also contains valuable references to villages in Aitolokarnania, Evrytania, and parts of Fthiotida.

² In 2014, the register was edited and published by G. Salakidis and I. Theocharidis. The present study draws upon its data with regard to cities and villages omitted from the BBA/MM 10 register. It should be noted, however, that the source does not furnish information on the confessional distinction between Christian and Muslim households at the village level, but records such differentiation only for the urban centers. Γ. ΣΑΛΑΚΙΔΗΣ, Ι. ΘΕΟΧΑΡΙΔΗΣ, *Η κεντρική Ελλάδα τον 15^ο αιώνα. Το ανέκδοτο Οθωμανικό κατάστιχο του 1485*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2014.

³ M. KIEL, *Population and Settlement of the Sandjak of Karli-ili-Aitolia/Akarnania – during the Turkokratia*, [in:] *Β' Διεθνές Ιστορικό και Αρχαιολογικό Συνέδριο Αιτωλοακαρνανίας, Αργίνο 29–31 Μαρτίου 2002, Πρακτικά*, vol. II, Αργίνο 2004, p. 705–727. At this point, I would like to express my gratitude to Professor M. Kiel for making this article available to me.

⁴ T. GOKBILGIN, *Kanuni Sultan Suleyman devri başlarında Rumeli eyaleti, livaları, şehir ve kasabaları*, BTTK 20, 1956, p. 260.

⁵ *Οθωμανικές πηγές για τη νεώτερη ιστορία της Λευκάδας*, ed. H. ΚΟΛΟΒΟΣ, Μ. ΣΑΡΗΓΙΑΝΝΗΣ, Ηράκλειο 2013, p. 91–92, 245, 256, 261, 270.

9th century, Naupaktos had already emerged as the capital of the theme of Nicopolis, developing into a prominent administrative and ecclesiastical center⁶. Testimonies of 12th-century travelers such as al-Idrisi and Benjamin of Tudela depict a city engaged in vigorous commercial activity and hosting a flourishing Jewish community, indicative of its economic dynamism⁷. The aftermath of the Fourth Crusade (1204) inaugurated a new phase of political fragmentation: although Central Greece was formally allocated to Venice, in practice much of Sterea Hellas fell under the authority of Michael I Komnenos Doukas, the ruler of Epirus⁸. In the subsequent decades, through dynastic marriages, feudal endowments, and sustained military confrontation, key urban centers and fortresses – including Naupaktos, Vonitsa, Angelokastro, Anatoliko – Aitoliko, and Loidoriki – became focal points of contestation among the Angevins, the Venetians, and the Epirote rulers⁹. During the 14th century, the ascendancy of the Catalans, following their victory

⁶ More on this, see P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia*, Wien 1981 [= VKTIB, 3], p. 210–211; D. NICOL, *The Despotate of Epiros 1267–1479. A Contribution to the History of Greece in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge 1984; A. ΣΑΒΒΙΑΔΗΣ, *Η Ναύπακτος από τα πρωτοβυζαντινά χρόνια ως την οθωμανική κατάκτηση του 1499: ιστορικό διάγραμμα*, [in:] *Μελετήματα Βυζαντινής προσωπογραφίας και τοπικής ιστορίας* (reprinting of articles, 1981–1991), Αθήνα 1992, p. 425–456 (1st published in *Nav* 5, 1990–1991, p. 45–76); IDEM, *Ιστορικές σημειώσεις για την Υστερομεσαιωνική Ναύπακτο*, *Nav* 10, 2000, p. 469–474.

⁷ EDRISI, *Géographie*, ed. P. JAUBERT, Paris 1836 (cetera: EDRISI), p. 122; *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela*, ed. M.N. ADLER, London 1907 (cetera: BENJAMIN OF TUDELA), p. 62–63.

⁸ N. BEES, *Unedierte Schriftstücke aus der Kanzlei des Johannes Apokaukos des Metropolitzen von Naupaktos, in Aetolien*, *BNJ* 21, 1971–1974, p. 72, 116–117; T. TAFEL, G. THOMAS, *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig mit besonderen Beziehungen auf Byzanz und die Levante*, Vienna 1856–1857 (reprint: Amsterdam 1964), vol. I, p. 471, 491, vol. II, p. 121. Also see J. KODER, F. HILD, *Hellas und Thessalia*, Wien 1976 [= VKTIB, 1], p. 161; D. NICOL, *The Despotate of Epiros...*, p. 28–29; A. ΣΑΒΒΙΑΔΗΣ, *Η Ναύπακτος...*, p. 54–55; K. ΒΑΡΖΟΣ, *Η Γενεαλογία των Κομνηνών*, vol. II, Θεσσαλονίκη 1984, p. 681–682.

⁹ Π. ΚΑΛΟΝΑΡΟΣ, *Το Χρονικόν του Μορέως*, Αθήνα 1940, & 1559, 3186, 7287 (Greek version); *Chronique de Morée aux 13 et 14 siècles*, ed. A. MOREL-FATIO, Geneva 1885, & 97, 102, 275, 877–879, 917 (Aragon version); K. HOPF, *Chroniques gréco-romanes inédites ou peu connues*, Berlin 1873, p. 424, 441 (Italian version); *Livre de la conquête de la princée de l'Amorée. Chronique de Morée (1204–1305)*, ed. J.A. LONGNON, Paris 1911, p. 107, 115, 221, 282 (French version); *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina Historia*, vol. I, ed. L. SCHOPEN, I. BEKKER, Bonnae 1829–1930 [= CSHB, 30], p. 297; K. HOPF, *Chroniques gréco-romanes...*, p. XXIX–XXX; *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris Historiarum*, vol. III, ed. L. SCHOPEN, Bonnae 1832, p. 529; V. LAURENT, *Les regestes des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople. Les actes des patriarches. Les regestes de 1208 à 1309*, Paris 1971, no. 1316, 1317; MARINO SANUDO TORSELLO, *Istoria del Regno di Romania*, [in:] K. HOPF, *Chroniques gréco-romanes...* (cetera: MARINO SANUDO TORSELLO), p. 107; T. TAFEL, G. THOMAS, *Urkunden...*, vol. I, p. 471, 491. Also see A. KIESEWETTER, *Il trattato del 18 ottobre 1305 fra Filippo I di Taranto e Giovanni Orsini di Cefalonia per la conquista dell' Epiro*, *ASP* 47, 1994, p. 200–201, 203–204; W. MILLER, *The Marquisate of Boudonitsa (1204–1414)*, *JHS* 28, 1908, p. 236; D. NICOL, *The Despotate of Epiros...*, p. 77, 214–215; A. ΣΑΒΒΙΑΔΗΣ, *Η Ναύπακτος...*, p. 54–76; IDEM, *Ιστορικές σημειώσεις...*, p. 469–474; R.L. WOLFF, *The Organization of the Latin Patriarchate of Constantinople, 1204–1261*, *DOP* 8, 1954, p. 225–303 (= *Studies in the Latin Empire of Constantinople*, Variorum Reprints, London 1976, VIII).

at the battle of Halmyros (1311), proved decisive, while concurrently local Albanian lordships arose and the Tocco dynasty gradually expanded its dominion from Cephalonia into Aitolokarnania¹⁰. These developments reveal a fluid and unstable political landscape characterized by shifting allegiances, endemic raiding, and the reconfiguration of territorial control. From the late 14th century onwards, the inexorable Ottoman advance imposed a new political order: cities such as Zetouni – Lamia, Vodonitsa – Mendenista, and Loidoriki progressively fell under Ottoman dominion, while Naupaktos – long a Venetian stronghold – was definitively captured in 1499 and designated as the center of a distinct administrative unit, the sanjak of Inebahti (Aynabahti)¹¹. In parallel, other parts of Aitolokarnania and

