

Transhumants and Rural Change in Northern Greece Throughout the Nineteenth Century*

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ABSTRACT: This article examines the sedentarization of transhumants in northern Greece within the context of the political, legal, social, and economic transformation of the region that occurred throughout the nineteenth century. Based on a wide range of primary sources, this research conducts a chronological survey of the local actors, events, and institutions with reference to a broader political and economic context. It emphasizes that, in the first half of the century, a provincial-elite regime and imperial policies did not create substantial change in transhumance. In the 1860s, however, economic transformations at both imperial and global levels did accelerate change in the region's land and labour regimes. In response, regional landholders began to institute sedentarization, adopting various legal and economic means based on strategies including negotiation, persuasion, and compulsion.

Every summer, from time immemorial, shepherds have brought their flocks to the high pastures of the Pindos Mountains in the northwest corner of Greece. [...] Milk, feta cheese, and the meat from the lambs are the shepherds' principal source of income. The men spend the summer out on the mountain side. Their families set up home in the village of Samarina, at over 1,600 metres it's the highest village in Greece. [...] At this time of year, it's full to overflowing as thousands of people from the towns and even abroad come home for the August 15th festival of the Virgin Mary to renew old acquaintance and dip their roots in their origins. But these people are Vlachs; they are citizens of the Greek state today, but their forefathers were semi-nomadic shepherds. Although they're all bilingual now, their distinguishing feature is their language, which derives from Latin and not Greek. [...] By October, Samarina has returned to the quieter rhythms of shepherd life.

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Many people have gone down to the lowlands for the winter and soon the shepherds themselves will begin to leave, many now truck their flocks but some still go down on foot during the traditional Dhiava, as this journey is called.¹

The documentary “Dhiava: Autumn Journey” was made in 1999 to record the autumn journey of the shepherds of northern Greece, probably the last generation to migrate on foot with their flocks. Their pastoral lifestyle has indeed existed “from time immemorial”, although its degree of mobility changed tremendously during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This article focuses on the pastoral communities, referred to here as “transhumants”, of northern Greece and will examine their human geography and attempts made throughout the nineteenth century to sedentarize them.² The article discusses various incentives offered to them by provincial and imperial actors to settle and concentrates on the transformation of the institutional dynamics related to land and labour regimes.

Sedentarization of pastoral communities was an important endeavour in and around the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century. Land and labour struggles made it a controversial subject for many social actors, as did human mobilization, changes in frontiers, and policies of centralization and commercialization, although to varying extents in different Ottoman provinces. Certain overall consequences of the imperial political economy of the era, such as effective taxation or centralized administration, have been observed in the sedentarization history of many provinces, but there are different reasons and mechanisms for sedentarization resulting from local dynamics.

The empire’s Arab provinces usually draw most of the scholarly interest on this subject, for example those interested in Transjordan and Syria, who, in turn, emphasize that centralizing efforts by the Ottoman state went hand in hand with expansion of global trade networks – with the effect of promoting a more settled lifestyle.³ However, Ottoman state policy was not limited to creating a more centralized administration, for a “civilizing mission” was an important motive behind Ottoman policies towards the Middle East and North Africa.⁴ Commercial agriculture had a great impact in Egypt, where the chiefs of certain nomadic tribes became prominent landholders.⁵

1. *Dhiava: Autumn Journey* (Watertown, MA, 1999), dir. Tim Salmon and David Hope.

2. “Northern Greece”, “Thessaly”, and “Epirus” are derived from the present-day administrative terms in English and used throughout to refer to the related geography. Similarly, present-day English instead of Ottoman place names are used throughout.

3. For example, see Eugene L. Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850–1921* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 70–95; Nora Barakat, “Marginal Actors? The Role of Bedouin in the Ottoman Administration of Animals as Property in the District of Salt, 1870–1912”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 58:1–2 (2015), pp. 105–134, 106–110.

4. Selim Deringil, “‘They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery’: The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 45:2 (2003), pp. 311–342.

5. Gabriel Baer, “Some Aspects of Bedouin Sedentarization in 19th-Century Egypt”, *Die Welt des Islams*, 5:1 (1957), pp. 84–98, 88–89.

Similarly, in the Çukurova Plain on the eastern Mediterranean, the growing importance of port cities and agriculture in their hinterlands first disrupted the nomads' migration routes, then attracted the nomads themselves.⁶ Elsewhere in southern Anatolia, Tahtacı lumberjacks from the Taurus Mountains were sedentarized with the twin aims of supporting commercial forestry and meeting the central state's demands for military conscription and new tax opportunities.⁷ In central Anatolia, an ideological change towards "equal citizenship" was a major motive for the central state's intervention in the internal administration of tribes.⁸ Meanwhile, in eastern Anatolia there were diverse patterns. Among the Kurds, the Ottoman regime established tribal militias called *Hamidiye* regiments, despite its own settlement policies.⁹ Nevertheless, certain of the pastoral Kurdish tribes were simultaneously pushed towards a settled life simply because they lacked sufficient livestock.¹⁰

In northern Greece, a powerful landowning class introduced a new dimension to the process of sedentarization. Central reforms, mostly initiated by the local landholders, and global economic change placed land at the centre of matters. It follows, therefore, that those landholders, local institutions, and the interaction among them should be more closely analysed to explain how and why sedentarization occurred in that region. The "institutionalist" explanation adopted in this research follows an inductive approach of analysis of certain institutions at the micro level to be able to discern outcomes related to the economic transformation.¹¹ This research does not intend to explain the economic growth of the "Western world",¹² hence it concentrates on institutions other than the market alone. Instead, this research has considered the provincial and imperial governments, land tenure, pious foundations

6. Meltem Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton in the Eastern Mediterranean* (Leiden, 2010), pp. 29–32.