¹⁰ *Acta Albaniae Venetae Saeculorum XIV et XV*, vol. V, ed. J. VALENTINI, Palermo–Milano–Roma 1967–1976, p. 55–59; *Laonici Chalcocondylae Atheniensis Historiarum libri decem*, ed. I. BEKKER, Bonnae 1843 [= *CSHB*, 48], p. 352–353; Π. ΚΑΛΟΝΑΡΟΣ, *Το Χρονικόν...*, & 7287 (Greek version); *Chronica Toccoorum Cephallenensium*, ed. G. SCHIRÒ, Roma 1975 [= *CFHB.I*, 10.1], p. 31, 44–56, 228, 236, 248, 250, 254, 256, 278–281; Ι. ΒΡΑΝΟΥΣΗΣ, *Το Χρονικόν των Ιωαννίνων*, *EMA* 12, 1962, p. 74, 79; A. GERLINI, *Nuove lettere di Marino Sanudo il Vecchio*, *Bibl* 42, 1940, p. 351; GREGORAS, p. 297; K. ΗΟΡΦ, *Chroniques gréco-romanes...*, p. 132, 230; Δ. ΜΕΡΤΖΙΟΣ, *Μια ανέκδοτη επιστολή του Καρόλου Α΄ του Τόκκου προς τον Δόγη της Βενετίας γραφείσα εξ Ιωαννίνων το 1425*, [in:] *Πεπραγμένα του Θ΄ Διεθνούς Βυζαντινολογικού Συνεδρίου, Θεσσαλονίκη, 12–19 Απριλίου 1953*, ed. Στ. ΚΥΡΙΑΚΙΔΗΣ, Α. ΞΥΓΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, Π. ΖΕΠΟΣ, Αθήνα 1956, p. 556–559; IDEM, *Trois lettres inédites de Charles Tocco en 1427, 1428 et 1432*, [in:] *Akten de XI. Internationalen Byzantinisten Kongresses*, Munich 1960, p. 352–354; *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, ed. J.A. VAN DIETEN, Berlin–New York 1975 [= *CFHB*, 11], p. 609; S. PETRIDES, *Jean Apokaukos, Lettres et autres documents inédits*, [in:] *Bulletin de l'Institut Archéologique Russe à Constantinople*, vol. XIV, Sofia 1909, p. 21; MARINO SANUDO TORSSELLO, p. 136, 177; Κ.Ν. ΣΑΘΑΣ, *Μνημεία Ελληνικής Ιστορίας, Documents inédits relatif à l'histoire la Grèce au Moyen Âge*, Paris 1880–1890, vol. I, p. 31, 35–36, 214, vol. II, p. 186–189, 220, vol. III, p. 75–76, 267, 333; T. TAFEL, G. THOMAS, *Urkunden...*, vol. I, p. 496–497; P. SCHREINER, *Die Byzantinischen Kleinchroniken*, vol. II, Wien 1977, p. 232, 291, 363, 369; F. THIRIET, *Régestes délibérations du Sénat de Venise concernant la Roumanie. Documents et Recherches*, vol. II, Paris–La Haye 1959, no 1262, 1284, 1549; *Diplomatarium Veneto-Levantinum, sive Acta et Diplomata res Veneta, Graecas atque Levantis illustrantia a 1330–1454*, vol. I, ed. G.M. THOMAS, R. PREDELLI, Venezia 1889, p. 120–121. Also see Σ. ΑΣΩΝΙΤΗΣ, *Το Νότιο Ιόνιο κατά τον Όψιμο Μεσαίωνα. Κομητεία Κεφαλληνίας, Δουκάτο Λευκάδος, Αιτωλοακαρνανία*, Αθήνα 2005, p. 78, 88–89, 94–95, 112, 134; IDEM, *Κατοχή. Μια κτήση του πριγκιπάτου της Αχαΐας στη δυτική Στερεά*, *ΙΓ* 3, 1992, p. 93–107; J.A.C. BUCHON, *Nouvelles recherches historiques sur la principauté Française de Morée et ses hautes baronies à la suite de la 4^{me} croisade*, vol. I, Paris 1843, p. 410–411; B. HENDRICKX, *Amadeo Pofey*, [in:] *Encyclopedic Prosopographical Lexicon of Byzantine History and Civilization*, vol. I, ed. A. SAVVIDES, B. HENDRICKX, Turnhour 2007, p. 179; IDEM, *Boniface of Montferrat*, [in:] *Encyclopedic Prosopographical Lexicon...*, vol. II, p. 134–135; A. LUTTRELL, *Vonitza in Epirus and its Lords: 1306–1377*, *RSBN* 1, 1964, p. 133–134, 141; A. MOUSTOXIDES, *Delle Cose Corciresi*, Corfu 1848, p. 357–358; D. NICOL, *The Despotate of Epiros...*, p. 170–171; A. RUBIO Y LLUCH, *Diplomatari de l'Orient Català*, Barcelona 1947, p. 159–161, 298, 326, 356; Α. ΣΑΒΒΙΔΗΣ, *Ιστορικές σημειώσεις...*, p. 471.

¹¹ CHALCOKONDYLES, p. 67, 174; *Χρονικό του Γαλαξειδιού Ευθυμίου Ιερομονάχου*, ed. Η. ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΤΑΚΗΣ, Αθήνα 1985, p. 207, 209; DUKAS, *Istoria turco-byzantina (1341–1462)*, ed. V. GRECU, Boucares 1958, p. 239, 245; *Ekthesis Chronica and Chronicon Athenarum*, ed. S. LAMBROS, London 1902, p. 43; *Historia Politica et Patriarchica Constantinopoleos. Epirotica*, ed. I. BEKKER, Bonnae 1849

Phthiotis were incorporated into the sanjak of Karli-eli¹², while urban centers such as Zetouni – Lamia and Loidoriki were subsumed under the sanjak of Trikala¹³. By the 16th century, Sterea Hellas had been fully assimilated into the Ottoman administrative framework, with the structured network of sanjaks institutionalizing the transition from the fragmented political order of Byzantine, Latin, and regional lordships to the protracted era of Ottoman hegemony.

2.2. The cities of Sterea Hellas

An analysis of the available data from the 12th to the 16th century allows for the reconstruction of the structure and defining features of the settlement network in mainland Greece. A useful point of departure in this inquiry is the examination of the urban landscape of Sterea Hellas. Prior to the Ottoman conquest, historical sources record the existence of approximately twenty-six urban centers in the region: 19 in Aitolokarnania (Naupaktos, Vonitsa, Angelokastro, Katoche, Kandela – Varnakas, Astakos – Dragamesto, Anatoliko – Aitoliko, Aetos, Amphilochia, Vlochos, Stratos – Gerovilia – Sorovigli, Ligovitsi – Skourtou, Platanos, Analepsis – Dervekista, Paravola, Trigardo, Empesos, Mastro, Ochthia), 6 in Phtiotis (Zetouni – Lamia, Vodonitsa – Mendenista, Ezeros, Echinος, Etera Gardikia, Marmaritzana), and 1 in Phocis (Loidoriki). However, by the mid-15th century, only nine cities continue to be attested in the historical record: 6 in Aitolokarnania (Naupaktos, Vonitsa, Angelokastro, Anatoliko – Aitoliko, Aetos, Vlochos), 2 in Phtiotis (Zetouni – Lamia, Vodonitsa – Mendenista), and 1 in Phocis (Loidoriki). This notable decline in the number of recognized urban centers may be attributed, at least in part, to the Ottoman administrative framework, which did not inherit the Byzantine conception of cities as synonymous with episcopal sees. When the evidence is synthesized, it becomes possible to assess both the relative size of these settlements and their hierarchical position within the broader regional settlement system:

[= CSHB, 2], p. 56; *Critobuli Imbriotae Historiae*, ed. H. BECK, A. CAMBYLIS, R. KEYDELL, Berlin 1983 [= CFHB, 22], p. 223, 309; K.N. ΣΑΘΑΣ, *Μνημεία Ελληνικής...*, vol. III, p. 306; P. SCHREINER, *Die Byzantinischen...*, vol. II, p. 295, 465; Γ. ΣΑΛΑΚΙΔΗΣ, I. ΘΕΟΧΑΡΙΔΗΣ, *Η κεντρική Ελλάδα...*, p. 187, 201, 203, 247. Also see Φ. ΠΕΡΡΑ, *Η Ναύπακτος, η Μεθώνη και η Κορώνη μεταξύ των δύο πρώτων Βενετο-οθωμανικών πολέμων (1479–1499)*, ΒΔ 15, 2006, p. 223–230; Μ. ΚΙΕΛ, *Ναύπακτος (Inebahti)*, [in:] *Μνημεία και Πολιτισμός των Ελληνικών πόλεων κατά την Οθωμανική περίοδο μέσα από τα κείμενα του Machiel Kiel. Συμβολή στην Οθωμανική κληρονομιά στον ελλαδικό χώρο*, ed. Α.Σ. ΜΑΡΚΟΥ, trans. Π.Δ. ΤΟΥΛΟΥΜΑΚΟΣ, Αθήνα 2015, p. 262; Α. ΣΑΒΒΙΔΗΣ, *Ιστορικές σημειώσεις...*, p. 472.

¹² Ö. BARKAN, *894 (1488/1489) yılı cizye Tahsilâtina ait Muhasebe Bilâncolari*, Bgr 1, 1964, p. 101; T. GOKBILGIN, *Kanuni...*, p. 260; Μ. ΚΙΕΛ, *Αιτωλία-Ακαρνανία (Karli-Ili)*, [in:] *Μνημεία και Πολιτισμός...*, p. 97, 105; IDEM, *Population and Settlement...*, p. 708, 709, 722, 726; *Οθωμανικές πηγές...*, p. 8, 13, 43, 83–84, 85–86, 89, 92; L. MÉNAGE, *Karli-iîli*, [in:] *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. IV, Leiden 1978, p. 656–657.

¹³ Γ. ΣΑΛΑΚΙΔΗΣ, I. ΘΕΟΧΑΡΙΔΗΣ, *Η κεντρική Ελλάδα...*, p. 187, 201.

Table 1

The table further incorporates former Byzantine urban centers that were reclassified as villages following the Ottoman conquest. The dates of the corresponding Ottoman cadastral surveys (tahrir defterleri) are indicated in parentheses

Cities	Population (tax units)
Aetos ¹⁴	230 (1521), 248 (1562), 80 (1646/1647)
Amphilochia ¹⁵	–
Analepsis – Dervekista ¹⁶	–
Anatoliko – Aitoliko ¹⁷	331 (1521)
Angelokastro ¹⁸	172 (1521)
Astakos – Dragamesto ¹⁹	170 (1521), 137 (1646/1647)
Echinos ²⁰	–
Empesos ²¹	–

¹⁴ M. KIEL, *Population and Settlement...*, p. 709, 722, 726; P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 102–103; M. VEIKOU, *Byzantine Epirus. A Topography of Transformation. Settlements of the Seventh–Twelfth Centuries in Southern Epirus and Aetoloacarnania, Greece*, Leiden–Boston 2012 [= MMe, 95], p. 377–378.

¹⁵ P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 104; *Οθωμανικές πηγές...*, p. 43.

¹⁶ Α. ΠΑΛΙΟΥΡΑΣ, *Βυζαντινή Αιτωλοακαρνανία: Συμβολή στη βυζαντινή και μεταβυζαντινή μνημειακή τέχνη*, Αθήνα 2004, p. 250; P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 184; M. VEIKOU, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 387–388, 432–433.

¹⁷ Σ. ΑΣΩΝΙΤΗΣ, *Το Νότιο Ιόνιο...*, p. 212–213; M. KIEL, *Population and Settlement...*, p. 708–709, 722; IDEM, *Αιτωλία-Ακαρνανία (Karli-Ili)*..., p. 107; J. NESBITT, J. WIIITA, *A Confraternity of the Comnenian Era*, BZ 68, 1975, p. 368, 378; Α. ΠΑΛΙΟΥΡΑΣ, *Βυζαντινή Αιτωλοακαρνανία...*, p. 281; M. VEIKOU, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 374–375.