7. B. Akgül-Kovankaya, "Negotiating Nature: Ecology, Politics, and Nomadism in the Forests of Mediterranean Anatolia, 1870–1920" (Ph.D., Boğaziçi University and Leiden University, 2019), pp. 4–5.

8. Yonca Köksal, "Coercion and Mediation: Centralization and Sedentarization of Tribes in the Ottoman Empire", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 42:3 (2006), pp. 469–491, 478.

9. M. van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London, 1992), p. 185.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

11. For the institutional approach adopted here, see Francesco Boldizzoni, *The Poverty of Clio: Resurrecting Economic History* (Princeton, NJ, 2011); Geoffrey Martin Hodgson, "Varieties of Capitalism and Varieties of Economic Theory", in G.M. Hodgson (ed.), *A Modern Reader in Institutional and Evolutionary Economics: Key Concepts* (Northampton, 2002), pp. 201–229, 220.

12. For the origins of the deductive institutionalist approach that focuses on explaining the rise of capitalist markets and economic growth, see Douglass C. North and Robert Paul Thomas, *The Rise of the Western World: A New Economic History* (Cambridge, 1973), pp. 122–127, 150–155. For current examples, see Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty* (New York, 2012); Timur Kuran, *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East* (Princeton, NJ, 2012).

(*vakıf*), as well as the making and implementation of law. I suggest that this analysis of local actors, institutions, and events related to the land and labour regime over a longer period provides a new perspective on the origins and characteristics of the sedentarization process in one particular region.

Estate (*çiftlik*) ownership is a major theme of land and labour discussions in nineteenth-century Ottoman-Balkan historiography. Earlier works usually adopted the view that provincial landowning elites were abusive actors who took advantage of the lack of state authority and caused degeneration of the classical land regime.¹³ However, later research has shown that most of the Balkan provincial elite were title-holders with significant reputations and authority,¹⁴ who stepped in when the central state proposed to restructure the provincial legal administration.¹⁵ New studies highlight too that local communities participated similarly actively in provincial governance.¹⁶ This research therefore interrogates the role in sedentarization of the landholders in northern Greece during the nineteenth century while emphasizing the collectivist nature of the Vlachs.

This article begins by introducing the “transhumant Vlachs” and describing their human geography, then examines the effects on them of the provincial dynamics of northern Greece in the first half of the nineteenth century. The emphasis there will be on Tepedelenli Ali Paşa and his *çiftlik* economy. The focus will then shift to the years from 1840 to 1860 and the efforts by the imperial authorities to settle the Vlachs, followed by a discussion of the provincial landholders and their attempts to promote sedentarization during the 1860s. The final section explains the effects of frontier changes in northern Greece that had occurred by 1881 and returns to imperial sedentarization policy.

This research shows that because their *çiftlik*s benefited from the seasonal movements of the transhumants, the decentralized Ottoman regime and its provincial rulers made no systematic effort during the early nineteenth century to settle the pastoral communities of northern Greece. When those provincial rulers, who had always mediated between the Vlachs and the centre, lost their power, new imperial policies against pastoralism, based mostly on security concerns, were implemented but were not successful in creating sedentarization.

13. For example, Ömer Lütfi Barkan, *Türkiye’de Toprak Meselesi* (Istanbul, 1980), pp. 127–128, 367–368; Halil İnalcık, “The Ottoman Decline and its Effects upon the *Reaya*”, in H. Birnbaum and S. Vryonis, Jr. (eds), *Aspects of the Balkans: Continuity and Change* (The Hague, 1972), pp. 338–354, 341.

14. Socrates Petmezas, “Christian Communities in Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Greece: Their Fiscal Functions”, in Molly Greene (ed.), *Minorities in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, NJ, 2005), pp. 71–127.

15. Alp Yücel Kaya, “The Reorganization of the Ottoman Legal Administration in the Balkans in the Nineteenth Century”, in M. Stolleis, G. Bender, and J. Kirov (eds), *Konflikt und Koexistenz. Die Rechtsordnungen Südosteuropas im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Band 1* (Frankfurt am Main, 2015), pp. 61–101.

16. Ali Yaycıoğlu, *Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions* (Stanford, CA, 2016), pp. 117–156.

Nevertheless, by the 1860s, the sedentarization of Vlachs entered a new phase. Certain politico-economic developments at imperial and global level had significant effects on rural change in northern Greece. Integration into long-distance markets was limited, while long-established commercial networks were lost. There were also changes to provisioning policies, the economy was monetized, and land commodified.

This research argues that the region's landholders developed various sedentarization strategies in response to the rural changes of the 1860s, initiating a new process that led to a more settled society. In order to settle the transhumants at their *çiftliks*, the heterogeneous group of landholders pursued various economic and legal strategies, such as the promise of protection from brigandage, offers of a range of settlement agreements including semi-settled and animal husbandry groups, along with the formulation and enforcement of laws to restrict the pastoral lifestyle.

This study is based on a significant number of primary sources, including account books and other documents not previously utilized. The sources may be classified as four types. First are the official archives of the Ottoman Empire located at the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri, hereafter BOA). Used here are the account books of *çiftliks* in *Bab-ı Defteri* and *Kamil Kepeci* classifications, decisions of the imperial high courts in *Sadaret* and *Meclis-i Vala* classifications, and correspondence between the centre and the province in *Bab-ı Asafi*, *Cevdet Zabtiye*, and *Sadaret* classifications. Second are the archives of the Pertevniyal Valide Sultan Vakfi located at IBB Atatürk Library. The third group of sources are the relevant Ottoman laws and regulations, namely the Ottoman Land Code (1858), Title Deed Regulation (1859), and the Bylaw of Trikala (1860). The fourth and final group of sources are the valuable accounts of travellers such as W.M. Leake (1835) and A.J.B. Wace and M.S. Thompson (1914) (Figure 1).

TRANSHUMANT COMMUNITIES OF NORTHERN GREECE: THE VLACHS OF THESSALY AND EPIRUS

Pastoral communities are usually identified by reference to their environmental and social conditions. Transhumance, semi-nomadism, and nomadism lie on a spectrum and include intermediate types; unlike nomads, however, transhumants have permanent “homes”. Certain members of transhumant communities remain in their homes, while others occupy themselves in agriculture, craftsmanship, or trade.¹⁷ The Mediterranean climate has dry summers, forcing upland migration along extended routes feasible only for sheep and goats. Therefore, that climate and ownership of large estates together

17. E. Estyn Evans, “Transhumance in Europe”, *Geography: Journal of the Geographical Association*, 25:4 (1940), pp. 172–180, 172.



Figure 1. “Vlach muleteers.” Photo taken during Wace and Thompson’s travels with Vlachs. *Wace and Thompson, The Nomads of the Balkans, p. 12.*

facilitated transhumance in southern Europe.¹⁸ Transhumance is characterized by the relationship between seasonally mobile pastoral groups moving their livestock and permanent villages occupied with arable agriculture.¹⁹ Vertical movement between highlands and uplands and agricultural activities in temporary lowland settlements is another strong feature distinguishing transhumance from nomadism, and various forms of it may be observed in the mountainous areas of Europe and Asia.²⁰ In Europe, for example, it is concentrated “in the interface between Mediterranean coastal areas and the Southern Alps”,²¹ and the climate and vegetation of mountainous continental Greece created its own sub-type of transhumance based on sheep and goats. Despite heavy rains and winter snow, the Greek mountain soil does not retain moisture and there is often drought in summer.²²

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 173–174.

19. Schuyler Jones, “Transhumance Re-Examined”, *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 11 (2005), pp. 357–359.

20. Eckart Ehlers and Hermann Kreutzmann, “High Mountain Ecology and Economy Potential and Constraints”, in *idem* (eds), *High Mountain Pastoralism in Northern Pakistan* (Stuttgart, 2000), pp. 9–36, 16.

21. Harald Uhlig and Hermann Kreutzmann, “Persistence and Change in High Mountain Agricultural Systems”, *Mountain Research and Development*, 15:3 (1995), pp. 199–212, 201.

22. Ekaterini Chalkea, “Ecological Adaptations of the Sarakatsani (Epirus–Zagori–Greece)”, in László Bartosiewicz and Haskel Greenfield (eds), *Transhumant Pastoralism in Southern*

Evans, despite emphasizing their habit of vertical and seasonal migration, argued that “the Vlachs are not pure transhumants, but illustrate a gradation between transhumance and nomadism” since they “neglect cultivation” and the whole population migrates.²³ However, this present research will provide examples to challenge Evans’s claim. Although they can be thought of as “seasonal-nomadic” or “semi-nomadic” groups, the migration patterns of the Vlachs are closer to transhumance than to nomadism, hence for this research they have been viewed as “transhumants”.