¹⁸ Ö. BARKAN, *Cizye...*, p. 101; T. GOKBILGIN, *Kanuni...*, p. 260; Β. ΚΑΤΣΑΡΟΣ, *Το πρόγραμμα έρευνας της βυζαντινής τοπογραφίας στην κοιλάδα του Αχελώου, πρόταση για μια νέα θεώρηση του χώρου*, [in:] *Πρακτικά Α΄ Αρχαιολογικού και Ιστορικού Συνεδρίου Αιτωλοακαρνανίας (Αγρίνιο 21–23 Οκτ. 1988)*, ed. I. ΜΕΝΝΕΓΚΑ, Αγρίνιο 1991, p. 324–327; M. KIEL, *Αιτωλία-Ακαρνανία...*, p. 97; *Οθωμανικές πηγές...*, p. 8, 13, 83–84, 85–86, 89; Α. ΠΑΛΙΟΥΡΑΣ, *Βυζαντινή Αιτωλοακαρνανία...*, p. 202; P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 101.

¹⁹ M. KIEL, *Population and Settlement...*, p. 709, 722; *Οθωμανικές πηγές...*, p. 71, 241; P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 144; M. VEIKOU, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 282–283, 416–417.

²⁰ Α. ΑΒΡΑΜΕΑΣ, *Η Βυζαντινή Θεσσαλία μέχρι του 1204. Συμβολή εις την Ιστορικήν Γεωγραφία*, Αθήνα 1974, p. 145; J. KODER, F. HILD, *Hellas und Thessalia...*, p. 152; F. STÄHLIN, *Η Αρχαία Θεσσαλία*, trans. Γ. ΠΑΠΑΣΩΤΗΡΙΟΥ, Α. ΘΑΝΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Θεσσαλονίκη* 2002, p. 357; Μ. ΣΤΑΜΑΤΕΛΑΤΟΣ, Β.Φ. ΣΤΑΜΑΤΕΛΑΤΟΣ, *Ελληνική Γεωγραφική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια*, vol. I, Αθήνα 1996, p. 171, 343.

²¹ P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 149; M. VEIKOU, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 426.

Table 1 (cont.)

Cities	Population (tax units)
Etera Gardikia ²²	89 (1485)
Ezeros ²³	–
Kandela – Varnakas ²⁴	102 (1521)
Katoche ²⁵	118 (1521), 136 (1562), 27 (1650)
Ligovitsi – Skourtou ²⁶	13 (1646/1647)
Loidoriki ²⁷	103 (1485)
Marmaritzana ²⁸	–
Mastro ²⁹	–
Naupaktos ³⁰	617 (1521)
Ochthia ³¹	–

²² Α. ΑΒΡΑΜΕΑ, *Θεσσαλία...*, p. 176; J. KODER, F. HILD, *Hellas und Thessalia...*, p. 161; Γ. ΣΑΛΑΚΙΔΗΣ, Ι. ΘΕΟΧΑΡΙΔΗΣ, *Η κεντρική Ελλάδα...*, p. 101, 231; F. STÄHLIN, *Η Αρχαία...*, p. 316; Μ. ΣΤΑΜΑΤΕΛΑΤΟΣ, Β.Φ. ΣΤΑΜΑΤΕΛΑΤΟΣ, *Γεωγραφική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια...*, vol. III, p. 150.

²³ Α. ΑΒΡΑΜΕΑ, *Θεσσαλία...*, p. 174–175; J. KODER, F. HILD, *Hellas und Thessalia...*, p. 158; F. STÄHLIN, *Η Αρχαία...*, p. 281–283; Μ. ΣΤΑΜΑΤΕΛΑΤΟΣ, Β.Φ. ΣΤΑΜΑΤΕΛΑΤΟΣ, *Γεωγραφική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια...*, vol. III, p. 84.

²⁴ Μ. ΚΙΕΛ, *Αιτωλία-Ακαρνανία...*, p. 103; IDEM, *Population and Settlement...*, p. 722; *Οθωμανικές πηγές...*, p. 325, 335, 336; P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 170–171; Μ. ΒΕΙΚΟΥ, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 433.

²⁵ Σ. ΑΣΩΝΙΤΗΣ, *Το Νότιο Ιόνιο...*, p. 51; Μ. ΚΙΕΛ, *Population and Settlement...*, p. 709, 722; *Οθωμανικές πηγές...*, p. 115, 118–119, 121–122, 142, 153–154, 155, 157, 163, 164–166; P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 174; Μ. ΒΕΙΚΟΥ, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 56, 436–437.

²⁶ *Οθωμανικές πηγές...*, p. 244; P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 200; Μ. ΒΕΙΚΟΥ, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 454.

²⁷ Α. ΑΒΡΑΜΕΑ, *Θεσσαλία...*, p. 141; J. KODER, F. HILD, *Hellas und Thessalia...*, p. 283; Γ. ΣΑΛΑΚΙΔΗΣ, Ι. ΘΕΟΧΑΡΙΔΗΣ, *Η κεντρική Ελλάδα...*, p. 187; Μ. ΣΤΑΜΑΤΕΛΑΤΟΣ, Β.Φ. ΣΤΑΜΑΤΕΛΑΤΟΣ, *Γεωγραφική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια...*, vol. II, p. 254.

²⁸ Α. ΑΒΡΑΜΕΑ, *Θεσσαλία...*, p. 178; J. KODER, F. HILD, *Hellas und Thessalia...*, p. 215; F. STÄHLIN, *Η Αρχαία...*, p. 365; Μ. ΣΤΑΜΑΤΕΛΑΤΟΣ, Β.Φ. ΣΤΑΜΑΤΕΛΑΤΟΣ, *Γεωγραφική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια...*, vol. I, p. 165.

²⁹ Μ. ΚΙΕΛ, *Αιτωλία-Ακαρνανία...*, p. 99; P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 202; Μ. ΒΕΙΚΟΥ, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 459.

³⁰ Τ. ΓΟΚΒΙΛΓΙΝ, *Kanuni...*, p. 247–294; Μ. ΚΙΕΛ, *Ναύπακτος...*, p. 263–264; Α. ΣΑΒΒΙΔΗΣ, *Η Ναύπακτος...*, p. 45–76; IDEM, *Ιστορικές σημειώσεις...*, p. 469–474; O. J. SCHMITT, *Geschichte Lepantos unter der Venezianerherrschaft (1407–1499)*, SF 56, 1997, p. 43–103; P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 210–211.

³¹ Α. ΠΑΛΙΟΥΡΑΣ, *Βυζαντινή Αιτωλοακαρνανία...*, p. 59; P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 217; Μ. ΒΕΙΚΟΥ, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 485–486.

Table 1 (cont.)

Cities	Population (tax units)
Paravola ³²	–
Platanos ³³	13 (1454/1455)
Stratos – Gerovilia – Sorovigli ³⁴	101 (1521)
Trigardo ³⁵	–
Vlochos ³⁶	175 (1521)
Vodonitsa – Mendenista ³⁷	281 (1485)
Vonitsa ³⁸	132 (1530/1531)
Zetouni – Lamia ³⁹	597 (1485)

The extant demographic data, covering the period from the 10th to the 15th centuries, are fragmentary and cannot be regarded as an accurate reflection of the actual number of inhabitants at any given time. Likewise, the evidence concerning household size is problematic, owing to the paucity of references regarding the number of family members per household⁴⁰.

³² P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 189; M. VEIKOU, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 489–490.

³³ M. DELILBAŞI, M. ARIKAN, *Hicri 859...*, p. 162; M. VEIKOU, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 491–492.

³⁴ M. KIEL, *Population and Settlement...*, p. 708, 722; P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 157; M. VEIKOU, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 501–502.

³⁵ P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 272–273; M. VEIKOU, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 503.

³⁶ M. KIEL, *Population and Settlement...*, p. 722; IDEM, *Αιτωλία-Ακαρνανία...*, p. 97; P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 150; M. VEIKOU, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 511–512.

³⁷ J. KODER, F. HILD, *Hellas und Thessalia...*, p. 221–222; W. MILLER, *The Marquisate...*, p. 234–249; Γ. ΣΑΛΑΚΙΔΗΣ, Ι. ΘΕΟΧΑΡΙΔΗΣ, *Η κεντρική Ελλάδα...*, p. 203, 247.

³⁸ T. GOKBILGIN, *Kanuni...*, p. 260; P. SOUSTAL, J. KODER, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia...*, p. 128–129; *Οθωμανικές πηγές...*, p. 44–45, 91–92, 104, 347–348, 400; M. VEIKOU, *Byzantine Epirus...*, p. 513–519.

³⁹ Α. ΑΒΡΑΜΕΑ, *Θεσσαλία...*, p. 141; J. KABRDA, *Ο Τουρκικός κώδικας (kanunname) της Λαμίας (Συμβολή στη μελέτη των τουρκικών ιστορικών πηγών των σχετικών με την ιστορία της Ελλάδας)*, trans. Σ. ΠΑΠΑΔΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Ελλ* 17, 1962, p. 202–218; J. KODER, F. HILD, *Hellas und Thessalia...*, p. 283; Γ. ΣΑΛΑΚΙΔΗΣ, Ι. ΘΕΟΧΑΡΙΔΗΣ, *Η κεντρική Ελλάδα...*, p. 201; F. STÄHLIN, *Η Αρχαία...*, p. 321–322; Μ. ΣΤΑΜΑΤΕΛΑΤΟΣ, Β.Φ. ΣΤΑΜΑΤΕΛΑΤΟΣ, *Γεωγραφική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια...*, vol. II, p. 218.