The transhumant communities in northern Greece comprised different ethno-religious groups, such as Orthodox Vlachs under Greek influence, Greek-Orthodox and Greek-speaking shepherds called Sarakatsanes (referred to as Sarikaçan in Ottoman sources), Koutsovlachs who lived in the summer villages of Pindus, Arvanitovlachs of Albanian origin, Koupatsarei (Kupatshari) who lived in the summer villages of Grevena, and Karagounides who had settled in the lowlands of Western Thessaly.²⁴ There were also Valakhadhes (Vlahadzi), who were Greek-speaking Muslim shepherds inhabiting Grevena and Lapsista, and the group of “hellenized or semi-hellenized Vlachs” called Kupatshari (Koupatsarei), who inhabited Grevena and Pindus.²⁵ Wace and Thompson placed most emphasis on the Vlach, Valakhadhes, and Kupatshari, marking those groups’ settlements on their sketch map. This present research applies the techniques of the Geographical Information System (GIS) to Wace and Thompson’s map in order to pinpoint the exact locations of the seventy-seven villages they marked. This is therefore the first study done on such a scale to show spatial analyses. It not only presents the transhumant settlements of northern Greece, but also offers a contribution in its use of digital humanities in rural history. The results are presented in both a map (Figure 2) and a gazetteer (Table 1).

While the existing literature tends to recognize ethno-religious differences, most of it identifies the region’s transhumants by the general name “Vlach”,²⁶ as applied to the transhumant shepherds of the Greek highlands since the

Europe: Recent Perspectives from Archaeology, History and Ethnology (Budapest, 1999), pp. 181–188, 183.

23. Evans, “Transhumance in Europe”, p. 175.

24. Michel Sivignon, “The Demographic and Economic Evolution of Thessaly (1881–1940)”, in F. Carter (ed.), *An Historical Geography of the Balkans* (London [etc.], 1977), pp. 379–408, 387.

25. A.J.B. Wace and M.S. Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans: An Account of Life and Customs among the Vlachs of Northern Pindus* (London, 1914), pp. 29–30.

26. This article follows the normal usage found in the literature and refers to these different groups as “Vlachs”.

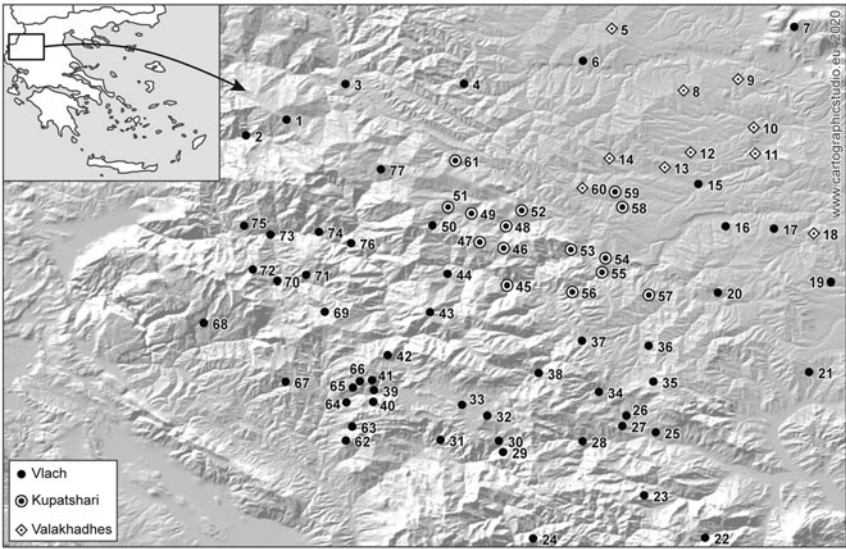


Figure 2. Map of the transhumant villages in northern Pindus, which is the area with the highest transhumant population density. For this research, the original map prepared by Wace and Thompson was digitized and analysed spatially using ArcGIS software in four steps: 1. Geo-referencing: the historical map was geo-referenced, meaning that the raster image of the historical map was associated with a base map with coordinates. In the absence of coastal lines, hill shading matching across both terrain maps was used to mark the reference points. 2. Editing: Wace and Thompson presented their map with the caption “Northern Pindus” and with a legend decoding ethno-religious diversity. The villages on that map have therefore been marked according to ethno-religious diversity in ArcGIS. Village locations were marked in the same way they had been by Wace and Thompson; no corrections were made to their work. 3. Reverse geocoding: after the villages were marked on the coordinated map, their coordinates were determined and the present-day settlements nearest to the historical settlements were identified from the coordinates. 4. Calculation: the distance was calculated from each village to Trikala, because the majority of the transhumants migrated from their villages in the Pindus mountains to the lowlands of Trikala. Since their specific destination *çifilik*s were not indicated in this study, the centre of Trikala was taken as the target. See [Table 1](#) for details.²⁷

eleventh century.²⁸ The Vlachs, or Aromanians, are a large community indigenous to south-eastern Europe who range from Albania to Romania ([Figure 3](#)). From the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, when the Vlachs constituted its principal population, northern Greece was called “the Great Wallachia”, but during the following centuries the Vlachs were gradually Hellenized.²⁹ In time,

27. For the original map see Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, p. 160.

28. John Kennedy Campbell, *Honour, Family, and Patronage: A Study of Institutions and Moral Values in a Greek Mountain Community* (New York [etc.], 1964), p. 2.

29. Jovan Cvijić, *La péninsule balkanique. Géographie humaine* (Paris, 1918), p. 135. The translation is my own.

Table 1. *Gazetteer for transhumant settlements in northern Pindus (based on the locations marked by Wace and Thompson)*

Map id	Ethno-religious id	Name	Nearest present-day settlement	Present-day county	Coordinates	Distance to Trikala (km)	Elevation (metres)
0		Trikala	Trikala	Trikala	21°46'6.1"E 39°33'17.8"N		115
1	Vlach	Furka	Fourka	Konitsa	20°55'43.23"E 40°10'2.411"N	6.2	1537
2	Vlach	Kerasova	Agia Paraskevi	Konitsa	20°52'45.256"E 40°8'46.552"N	10.2	909
3	Vlach	Burbuso	Arrenes	Arrenes	20°59'56.502"E 40°12'34.058"N	24.9	1012
4	Vlach	Zhupan	Vithos	Pentalofos	21°8'33.313"E 40°12'36.671"N	47.0	886
5	Valakhadhes	Tshotili	Tsotili	Tsotili	21°19'30.449"E 40°16'39.631"N	41.6	763
6	Vlach	Krimini	Louvri	Tsotili	21°17'13.546"E 40°14'18.587"N	70.9	793
7	Vlach	Shatishta	Siatista	Siatista	21°32'47.912"E 40°16'44.853"N	54.1	1282
8	Valakhadhes	Tsurkhli	Agios Georgios	Irakleotes	21°24'44.472"E 40°12'7.592"N	61.7	752
9	Valakhadhes	Subeno	Polydendro	Irakleotes	21°28'48.331"E 40°12'58.561"N	63.4	657
10	Valakhadhes	Dovratovo	Vatolakkos	Grevena	21°29'55.072"E 40°9'28.735"N	63.9	576
11	Valakhadhes	Kublari	Myrsina	Grevena	21°29'57.639"E 40°7'25.108"N	55.1	490
12	Valakhadhes	Serini	Mikro Seirini	Grevena	21°25'10.141"E 40°7'34.922"N	52.0	623

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued.)

Map id	Ethno-religious id	Name	Nearest present-day settlement	Present-day county	Coordinates	Distance to Trikala (km)	Elevation (metres)
13	Valakhadhes	Kirakale	Kyrakali	Grevena	21°23'24.897"E 40°6'28.179"N	44.4	686
14	Valakhadhes	Kastro	Oropedio	Ag. Kosmas	21°19'18.47"E 40°7'11.368"N	57.1	733
15	Vlach	Ghrevena	Grevena	Grevena	21°25'48.645"E 40°5'13.563"N	62.5	566
16	Vlach	Eleftherokhori	Eleftherochori	Grevena	21°27'49.292"E 40°2'6.924"N	68.9	611
17	Vlach	Phili	Felli	Grevena	21°31'19.781"E 40°1'55.131"N	74.4	610
18	Valakhadhes	Ventsa	Felli	Ventzi	21°34'11.766"E 40°1'33.51"N	79.3	567
19	Vlach	Dhiminita	Karpero	Hashia	21°35'35.671"E 39°58'6.178"N	66.1	550
20	Vlach	Pleshia	Aimilianos	Grevena	21°27'12.551"E 39°57'18.959"N	83.8	734
21	Vlach	Velemishti	Agiofillo	Hashia	21°33'58.127"E 39°51'28.463"N	93.3	506
22	Vlach	Klinovo	Kleino	Klinovo	21°26'22.941"E 39°39'25.845"N	82.3	932
23	Vlach	Kastania	Kastania	Kastania	21°21'50.845"E 39°42'27.592"N	81.3	1219
24	Vlach	Lepenitsa	Anthousa	Aspropotamos	21°13'43.126"E 39°39'23.869"N	74.6	1287
25	Vlach	Strudzha	Pefki	Malakasi	21°22'42.184"E 39°47'8.51"N	69.8	641
26	Vlach	Dzheneradhes	Koridallos	Koridallos	21°20'26.136"E 39°48'21.484"N	70.8	697

27	Vlach	Libohovo	Panagia	Malakasi	21°20'15.868"E 39°47'32.18"N	69.7	749
28	Vlach	Malakasi	Malakasio	Malakasi	21°17'21.316"E 39°46'25.111"N	65.7	713
29	Vlach	Nkiare	Anilio	Metsovo	21°11'34.779"E 39°45'35.783"N	63.7	1200
30	Vlach	Metsovo	Metsovo	Metsovo	21°11'6.543"E 39°46'31.029"N	60.4	1052
31	Vlach	Vutunoshi	Votonosi	Metsovo	21°6'57.55"E 39°46'36.948"N	59.0	986
32	Vlach	Pulitshaii	Metsovo	Metsovo	21°10'22.905"E 39°48'13.596"N	55.8	1400
33	Vlach	Peritore	Metsovo	Metsovo	21°8'29.96"E 39°49'6.835"N	64.2	1348
34	Vlach	Kutsufliani	Koutsoufliani	Malakasi	21°18'35.758"E 39°50'4.005"N	68.0	889
35	Vlach	Baltinu	Kallithea	Gorgiani	21°22'34.483"E 39°50'53.279"N	63.4	1027
36	Vlach	Bozovo	Prionia	Gorgiani	21°22'8.814"E 39°53'26.95"N	56.0	779
37	Vlach	Turia	Kranea	Gorgiani	21°17'18.749"E 39°53'48.614"N	56.4	950
38	Vlach	Ameru	Milea	Metsovo	21°14'6.229"E 39°51'24.809"N	49.3	1134
39	Vlach	Seshi	Greveniti	Anatoliko Zagori	21°2'2.352"E 39°50'11.89"N	51.3	1221
40	Vlach	Floro	Greveniti	Anatoliko Zagori	21°2'2.352"E 39°49'18.664"N	47.5	1339
41	Vlach	Tsherneshi	Flambourari	Anatoliko Zagori	21°1'57.218"E 39°50'55.25"N	43.9	1654
42	Vlach	Baieasa	Flambourari			39.2	1719