⁴⁰ Naupaktos had 1,417 individuals (7 in the 11th century, 8 in the 12th century, 64 in the 13th century, 22 in the 14th century, 1,316 in the 15th century, and an unspecified number of public officials – tax collectors, night watchmen, officers, and soldiers – and representatives of various professional groups, such as masons, carpenters, and builders). Vonitsa had 34 individuals (21 in the 13th century, 11 in the 14th century, 2 in the 15th century). Angelokastro had 10 individuals (3 in the 13th century, 3 in the 14th century, 4 in the 15th century). Kandela – Varnakas had 2 individuals (2 in the

Table 2

Household	Number of members
– Konstantinos Manasses, Metropolitan of Naupaktos – Ioannes Apokaukos, Metropolitan of Naupaktos, nephew of Konstantinos Manasses	2
– wife of a priest (not named) – mother of a priest's wife (not named)	2
– Alexios Pyrros – Anna, wife of Alexios Pyrros – Leon, brother of Alexios Pyrros – sister of Alexios Pyrros (not named) – Kastamonitēs, father-in-law of Alexios Pyrros	5
– Theodoros – Eudokia, wife of Theodoros – Georgios Patrinos father-in-law of Theodoros	3
– Demetrios – wife of Demetrios (not named) – Nikolaos, brother-in-law of Demetrios	3
– Stephanos Mauromanikos – Archonto, wife of Stephanos Mauromanikos – Vasileios Klostos, father-in-law of Stephanos Mauromanikos – Alethine, mother-in-law of Stephanos Mauromanikos	4
– Konstantinos Monomachos – wife of Konstantinos Monomachos (not named) – Theodoros Isaris, father-in-law of Konstantinos Monomachos	3

15th century). Dragamesto had 2 individuals (1 in the 13th century, 1 in the 15th century). Anatoliko – Aitoliko had 4 individuals (all in the 13th century). Aetos had 3 individuals (2 in the 13th century, 1 and an unspecified number of residents in the 15th century). Zetouni – Lamia had 5 individuals (3 in the 13th century, 1 in the 14th century, 1 in the 15th century). Vodonitsa – Mendenista had 16 individuals (5 in the 13th century, 7 in the 14th century, 4 and an unspecified number of peasants in the 15th century). Ezeros had 5 individuals (3 and an unspecified number of residents in the 10th century, 2 and an unspecified number of fishermen in the 13th century). Etera Gardikia had 9 individuals (an unspecified number of Greeks and Jews in the 12th century, 9 residents in the 13th century). Marmaritzana had 1 individual (in the 10th century), and Loidoriki had an unspecified number of soldiers in the 13th century.

Table 2 (cont.)

Household	Number of members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ioannes Stylianos - Kale, wife of Ioannes Stylianos - Konstantinos Mylonas, father-in-law of Ioannes Stylianos 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Konstantinos Papaioannopoulos - Anna, wife of Konstantinos Papaioannopoulos 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - couple (not named) 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signorinos (Syniorinus) - Kalodikes (Calodicus), brother of Signorinos (Syniorinus) 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chomatianos (Comitianos) - nephew of Chomatianos (not named) 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gregoriza - son of Gregoriza (not named) 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Symeon Sgouropoulos - Vlasia, daughter of Symeon Sgouropoulos - Nikolaos, husband of Vlasia and son-in-law of Symeon Sgouropoulos 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gregorios from Armenia - Georgios, brother-in-law of Gregorios from Armenia - Theodoros, brother-in-law of Gregorios from Armenia - sisters of Gregorios from Armenia (not named) 	4-(?)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taronites Xenos - wife of Taronites Xenos (not named) - daughter of Taronites Xenos (not named) 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Laviotissa - son of Laviotissa (not named) 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Archontitzes - wife of Archontitzes - mother-in-law of Archontitzes (not named) 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guido Pallavicini - Ubertino, son of Guido - Isabella, daughter of Guido - husband of Isabella (not named) - Tomasso, nephew of Guido 	5

Table 2 (cont.)

Household	Number of members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Alberto Pallavicini, son of Tomasso – Maria de la Carceri, wife of Alberto – Gulielma, daughter of Alberto Pallavicini 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Gulielma, daughter of Alberto Pallavicini – Bartolomeo Zaccaria, first husband of Gulielma – Niccolò Giorgio, second husband of Gulielma – Marulla, daughter of Gulielma Pallavicini and Bartolomeo Zaccaria – Francesco, son of Gulielma Pallavicini and Niccolò Giorgio 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Giacomo Giorgio, son of Francesco – Niccolò III Giorgio, son of Francesco – wife of Niccolò III Giorgio (not named) – Niccolò II Giorgio, son of Giacomo 	4
Average number of members	3.05

With the exception of Naupaktos, the majority of references date to the 12th and 13th centuries, followed by those of the 14th century. This phenomenon may be attributed primarily to the nature of the extant sources, particularly the information – occasionally quantitative in character, a rarity for the Byzantine period – supplied by Benjamin of Tudela and Ioannes Apokaukos. On the basis of the available evidence, it is possible to reconstruct in part the structure of households, thereby permitting certain hypotheses regarding the calculation of the household ratio, while bearing in mind the limitation that, in most instances, not all family members are recorded. In Naupaktos, during the 13th century, the following individuals are attested: Konstantinos Manasses together with his nephew Ioannes Apokaukos; the unnamed wife of a priest and her mother; Alexios Pyrros and his wife Anna, his brother Leon, his unnamed sister, and his father-in-law Kastamonites; Theodoros and his wife Eudokia, along with his father-in-law Georgios Patrinos; Demetrios and his unnamed wife, together with his brother-in-law Nikolaos; Stephanos Mavromanikos and his wife Archonto, his father-in-law Vasileios Klōstos and his mother-in-law Alethine; Konstantinos Monomachos and his unnamed wife, with his father-in-law Theodoros Isaris; Ioannes Stylianos and his wife Kale, together with his father-in-law Konstantinos Mylonas; Konstantinos Papaioannopoulos and his wife Anna; an anonymous couple. In the 14th century, the sources attest to Signorinos (Syniorinus) together with his brother Kalodikos (Calodicus), as well as Chomatianos (Comitianus) and an unnamed nephew; in the 15th century, Gregoriza appears, accompanied by an unnamed son. For Vonitsa in the 13th century, attested individuals include Symeon Sgouropoulos, his

daughter Vlasia and son-in-law Nikolaos, alongside Gregorios of Armenia with his brothers-in-law Georgios and Theodoros and unnamed sisters. In Angelokastro during the same century, Taronites Xenos is recorded with his wife and daughter; in Etera Gardikia, Laviotissa with an unnamed son; and in Anatoliko – Aitoliko, Archontitzes together with his unnamed wife and mother-in-law. In Bodonitsa – Mendenitsa, the data derive exclusively from the Pallavicini family and extend over a time span covering the period from the 13th to the early 15th century. In the 13th century, Guido is mentioned, together with his son Ubertino, his daughter Isabella and her unnamed husband, as well as his cousin Tomasso. In the 14th century, reference is made to Tomasso's son Alberto, Alberto's wife Maria de la Carceri, and their daughter Gulielma; to Gulielma's first husband, Bartolomeo Zaccaria, and her second husband, Niccolò Giorgio; as well as to her children from both marriages, Marulla from the first and Francesco from the second. In the 15th century, the sources attest to Francesco's sons, Giacomo and Niccolò III, Giacomo's son Niccolò II, and the unnamed wife of Niccolò III. The aggregate evidence suggests that the mean household size in the urban centers of Central Greece amounted to 3.05 persons.

Following the Ottoman conquest – an event that marked the beginning of systematically recorded quantitative data – certain urban centers emerged as the most prominent within the region. Among these were Naupaktos, Zetouni – Lamia, Anatoliko – Aitoliko, Vodonitsa – Mendenitsa, and Aetos. In addition to these recognized urban centers, several settlements that ceased to be classified as cities under the Ottoman administrative framework – such as Astakos (Dragamestos), Katochi, Kandela (Varnakas), and Stratos (including the associated sites of Gero-vilia and Sorovigli) – nonetheless exhibited considerable demographic strength, with population figures in some cases comparable to those of the officially designated cities. Based on the earliest available tahrir records for each settlement – acknowledging that data are frequently drawn from multiple registers, as shown in the accompanying table – the total number of households documented amounts to 1,657 in Aetoloakarnania, 878 in Fthiotida, and 103 in Phocis⁴¹. Furthermore, the sources attest to a limited Muslim presence in the region, with 171 and 15 taxable units (*hâne*) recorded in Fthiotida and Phocis, respectively. These figures represent 19.47% and 14.85% of the total registered tax units in each area. Considering the relatively brief interval between the composition of the earliest Ottoman cadastral surveys and the initial consolidation of Ottoman control over the region, these data permit reasonably reliable inferences regarding the demographic and

⁴¹ For this see Γ. ΤΕΡΕΖΑΚΗΣ, *Ο χώρος της Στερεάς Ελλάδος, 12^{ος}-15^{ος} αιώνας: Οι κοινωνικοί και οικονομικοί μηχανισμοί της διαμόρφωσης και εξέλιξης του οικιστικού πλέγματος*, University of Peloponnese 2022 (unpublished post-doc research), p. 83-92, 114, 119-120, 125-130, 134, 143, 148-149, 153-154, 157, 159-160, 165, 167-168 (Aetoloakarnania), 182-187, 196, 208-209 (Fthiotida), 212 (Phocis).

settlement patterns of the immediately preceding period⁴². In this context, it may be inferred that there was no large-scale influx of Muslim populations into the region during the initial phase of Ottoman rule. Rather, the demographic continuity suggests the sustained presence of the pre-existing (i.e., Byzantine-era) Christian population.