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued.)

Map id	Ethno-religious id	Name	Nearest present-day settlement	Present-day county	Coordinates	Distance to Trikala (km)	Elevation (metres)
43	Vlach	Perivoli	Perivoli	Anatoliko Zagori Grevena	21°3'6.525"E 39°52'41.647"N 21°6'11.345"E 39°55'52.652"N	35.0	1905
44	Vlach	Avdela	Perivoli	Grevena	21°7'28.353"E 39°58'39.907"N	41.9	1295
45	Kupatshari	A.Nikolas	Tsami	Grevena	21°11'50.181"E 39°57'46.791"N	37.3	907
46	Kupatshari	Lavdha	Lavdas	Theodoros Ziakas	21°11'34.779"E 40°0'30.036"N	34.1	1294
47	Kupatshari	Sharghanei	Panorama	Avdella	21°9'52.102"E 40°0'57.561"N	35.3	1522
48	Kupatshari	Vodhendzko	Lavdas	Theodoros Ziakas	21°11'37.346"E 40°2'12.255"N	30.1	1028
49	Kupatshari	Tshurlaka	Panorama	Avdella	21°9'16.165"E 40°3'1.383"N	27.3	1032
50	Vlach	Smiksi	Smixi	Avdella	21°6'21.613"E 40°2'8.324"N	26.9	1627
51	Kupatshari	Philippei	Smixi	Avdella	21°7'28.353"E 40°3'32.82"N	35.8	1226
52	Kupatshari	Tuzhi	Polyneri	Theodoros Ziakas	21°12'59.488"E 40°3'17.102"N	45.0	1101
53	Kupatshari	Spileo	Spilaio	Theodoros Ziakas	21°16'29.978"E 40°0'24.138"N	49.8	864
54	Kupatshari	Zalovo	Parorio	Theodoros Ziakas	21°18'53.869"E 39°59'49.18"N	50.7	786
55	Kupatshari	Monakhiti	Monachiti	Theodoros Ziakas	21°18'50.446"E 39°58'43.622"N	49.3	735

56	Kupatshari	Labanitsa	Monachiti	Theodoros Ziakas	21°16'36.965"E 39°57'22.306"N	58.1	1019
57	Kupatshari	Kipurio	Kipourio	Gorgiani	21°22'10.24"E 39°57'11.812"N	48.2	782
58	Kupatshari	Mavranei	Mavronoros	Theodoros Ziakas	21°20'19.006"E 40°3'32.296"N	46.4	664
59	Kupatshari	Mavronoro	Mavronoros	Theodoros Ziakas	21°19'46.491"E 40°4'39.087"N	42.0	752
60	Valakhadhes	Vriashteno	Kalirachi	Ag. Kosmas	21°17'21.031"E 40°4'56.109"N	24.0	868
61	Kupatshari	Dusko	Dotsiko	Dotsiko	21°8'0.582"E 40°6'54.576"N	57.3	1169
62	Vlach	Dreshteniku	Itea	Anatoliko Zagori	20°59'59.623"E 39°46'30.372"N	55.0	1016
63	Vlach	Grebenitsi	Greveniti	Anatoliko Zagori	21°0'27.86"E 39°47'27.578"N	50.7	987
64	Vlach	Doliani	Doliani	Anatoliko Zagori	21°0'2.418"E 39°49'14.678"N	48.3	940
65	Vlach	Dragari	Flambourari	Anatoliko Zagori	21°0'32.936"E 39°50'22.665"N	47.4	1203
66	Vlach	Makrini	Flambourari	Anatoliko Zagori	21°1'4.082"E 39°50'47.038"N	46.4	1335
67	Vlach	Phrangadhes	Kastanonas	Tymphaea	20°55'36.578"E 39°50'45.667"N	37.7	1216
68	Vlach	Tsepelovo	Tsepelovo	Tymphaea	20°49'37.206"E 39°55'8.303"N	34.4	1308
69	Vlach	Laka	Laista	Tymphaea	20°58'27.708"E 39°55'50.299"N	28.6	1256
70	Vlach	Dobrinovo	Iliochoiri	Tymphaea	20°55'0.071"E 39°58'9.25"N	27.7	839
71	Vlach	Paliohori	Laista	Tymphaea		27.0	1136

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued.)