Regarding the prevailing economic activities, urban centers functioned predominantly as hubs of commercial and artisanal production throughout the examined period. This phenomenon can largely be attributed to the concentration of surplus agricultural output from the surrounding rural hinterlands within these cities. Focusing on the timeframe spanning from the mid-12th century to the early 15th century, extant evidence drawn from both Byzantine and Western sources underscores the expansion and diversification of commercial and craft enterprises in the principal urban localities of the region, notably Naupaktos⁴³, Vonitsa⁴⁴, Anatoliko – Aetoliko, Zetouni – Lamia⁴⁵, Vodonitsa – Mendenitsa⁴⁶, Ezeros⁴⁷, Echinos⁴⁸, and Etera Gardikia⁴⁹. Particular emphasis should be placed on the case

⁴² For insights into the significance of early Ottoman-period sources for the study of the region, see Α. ΣΑΒΒΙΔΗΣ, *Ιστορικές σημειώσεις...*, p. 472.

⁴³ BENJAMIN OF TUDELA, p. 13; EDRISI, p. 122; N. BEES, *Unedierte...*, p. 84–85, 95–96; Α. ΠΑΠΑΔΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ-ΚΕΡΑΜΕΥΣ, *Ιωάννης Απόκαυκος και Νικήτας Χωνιάτης*, [in:] *Τεσσαρακονταετηρίς της καθηγεσίας Κ.Σ. Κοντου: Φιλολογικά Διατριβαί υπό των μαθητών και θαυμαστών αυτού προσφερόμεναι*, Αθήνα 1909, p. 378; S. PETRIDES, *Lettres...*, p. 18; Γ.Σ. ΠΛΟΥΜΙΔΗΣ, *Εγγραφα για τη Βενετοκρατούμενη Ναύπακτο (1444–1510)*, ΕΕΒΣ 39, 1972–1973, p. 494, 495, 496, 497, 499–500; R. PREDELLI, *Il ciber communis (Liber Plegiorum)*, [in:] *Archivio Veneto III–VIII supplement*, Venice 1872–1874, p. 184–185; Κ.Ν. ΣΑΘΑΣ, *Μνημεία Ελληνικής...*, vol. III, p. 136–137, 142–143, 156, 242, 413–414, 458; T. TAFEL, G. THOMAS, *Urkunden...*, vol. III, p. 251–252; F. THIRIET, *Régestes deliberations...*, vol. III, no. 1612, no. 1630, no. 1650, no. 1687, no. 1867, no. 2274, no. 2505, no. 2938, no. 3095, no. 3113; V. VASILIEVSKIJI, *Epirotica saeculi XIII*, BB 3, 1896, p. 296–299.

⁴⁴ CHRONICLE OF THE TOCCO, p. 226, 498; E. ZIEBARTH, *Κυριακός ο εξ Αγκώνος εν Ηπειρώ*, HX 1, 1926, p. 115; EDRISI, p. 121; B. KREKIC, *Dubrovnik (Raguse) et le Levant au Moyen Âge*, Paris–Den Haag 1961, p. 237–238, 302, 309–310, 388, 409; T. TAFEL, G. THOMAS, *Urkunden...*, vol. I, p. 52, 118, 184; V. VASILIEVSKIJI, *Epirotica...*, p. 252.

⁴⁵ *Acta Albaniae...*, vol. IV, p. 55–59, vol. V, p. 55–59, 120–121, vol. X, p. 159, vol. XXII, p. 85; N. BEES, *Unedierte...*, p. 92–94; Κ.Ν. ΣΑΘΑΣ, *Μνημεία Ελληνικής...*, vol. I, p. 31, 35–36, 214, vol. II, p. 186–189, 220, vol. III, p. 267; T. TAFEL, G. THOMAS, *Urkunden...*, vol. I, p. 471, 491.

⁴⁶ T. TAFEL, G. THOMAS, *Urkunden...*, vol. III, p. 201, 213, 218, 222; F. THIRIET, *Régestes deliberations...*, vol. I, p. 57–58; *Diplomatarium Veneto-Levantinum...*, p. 203; Α. ΤΖΑΒΑΡΑ, *Nicolò I^{er} Zorzi, marquis de Bondonitsa, et son héritage, 1335–1414*, Θη 44, 2014, p. 57–61, 68, 72–75.

⁴⁷ T. TAFEL, G. THOMAS, *Urkunden...*, vol. I, p. 267, 279.

⁴⁸ Γ. ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ, *Νομισματική κυκλοφορία στη Βυζαντινή Θεσσαλία*, [in:] *Το νόμισμα στο Θεσσαλικό χώρο: νομισματοκοπεία, κυκλοφορία, εικονογραφία, ιστορία. Αρχαίοι, Βυζαντινοί, νεότεροι χρόνοι. Πρακτικά συνεδρίου της Γ' Επιστημονικής Συνάντησης*, ed. Α. ΚΥΠΡΑΙΟΥ, Αθήνα 2004, p. 579, 585.

⁴⁹ *Acta Innocentii III. Romani Pontificis Regestorum sive Epistolarum libri XVI*, [in:] *PL*, vol. CCXVI, ed. J.-P. MIGNÉ, Paris 1855, col. 297–298, 304, 591–594, 911; BENJAMIN OF TUDELA, p. 63; Γ. ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ, *Νομισματική κυκλοφορία...*, p. 579–580; T. TAFEL, G. THOMAS, *Urkunden...*, vol. III, p. 195, 205, 223; V. VASILIEVSKIJI, *Epirotica...*, p. 279–280.

of Naupaktos, as the most important urban center of the region. In 1198, in the chrysobull of Alexios III Angelos in favor of the Venetians, it is mentioned among the cities in which the Venetians enjoyed commercial privileges⁵⁰. This reference, combined with the accounts of mid-12th-century travelers such as Idrisi and Benjamin of Tudela, conveys the image of a thriving city with a wide range of economic activities⁵¹. This is also reflected in the treaty of 20 June 1210, by which Doge Pietro Ziani granted Naupaktos/Nepantum to Michael I Komnenos Doukas of Epirus, establishing as a fundamental term of the agreement – as emphasized by A. Savvides – that Venice would retain nominal suzerainty as well as its privileged status in commercial transactions, while a provision was also made to guarantee freedom of navigation⁵². The scale of commercial transactions is also indirectly indicated by reports of lost merchandise due to piracy in the late 12th and early 13th centuries, on routes originating from or passing through the port of Naupaktos⁵³. Even more revealing is the letter of Ioannes Apokaukos to Theodore I Komnenos Doukas. According to the letter, in 1218, Theodore I Komnenos Doukas imposed on the local metropolitan a special levy totaling 1,000 gold coins to cover the expenses of organizing a naval expedition, a measure that provoked a protest from Apokaukos⁵⁴. According to the letter, the taxation of the *paroikoi* under the jurisdiction of the metropolitan amounted to 180 gold coins annually⁵⁵. The issue of over-taxation is highlighted by the indication of the total value of the assets of the metropolitan and the *paroikoi*, which amounted to 1,000 trachea⁵⁶. The letter further details the metropolitan's contributions in the recent past to Theodore I Komnenos Doukas, including unspecified amounts of gold, textiles, provisions, wine, horses, and other livestock⁵⁷. It is noted that the value of the contributions amounted to 343 hyperpyra, reaching a total of 500 when the value of the horses that were offered is included⁵⁸. In another letter from Apokaukos to the intermediary (mesazon) Nikephoros Gorianites, oxen and sheep are mentioned, as well as the provision of bread⁵⁹. The evidence highlights both the substantial local agricultural and pastoral production and the prominent role of Naupaktos, as the surplus from the primary sector was funneled to the city⁶⁰. In 1228, the privileges conferred

⁵⁰ T. TAFEL, G. THOMAS, *Urkunden...*, vol. I, p. 258–272.

⁵¹ IDRISI, *Géographie...*, p. 122; BENJAMIN OF TUDELA, p. 62–63.

⁵² T. TAFEL, G. THOMAS, *Urkunden...*, vol. II, p. 121. For this see A. ΣΑΒΒΙΔΗΣ, *Η Ναύπακτος...*, p. 54.

⁵³ V. VASILIEVSKIJI, *Epirotica...*, p. 296–299.

⁵⁴ S. PETRIDES, *Lettres...*, p. 11.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 13.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 12.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 14.

⁶⁰ The discovery of the so-called “Treasure of Agrinio”, comprising 53 gold coins dating to before 1204 and an additional 253 coins from the reign of John III Doukas Vatatzes (1222–1254), provides

by Theodore I Komnenos Doukas upon the local metropolitan included exemption from specific taxes⁶¹. The metropolitan's former obligations are distinguished into two categories: monetary, as evidenced by the tax demands in coin, and in-kind contributions⁶². A point of particular importance is the exemption from tax levies granted to the labor force subject to the metropolitan's authority⁶³. The data largely reveal the nature of local economic activities, as they refer to the development of the primary sector (agricultural and pastoral activities), handicrafts in the textile industry, and other occupations, such as fishing, which engaged a significant portion of the population⁶⁴. Comparable data are evident for the subsequent period under Venetian rule, demonstrating that the region was integrated into a wider commercial network, with documented trade routes to Methone and Corfu. Additionally, at least one source explicitly attests to the maritime connection between Naupaktos and Alexandria in 1479⁶⁵.

Early Ottoman fiscal registers offer valuable data regarding the taxation responsibilities imposed on urban inhabitants:

evidence that the wider region of Aitolokarnania during the period under study was inhabited by individuals possessing substantial quantities of gold. Furthermore, it underscores the impact of conditions of political and social unrest on monetary circulation, as reflected in the practice of coin hoarding. For the "Treasure of Agrinio", see D.M. METCALF, *The Agrinion Hoard Gold Hyperpyra of John III Vatatzes*, NC 20, 1980, p. 113–131.

⁶¹ V. VASILIEVSKIJI, *Epirotica...*, p. 297: *The confirmation and authentication of the entitlements to various rights, whether ancient or later royal decrees, wills, donations, sealed official documents, customary written and unwritten records, and any other partial or general right, up to the point of being fully recognized by the metropolis.*

⁶² A characteristic example is the *sitarcismós* tax of the castle, which consisted in supplying the castle with provisions. For a more detailed discussion, see N. ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΔΗΣ, *The Role of the Byzantine State in the Economy*, [in:] *The Economic History of Byzantium: From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. A. ΛΑΙΟΥ, Washington 2002, p. 1000.

⁶³ V. VASILIEVSKIJI, *Epirotica...*, p. 298: [...] *and it commands, by the royal authority granted to it by God, that neither the peasants in the surrounding area of Naupaktos nor any of its inhabitants shall be subjected to forced labor, exactions, or any kind of levies by my brother of the kingdom; nor shall the clergy, their draft animals, the tenants, or their livestock be burdened; nor shall the fishermen or others engaged in activities within its domain be drawn into maritime service; nor shall they be prevented from fishing in the sea. Likewise, the artisans under the metropolis – those who work in textiles, tanners, tailors, and unskilled tenants – shall not be conscripted, either in part or entirely, by my brother of the kingdom, nor shall they suffer any harm or exaction from him, as decreed by my kingdom.*

⁶⁴ V. VASILIEVSKIJI, *Epirotica...*, p. 297: [...] *exempting this church from all public taxes, levies, burdens, and liturgical obligations. And it commands that from now on and forevermore this most holy metropolis shall not be subjected to any maritime contribution, to the sitarcismós of any castle, to the provision of construction materials, to the tithe of pigs, or to the demand for coinage, imposed anywhere in the region by the authority of my kingdom, nor to any other tribute, exaction, forced labor, or public assessment, whatever name it might be called, whether existing now or to be devised in the future.*

⁶⁵ Γ.Σ. ΠΛΟΥΜΙΔΗΣ, *Εγγράφα...*, p. 494–495 (9–7–1464); F. THIRIET, *Régestes deliberations...*, vol. III, no. 2274; K.N. ΣΑΘΑΣ, *Μνημεία Ελληνικής...*, vol. III, p. 413–414 (24–3–1432).

Table 3

Cities	Tax charge (in aspra)					
	1485	1521	1528	1530/1531	1562	Average tax burden
Angelokastro ⁶⁶	-	-	21.002	-	-	145.84 (1528)
Aetos ⁶⁷	-	121 and 60 aspra on the monasteries of Agios Nikolaos and Agia Varvara, respectively	-	-	121 and 60 aspra on the monasteries of Agios Nikolaos and Agia Varvara, respectively	-
Anatoliko – Aetoliko ⁶⁸	-	7.270 aspra from operating the local port and 142,000 coins from farming throughout the sanjak	-	-	260.124 aspra from fish farms in the Aspropotamos delta	-
Loidoriki ⁶⁹	8.984	-	-	-	-	87.22 (1485)
Naupaktos ⁷⁰	-	213.830	212.837	-	-	346.56 (1521)
Vlochos ⁷¹	-	127 aspra on the monastery of “Panayoris”	-	-	-	-
Vodonitsa – Mendenitsa ⁷²	37.253	-	-	-	-	132.57 (1485)
Vonitsa ⁷³	-	-	18.484	18.484	-	140 (1530/1531)

⁶⁶ M. KIEL, *Population and Settlement...*, p. 708–709, 722; IDEM, *Αιτωλία-Ακαρνανία...*, p. 105, 107.

⁶⁷ M. KIEL, *Population and Settlement...*, p. 709, 722; IDEM, *Αιτωλία-Ακαρνανία...*, p. 107.

⁶⁸ M. KIEL, *Population and Settlement...*, p. 708–709, 722; IDEM, *Αιτωλία-Ακαρνανία...*, p. 107.

⁶⁹ Γ. ΣΑΛΑΚΙΔΗΣ, Ι. ΘΕΟΧΑΡΙΔΗΣ, *Η κεντρική Ελλάδα...*, p. 187.

⁷⁰ T. GOKBILGIN, *Kanuni...*, p. 258, 277.

⁷¹ M. KIEL, *Population and Settlement...*, p. 727.

⁷² Γ. ΣΑΛΑΚΙΔΗΣ, Ι. ΘΕΟΧΑΡΙΔΗΣ, *Η κεντρική Ελλάδα...*, p. 213.

⁷³ T. GOKBILGIN, *Kanuni...*, p. 260; *Οθωμανικές πηγές...*, p. 91–92.

Table 3 (cont.)

Cities	Tax charge (in aspra)					Average tax burden
	1485	1521	1528	1530/1531	1562	
Zetouni – Lamia ⁷⁴	161.084	–	–	–	–	269.82 (1485)
The average tax burden per household is calculated exclusively for years in which both population data and total tax assessments are available, with the specific year indicated in parentheses						

The extant data underscore the significance of the urban centers of Naupaktos and Zetouni – Lamia, as evidenced by the elevated tax burden per taxable unit. However, the aggregated nature of the surviving fiscal records limits the granularity of tax burdens by economic activity. An exception is provided by Zetouni – Lamia, where 74.95% of the assessed taxes derive from the cultivation and commercial exploitation of indigo, while commercial enterprises constitute 27.95% of the total tax revenue⁷⁵. The residual tax liabilities, which presumably represent a subordinate component, pertain to the production and processing of cereals, fruits and vegetables, rice cultivation, and fishing. This distribution corroborates the participation of urban inhabitants in primary sector activities. It is noteworthy that the professional affiliations of city residents are largely unrecorded, with the sole exception of four Christian individuals in Zetouni – Lamia documented as engaged in the trade of salt⁷⁶. Furthermore, the presence of 84 Jewish households in Naupaktos provides clear evidence of the development of commercial and artisanal sectors, particularly when considered alongside the comparatively higher tax burden imposed on Naupaktos residents relative to other urban centers in the region⁷⁷.

2.3. The villages of Sterea Hellas

Regarding rural settlements, documentary evidence indicates that between the 11th and early 15th centuries, there were 68 settlements in Aetoloakarnania, 13 in Fthiotida, and 3 in Evrytania⁷⁸. In Aetoloakarnania, the settlement network is distributed around the principal urban centers of the region, namely Naupaktos, Vonitsa, Anatoliko – Aetoliko, Angelokastro, and Amphilochia. In Phthiotis, a total of four settlements have been identified, all situated in the periphery of the region's

⁷⁴ Γ. ΣΑΛΑΚΙΔΗΣ, Ι. ΘΕΟΧΑΡΙΔΗΣ, *Η κεντρική Ελλάδα...*, p. 201.

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁷ T. GOKBILGIN, *Kanuni...*, p. 277; also see M. ΚΙΕΛ, *Ναύπακτος...*, p. 263–264.

⁷⁸ For this see Γ. ΤΕΡΕΖΑΚΗΣ, *Ο χώρος της Στερεάς Ελλάδος...*, p. 221–244 (Aitoloakarnania), p. 254–265 (Evrytania), p. 267–275 (Phthiotida).

primary city, Nea Patra. In Evrytania, only three settlements are documented, located to the north of Agrapha. By the mid-15th century, records document the existence of 55 Christian settlements in Evrytania, 49 in Aetoloakarnania, and in Fthiotida, 2 Christian settlements, 1 mixed (Christian-Muslim) settlement, and 1 Muslim settlement⁷⁹. However, by 1485, documentation for Fthiotida indicates a reduction to 22 Christian settlements alongside a single Muslim settlement⁸⁰. The majority of settlements documented in the mid-15th century are likely continuations of pre-existing communities, as evidenced by the temporal proximity of the BBA/MM 10 inventory to the preceding period. The limited presence of Muslims – recorded in only three settlements within Fthiotida – further indicates that the influx of Muslim populations into the region was minimal. Consequently, this demographic factor appears not to have substantially altered the population distribution or the residential network established in the earlier period⁸¹. Concerning the size of the villages, the available data presents the following overall distribution:

Table 4

Population (tax units)	Number of villages
100 >	14
50–99	14
20–49	31
20 <	67

The data indicate that the majority of settlements were relatively small, with most comprising fewer than 20 tax units. Nevertheless, notable exceptions exist, as 14 settlements are recorded with populations exceeding 100 tax units each⁸². Unfortunately, for the period between the 11th and 15th centuries, the available data do not allow for the reconstruction of household structures or the determination of the household ratio. The only documented case concerns a couple from the Malaina region (22 km southeast of Anatoliko – Aetoliko) – a young man

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 221–244, 254–265, 267–275.

⁸⁰ Γ. ΣΑΛΑΚΙΔΗΣ, Ι. ΘΕΟΧΑΡΙΔΗΣ, *Η κεντρική Ελλάδα...*, p. 73, 99, 103, 183, 197, 203, 205, 207, 227, 231, 232, 243, 246, 247, 248; also see Γ. ΤΕΡΕΖΑΚΗΣ, *Ο χώρος της Στερεάς Ελλάδος...*, p. 268–275.

⁸¹ Μ. DELILBAŞI, Μ. ΑΡΙΚΑΝ, *Hicri 859...*, p. 257, 262; Γ. ΣΑΛΑΚΙΔΗΣ, Ι. ΘΕΟΧΑΡΙΔΗΣ, *Η κεντρική Ελλάδα...*, p. 99, 231.

⁸² For the size of medieval Balkan villages, see Α. ΛΑΙΟΥ-ΤΗΜΑΔΑΚΙΣ, *Peasant Society in the Late Byzantine Empire. A Social and Demographic Study*, Princeton 1977, p. 38; Α. ΚΑΪΔΑΝ, *Аграрные отношения в Византии XIII–XV вв.*, Москва 1952, p. 69–70.

and an older woman – who ultimately divorced⁸³. By the mid-15th century, the demographic distribution reveals that Evrytania (2,521 households) and Aetoloakarnania (695 households) were inhabited exclusively by Christians. In contrast, Fthiotida, according to the 1485 census, exhibited a predominantly Christian population, consisting of 1,670 households, alongside a minor Muslim presence totaling 31 households. In 1454/1455, Evrytania registered the highest average population density per settlement with 46.38 households, followed by Fthiotida with 14.5 households and Aetoloakarnania with 14.18 households. By 1485, Fthiotida experienced a marked increase in average settlement size, with the average number of households per settlement rising to 73.95, relative to the earlier BBA/MM 10 register data. These figures suggest that the population experienced limited demographic shifts between the two periods, corroborated by the examination of available anthroponyms from the settlements of Agios Ioannes Prodromos and Kedra/Chorigovo in Evrytania (1454/1455), which further confirms the minimal Muslim demographic presence.

a) Agios Ioannes Prodromos (karye-i Ziliniç)⁸⁴

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Yanis Turkos; Ginis Turkos; Yanis Turkos; Yorgis Yani Turkos; bive Rakovya; Nikolas Raykos; Dimas Raykos; Todoris Paskos; Likas Raykos; Yanis Raykos; Yorgis Raykos; bive Kirana Turina; Yanis Uzguros; Yorgis Uzguros; Petros Uzguros; Yorgis Raykos; Yanis Zoyos; Nikolas Turupos; Istathis Turupos; Mihalis Turupos; bive Istatira-i Kosta; Mihalis Vuhisis (?); Mihalis Petrikusis; Yanis Maravelisis; Yorgis Kondaratos; Mihalis Maravelisis; Dimitris Maravelisis; Gönis Kunduratos; Papas Yani Porotopapa; Yorgis Peçisis; Dimitris Peçis; Nikolas Viratopulos; Papas Istathis; Yorgis Paskos; Dimitris Paskos; Yorgis Turupos; Gönis Turupos; Mihalis Simonisis; Nikos (Yangos?) Simonisis; Istathis Papadopoulos; Istefanos Harakopoulos; Istefanos Çaykas; Manolis Çaykas; Dimitris Çaykas; Yanis Zagoriti; Andreyas Arvanid; bive Kali Bogrena; Pavlos Mihalopoulos; Petros Andiriças; Mihalis Andiriças;

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Gönis Andiriças; Nikolas Andiriças; Istamadis Andiriças; Mihalis Andiriças; Yanis Metaksas; bive Disa (Visa)-i Turko; Yorgis veled-i Turpos; Yorgis Nikola Turpo; Mihalis Metaksas; Yorgis Mihali Turpo; Yorgis Andiriças; Nikolas Andiriças; Dimitris Andiriças; Pavlos Çaykas; Yorgis Çaykas; Kostas Metaksas; Dimitris Çaykas; Istefanos Çaykas; Aleksis Andiriças; Todoris Andiriças; Dimitris Porotopapa;

⁸³ N. BEES, *Unedierte...*, p. 109–110.

⁸⁴ The names of the Christian residents of the above settlements were transcribed from the original and made available to me by professor Konstantinos Moustakas, to whom I express my gratitude.

Yanis Andiriças; Todoris Mihalis; Todoris Çaykas; Petros Turkos; Mihalis Çaykas; Yanis Çaykas; Nikolas Martinos;
Hane: 74, bive: 4

b) Kedra/Chorigovo (karye-i Horikova)

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Yorgis Sakudas; Andreyas Sarkudas; Istathis Lanconatos; Yorgis Horihovidis; Nikolas Horihovidis;

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Nikolas Sosanisis; Todoris Palivotis; Murikis Horihovidis; Yanis Sosanisis; Yorgis Sosanisis; Andreyas Lanconatos; Manolis Horihovidis; Istathis Horihovidis; Yorgis Lanconatos; Yorgis Horihovidis; Nikolas Horihovidis; Dimitris Sosanisis; Todoris Lanconatos; Nikolas Lanconatos; Ginis Dimulas; Yanis Sayinas; Yorgis Sosanisis; Dimitris Vayenas; Yanis Sosanisis; Yorgis Sosanisis; Nikolas Sosanisis; Yorgis Kapuçis; Mihalis Sosanisis; Todoris Sosanisis; Dimitris Sosanis; Mihalis Uskuras; Kostas Sarkudas; Todoris Horihovidis; bive Maria-i Sayta; bive Ifrosini-i Pavlo; bive Istamata Arihotana; Yorgis Sosanisis; Todoris Sosanisis; Mihalis Horihovid; Papas Todoris; Yanis Arkudas; Nikolas Lanconatos; Yorgis veled-i Papa Todoris; Nikolas Horihovid; Yorgis Sosanisis; Raykos Sosanisis; Yanis Arkudas; Yorgis Lanconatos; Manolis Harkovidis; Kostas Baros; Todoris Barusis; Papas Nikolas; Manolis birader-i Papas; Todoris Halkas; Istathis Yorgis;

Hane: 47, Mücerred: 6, bive: 3

The anthroponyms recorded are predominantly of Greek origin, further supporting the limited influx of new settlers into the region. This is evidenced by the village of Agios Ioannes Prodromos, where only a single inhabitant is identified as Arvanitis, while six individuals bear the designation Tourkos (“Turk”). With respect to household structure and the assessment of the household ratio, the anthroponyms recorded in the village of Agios Ioannes Prodromos indicate the presence of families carrying the following surnames: Andiriças (12), Çaykas (8), Maravelisis (3), Paskos (2), Peçisis – Peçis (2), Raykos (6), Turkos (6), Simonisis (2), Turpo (3), Turupos (5). The resulting kinship ties are as follows: Yorgis (son) of ani Turkos, Papas Yani (son) of Porotopapa, Yorgis (son) of Turpos, Yorgis (son) of Nikola Turpo, Yorgis (son) of Mihali Turpo, Todoris (son) of Mihalis. The following families are found in the village of Kedra/Chorigovo: Sakudas – Sarkudas (3), Lanconatos (7), Horihovidis (10), Sosanisis (15). The resulting kinship ties are as follows: Maria widow of Sayta, Ifrosini widow of Pavlo, Istamata widow of Arihotana, Yorgis (son) of Papa Todoris, Manolis brother of Papas, Istathis (son) of Yorgis. A comparable pattern is observed in the analysis of the anthroponyms

documented in the *katholikon* of the Prousos Monastery, dated to 1518. Among the recorded names are: monk Martyrios; priest Konstantinos; Demetrios, son of priest Konstantinos; priest Nikolaos; wife of priest Nikolaos; son of priest Nikolaos; *grammatikos* Theodoros; priest Ioannes; Nikolaos the Serb; wife of Nikolaos the Serb; Ioannes Aravantinos; bishop Makarios; painter Georgios Papadopoulos; Demetrios, son of Georgios Papadopoulos⁸⁵. The mean household size amounted to 2.06 persons.

The majority of the recorded individuals are residents of the wider Prousos region, primarily engaged in the administrative functions of the church and the local monastery. There is no indication of significant migratory movements into the area from earlier periods, with the exception of Nikolaos the Serb, whose surname denotes probable Serbian origin. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that by the early 16th century, there was evidence of a localized influx of Muslim settlers, exemplified by the village of Pozikište. According to M. Kiel, Pozikište, situated in the lower Acheloos region, comprised 286 households whose inhabitants were engaged predominantly in rice cultivation⁸⁶. Although M. Kiel does not explicitly specify the religious affiliation of the inhabitants, rice cultivation in the region is commonly associated with Muslim communities. Consequently, it can be inferred that the residents of Pozikište were most likely Muslims who had recently settled in the area and engaged in rice cultivation⁸⁷.

The examination of archival sources dating from the 11th to the 15th centuries elucidates the progressive development of both the primary and secondary economic sectors. Documentary evidence indicates that the local population engaged extensively in cereal cultivation⁸⁸, viticulture⁸⁹, oil extraction⁹⁰, and animal husbandry⁹¹. Such productive activities appear to have generated surpluses that, in turn, facilitated the expansion of trade networks and artisanal production⁹². Indicatively, we may refer to the testimony of Apokaukos, who mentions

⁸⁵ Π. ΠΟΥΛΓΤΣΑΣ, *Επιγραφαί, ενθυμήσεις και σιγίλλια εξ Ευρυτανίας*, ΕΕΒΣ 3, 1936, p. 264–265.

⁸⁶ Μ. ΚΙΕΛ, *Population and Settlement...*, p. 709; IDEM, *Αιτωλία-Ακαρνανία...*, p. 107, 108.

⁸⁷ For the introduction of rice cultivation, see Κ. ΜΟΥΣΤΑΚΑΣ, *Όψεις της μετάβασης στο οικονομικό και στο δημογραφικό πεδίο*, [in:] ed. Τ. ΚΙΟΥΣΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Η Άλωση της Κωνσταντινούπολης και η μετάβαση από τους μεσαιωνικούς στους νεώτερους χρόνους*, Ηράκλειο 2005, p. 87–105.

⁸⁸ Ν. ΒΕΕΣ, *Unedierte...*, p. 87, 239–241; Σ. ΠΕΤΡΙΔΕΣ, *Lettres...*, p. 7–8; F. ΘΗΡΙΕΤ, *Régestes deliberations...*, vol. II, p. 219.

⁸⁹ Ν. ΒΕΕΣ, *Unedierte...*, p. 62–64.

⁹⁰ Κ.Ν. ΣΑΘΑΣ, *Χρονικόν Γαλαξειδίου ή Ιστορία Αμφίσσης, Ναυπάκτου, Γαλαξειδίου, Λοιδορικού και των περιχώρων, από των αρχαιωτάτων μέχρι των καθ' ημάς χρόνων, μετά προλεγομένων και άλλων ιστορικών σημειώσεων*, Αθήνα 1865, p. 42–44; Β. ΚΑΤΣΑΡΟΣ, *Ζητήματα ιστορίας ενός Βυζαντινού ναού κοντά στο Ευπάλιο Δωρίδος*, Βύζ 10, 1980, p. 35–36.

⁹¹ Α. ΠΑΠΑΔΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ-ΚΕΡΑΜΕΥΣ, *Συμβολή εις την Ιστορίαν της αρχιεπισκοπής Αχρίδος*, [in:] *Recueil de mémoires en l'honneur de l'académicien B.J. Lamanskij*, vol. I, S. Petersburg 1907, p. 245; F. ΘΗΡΙΕΤ, *Régestes deliberations...*, vol. II, p. 219.

⁹² BENJAMIN OF TUDELA, p. 63; Α. ΓΙΑΛΟΥΡΗ, *Αγροικία – βιοτεχνική εγκατάσταση στη θέση «Άγιος Δημήτριος» Καινούργιου Ν. Φθιώτιδας*, ΑΕΘΣΕ 2, 2006, p. 1251–1252; T. TAFEL, G. THOMAS, *Urkunden...*, vol. I, p. 266, 279.

a *paroikia* near Naupaktos, which he ironically characterizes as the “kellathraia monastery”⁹³, and records in detail the local products. He speaks of the storage of goods such as wheat, barley, millet, legumes, straw, and firewood, thereby highlighting the importance of the primary sector in the local economy, particularly cereals, including those that could be used as animal fodder. In the same passage, Apokaukos also refers to animal husbandry and notes the presence of horses, cattle, sheep, geese, pigeons, and dogs⁹⁴. The same source once again confirms the predominant importance of cereal production and animal husbandry in the immediate region of Naupaktos⁹⁵. Additional evidence regarding the activities of the rural population in the Naupaktos area derives from a note found in a document of the Monastery of the Dormition of the Theotokos at Varnakova (14 km NE of Naupaktos), which essentially serves as a chronicle of its history⁹⁶. Among other things, it records the ownership of 670 olive trees and one olive press⁹⁷. This constitutes a rare testimony from a source of the period that provides quantitative data. In any case, the number of trees underscores the scale of the monastery’s landed property and the volume of its production, a fact that rendered the existence of an olive press indispensable for the processing of the crop. A later document of the Venetian Senate, dated 13 January 1458, refers to the productive capacities of the area of Milissi, located near the settlement of Galatas, approximately 20 km southeast of Anatoliko – Aitoliko. This testimony is of major significance, given its chronological proximity to the Ottoman conquest of the region. Specifically, the document records that the area was highly productive, with an annual yield of 300 stara of wheat and 200 stara of barley and millet, while it also sustained the raising of 200 sheep and goats as well as 100 pigs⁹⁸. Thus, it presents the picture of a landscape under intensive exploitation through the cultivation of cereals and the breeding of livestock. By the mid-15th century, the economic structure of the settlements was predominantly agrarian, with a particular emphasis on grain cultivation and viticulture, followed by significant engagement in livestock farming. Furthermore, archival and material evidence points to the existence of ancillary agricultural practices, including the cultivation of fruits and vegetables, as well as “industrial crops” such as cotton, flax, and hemp, which likely sustained local handicraft industries. Additional small-scale agricultural enterprises – comprising walnut, chestnut, lentil, and broad bean cultivation – also contributed to the economic diversity of the settlements⁹⁹.

⁹³ N. BEES, *Unedierte...*, p. 87.

⁹⁴ Α. ΠΑΠΑΔΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ-ΚΕΡΑΜΕΥΣ, *Συμβολή...*, p. 245.

⁹⁵ N. BEES, *Unedierte...*, p. 239–241.

⁹⁶ For the reservations regarding the dating of the note to the 12th century, see Β. ΚΑΤΣΑΡΟΣ, *Ζητήματα ιστορίας...*, p. 35–36.

⁹⁷ Κ.Ν. ΣΑΘΑΣ, *Χρονικόν Γαλαξειδίου...*, p. 42–44; Β. ΚΑΤΣΑΡΟΣ, *Ζητήματα ιστορίας...*, p. 35–36.

⁹⁸ F. THIRIET, *Régestes deliberations...*, vol. II, p. 219.

⁹⁹ For detailed information on local economic activities in the mid-15th century, see Γ. ΤΕΡΕΖΑΚΗΣ, *Ο χώρος της Στερεάς Ελλάδος...*, p. 244–253, 265–266, 275–282.

An analysis of the total tax burden as documented in the BBA/MM 10 inventory reveals that the highest levies on cereals – the primary agricultural product – were imposed upon the inhabitants of Fthiotida, with a rate of 17.63 aspra per tax unit, followed by those in Aitoloakarnania at 13.1 aspra per tax unit, and Evrytania at 6.2 aspra per tax unit¹⁰⁰. Of particular note is the substantially elevated tax rate applied to the Muslim residents of the settlement of Dervisades – Agios Seraphem, who were subject to taxation amounting to 84 aspra per tax unit¹⁰¹. This pronounced discrepancy indicates the likelihood of differentiated fiscal regimes governing the two demographic groups, which may be reflective of the comparatively more intensive production strategies employed by Muslim cultivators, presumably motivated by enhanced profit maximization objectives¹⁰².

The population's engagement in livestock husbandry emerges as a salient aspect of the local economy, as evidenced by the disproportionately high representation of tax units associated with such activities within the fiscal records:

Table 5

Aitoloakarnania	
Total number of settlements	49
Total number of tax units	695
Settlements with a livestock-farming percentage up to 10% on total economic activities	20
Percentage of livestock-farming involved tax units	325 (46.76%)
Altitude	150–1060 m
Settlements with a livestock-farming percentage over 10% on total economic activities	22
Percentage of livestock-farming involved tax units	221 (31.79%)
Altitude	600–1060 m
Evrytania	
Total number of settlements	55
Total number of tax units	2521

¹⁰⁰ For this see *ibidem*, p. 280–282.

¹⁰¹ M. DELILBAŞI, M. ARIKAN, *Hicrî 859...*, p. 257.

¹⁰² For this see Σ. ΑΣΔΡΑΧΑΣ, *Φορολογία και εκχρηματισμός στην οικονομία των Βαλκανικών χωριών*, Μν 8, 1980–1982, p. 1–8.

Table 5 (cont.)

Settlements with a livestock-farming percentage up to 10% on total economic activities	14
Percentage of livestock-farming involved tax units	316 (12.53%)
Altitude	780–1120 m
Settlements with a livestock-farming percentage over 10% on total economic activities	22
Percentage of livestock-farming involved tax units	221 (8.76%)
Altitude	720–1220 m
Fthiotida	
Total number of settlements	4
Total number of tax units	58
Settlements with a livestock-farming percentage up to 10% on total economic activities	1
Percentage of livestock-farming involved tax units	36 (62%)
Altitude	780 m
Settlements with a livestock-farming percentage over 10% on total economic activities	1
Percentage of livestock-farming involved tax units	12 (20.68%)
Altitude	–

Animal husbandry constituted the second most significant economic activity among the inhabitants of the region, with a particular emphasis on the rearing of goats, sheep, and pigs. This pattern is largely attributable to the predominantly mountainous and semi-mountainous topography characteristic of the majority of settlements. The considerable productive capacity of Fthiotida is further substantiated by the highest average household tax assessment, recorded at 8.64 aspra, followed by Evrytania and Aitoloakarnania, with corresponding figures of 5.28 and 4.18 aspra, respectively¹⁰³. As delineated in Table 5, small livestock units predominate across Sterea Hellas, a trend corroborated by the proportion of livestock-related taxation levied within each settlement.

¹⁰³ For this see Γ. ΤΕΡΕΖΑΚΗΣ, *Ο χώρος της Στερεάς Ελλάδος...*, p. 280–282.

3. Conclusion

The systematic study of settlement patterns and the identification of their predominant characteristics provide a critical framework for understanding the economic landscape of Sterea Hellas during the transitional period between the late Byzantine and early Ottoman eras. The spatial organization of settlements, particularly the dichotomy between the mountainous and semi-mountainous regions of Aetoloakarnania and Evrytania and the lowland plains of Fthiotida, played a determinative role in shaping the economic activities of the local populations, specifically their engagement in agricultural production and animal husbandry.

The documentary record for settlement patterns during the late Byzantine period remains notably sparse and fragmented. The extant sources are primarily narrative and historiographical in nature, offering only partial and often incidental information on demographic distribution and economic life. Consequently, comprehensive analysis of the region's socioeconomic conditions prior to the Ottoman conquest is hindered by the paucity of systematic data. Nonetheless, the evidence elucidates the structure of local economic activity, indicating the prominence of the primary sector (agriculture and pastoralism), the production of textiles, and supplementary occupations such as fishing, which sustained a substantial proportion of the population.

The mid-15th century Ottoman cadastre BBA/MM 10 provides detailed fiscal records and a near-comprehensive register of tax-payers for the year 1454/1455. This cadastre is supplemented by subsequent Ottoman tax registers spanning from the late 15th century through the early 17th century, collectively furnishing invaluable quantitative data on local demography, topography, and economic structures. The meticulous enumeration of both Christian and Muslim households within these documents illuminates the ethno-religious composition of Sterea Hellas during the early Ottoman period.

Moreover, the detailed accounting of agricultural and pastoral products alongside the corresponding fiscal revenues serves as a proxy for assessing the productive capacity and economic vitality of the region. Importantly, due to their temporal proximity to the Ottoman arrival, these cadastral records also offer indirect insights into preceding Byzantine conditions, allowing for a diachronic analysis of economic and demographic continuity and change.

The extant data underscores a relatively smooth and gradual transition during the Ottoman annexation, marked by the consolidation and revitalization of the local urban network and the broader inhabited landscape. This process was facilitated by the political reunification of the region under Ottoman administration, which in turn fostered demographic stability and economic resilience. Consequently, the archival evidence challenges narratives of abrupt disruption, instead highlighting processes of adaptation and reorganization that underpinned the region's sustained socio-economic development in the early ottoman period.

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