Map id	Ethno-religious id	Name	Nearest present-day settlement	Present-day county	Coordinates	Distance to Trikala (km)	Elevation (metres)
72	Vlach	Leshnitsa	Iliochori	Tymphaea	20°57'5.851"E 39°58'36.79"N	20.5	1288
73	Vlach	Padzi	Pades	Konitsa	20°53'14.826"E 39°58'52.526"N	20.4	716
74	Vlach	Armata	Armata	Konitsa	40°1'29.83"N 20°57'59.756"E	19.7	892
75	Vlach	Palioseli	Palaioselli	Konitsa	40°1'41.624"N 20°52'33.755"E	23.6	1064
76	Vlach	Briaza	Distrato	Distrato	40°2'11.106"N 21°0'23.505"E	15.6	1219
77	Vlach	Samarina	Samarina	Samarina	40°0'56.411"N 21°2'36.986"E	128.3	1629
					40°6'18.614"N		

Legend:

Map id: location of villages marked on [Figure 2](#)

Ethno-religious id: ethno-religious identity of each village according to Wace and Thompson's map

Name: name of settlement according to Wace and Thompson

Nearest present-day settlement: name of the nearest settlement still existing today

Present-day county: name of the Greek county to which a place belongs

Coordinates: geographical coordinates in degrees, minutes, seconds

Distance to Trikala (km): distance from settlement to the centre of Trikala in kilometres

Elevation (m): height in metres above mean sea level



Figure 3. This map shows the Vlach areas in the southern Balkans and their population densities. For this research, the original map prepared by Wace and Thompson was digitized and analysed spatially using ArcGIS software in the following steps: 1. Geo-referencing; the historical map was geo-referenced using the coordinates of a base map. 2. Editing; Wace and Thompson presented their map with the caption “Sketch map of the southern Balkans. The principal Vlach areas are indicated by dots”. Areas were indicated by dots in three different levels of density, but no further written information was given. The same areas were therefore marked using ArcGIS with their different density levels.³⁰

the status of “Vlach” was associated not only with ethnicity, but also a socio-professional position. The Vlachs differed in that they were not settled peasantry

30. For the original map, see Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, p. 206.

but had adopted patterns of migration that we may safely define as transhumance.³¹ In the late nineteenth century, an estimated 150,000 to 160,000 Vlachs were scattered across 154 Vlach settlements throughout Epirus and Thessaly.³² Providing accurate population figures for a pastoral community that has been defined by various ethno-religious identities was a challenging task in the past and remains so today, but based on the criterion of fluency in their language there are now fewer than 100,000 Vlachs in Greece, the majority of whom still live in Epirus and Thessaly.³³

The Vlachs in northern Greece based their transhumance patterns on regular twice-yearly migrations between Epirus and Thessaly. Traditionally, they inhabited the wooded slopes of northern Pindus between Epirus and south-western Macedonia, beginning to move down to the plains of Thessaly and Macedonia in September, taking their animals with them.³⁴ At least until the mid-nineteenth century, only a few families overwintered in their mountain villages, they being millowners needing to maintain their businesses and the watchkeepers of the villages.³⁵ A number of Vlach families returned from the plains to the mountains at the earliest on 6 May, St. George's Day, while most other Vlach families preferred to wait until the great fair of St. Akhilios, which took place from 29 May to 5 June.³⁶ In a few less well-observed cases, Vlachs whose summer pastures were insufficient moved permanently to set up home in other villages.³⁷

Thessalian geography and land-use practices played an essential role in the dynamics of the Vlach autumn migration. Thessaly includes the largest plains in Greece, the land there being ringed by mountains and separated by highlands into two large lowlands in the east and west.³⁸ The region displays varied

31. Fikret Adanır, "The Ottoman Peasantries, c. 1360–c. 1860", in Tom Scott (ed.), *The Peasantries of Europe: From the Fourteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries* (London [etc.], 1998), pp. 269–310, 275; Tom Winnifrith, "The Review of 'A.J.B. Wace and M.S. Thompson, Nomads of the Balkans-The Vlachs'", *British School at Athens Studies*, 17 (2009), pp. 67–75, 67; Vjeran Kursar, "Being an Ottoman Vlach: On Vlach Identity(ies), Role and Status in Western Parts of the Ottoman Balkans (15th–18th Centuries)", *OTAM*, 34 (2013), pp. 115–161, 116–118.

32. Cvijić, *La péninsule balkanique*, p. 162.

33. Thede Kahl, "The Ethnicity of Aromanians after 1990: The Identity of a Minority that Behaves like a Majority", *Ethnologia balkanica*, 6 (2002), pp. 145–169, 153.

34. Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, pp. 46–48. For detailed accounts on pastoral migrations of Vlachs, see Cvijić, *La péninsule balkanique*, pp. 122–125 and 177–184; Fikret Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu* (Istanbul, 1996), p. 7.

35. Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, pp. 46–48; William Martin Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam, 1967, reprint of the London 1835 edition), pp. 425–426.

36. Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, pp. 11, 48.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 176.

38. Statistics prepared by the Ministry of Economic Affairs in 1896 demonstrate that the Thessalian lowlands covered 4,000,000 acres (16,187 km²). Cited in N.Δ. Πάππος, *Ζητήματα αγροτικής οικονομίας εν Θεσσαλία: Αι πραγματικά συνθήκαι της εγγείου παραγωγής και η οικονομική θέσις των διαφόρων αγροτικών τάξεων* (Αθήνα, 1907), p. 4 [N.D. Pappos, *Issues of*

plant cover, stemming mainly from a climate with wide differences in altitude, humidity, and coastal effects.³⁹ During the long nineteenth century, there were three dimensions to Thessaly's rural settlement, labour regime, and land use. First were the grain-producing *çiftliks* in the lowlands, then there were the highlands with their small peasant villages, and thirdly the transhumant shepherd Vlachs migrated between their summer residences and *çiftliks*, which had a symbiotic relationship with the highland settlements.⁴⁰

That relationship was based on the balancing of agriculture, animal husbandry, and trade, in which the Vlachs fulfilled numerous critical roles. They grazed their cattle, sheep, and especially goats in eastern Thessaly, a region primarily consisting of fallow lands that were crucial for wheat cultivation. They also rented land for its "stubble", the part of the crop left in the soil after the harvest, commonly gathered by shepherd communities. Additionally, they rented permanent *çiftlik* pastures for animal grazing and lived in the *çiftliks* during the winter.⁴¹ Throughout winter they worked at high-quality cotton, wool, silk, and goat-leather handicrafts to trade with the *çiftliks*.⁴² As a result, they acquired reputations as craft artisans and set up guilds for tinkers, locksmiths, silversmiths, tailors, bricklayers, masons, and so on.⁴³ They were also famous for textile production,⁴⁴ while their caravan trade transported goods from the Adriatic coast to the Aegean, trading along the way on the plains of eastern and western Thessaly.⁴⁵ They were among the major meat-providers not only to the towns of Thessaly, but also to the capital Istanbul, via the Aegean Sea port of Volos. In their major role in grain provision to the Ottoman capital they also transported agricultural produce from

Rural Economy in Thessaly: The Actual Conditions of Land Production and the Economic Position of Different Rural Classes (Athens, 1907)], p. 4.

39. Sivignon, "The Demographic and Economic Evolution of Thessaly", p. 390; Michel Sivignon, *La Thésalie. Analyse géographique d'une province grecque* (Lyon, 1975), p. 67.

40. Socrates Petmezas, "Recherches sur l'économie et les finances des villages du Pélion" (Ph.D., EHESS, 1989), p. 758.

41. Richard Lawless, "The Economy and Landscapes of Thessaly during Ottoman Rule", in Carter, *An Historical Geography of the Balkans*, pp. 509–515, 520.

42. Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, pp. 279–287.

43. Stoica Lascu, "Balkan Vlachs – Autonomies and Modernity", in Maria Baramova *et al.* (eds), *Power and Influence in South-Eastern Europe, 16th–19th Century* (Zurich [etc.], 2013), pp. 191–207, 199.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 203.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 193. In the 1810s, Leake, who observed Ali Paşa's period, defines the Vlachs of Thessaly as "carriers and shepherds". See Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, pp. 425–426. As the British Consul-General Blunt observed in the 1870s and 1880s, "A considerable quantity of cheese made in the Vlach villages is also sent from here to Italy and the Levant". See American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Gennadius Library Archives, Rare Book Collections, "Great Britain, Parliament (1879), Correspondence Respecting Insurrections in Thessaly and Epirus: Presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty, 1879–1880. Series: Turkey: no. 32. London: Harrison, [1879–1880]", p. 14.

Thessaly's *çiftlik*s to the ports, and in return for fiscal and administrative privileges the Ottoman state held them responsible for the safety of mountain and overland routes from banditry.⁴⁶

PROVINCIAL NOTABLES AND TRANSHUMANTS UP TO THE 1840S

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the provincial organization of the Ottoman Empire was based on a decentralized political and fiscal institutional order established through negotiation and cooperation between local and imperial authorities.⁴⁷ The relationship between transhumant communities and imperial rule was therefore established through a network of provincial notables. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries especially, the rural areas of northern Greece had been under the control of pious foundations called *vakıfs*, most of which in Thessaly and Epirus were held by the mother sultans, the Valide Sultan of the Ottoman dynasty.⁴⁸ Until the 1810s, the region's Vlach districts too were under the protection of the Valide Sultan, keeping them free from the "extortions of each local pasha in turn".⁴⁹ They were, in fact, rather prosperous in comparison with the lowland peasants and had even established trade colonies in central Europe.⁵⁰

However, the rise in Epirus and Thessaly of local notable Tepedelenli Ali Paşa not only challenged the authority of the absentee mother sultans, but also affected the living and working conditions of Vlachs.⁵¹ Tepedelenli Ali Paşa began his career as the guardian of the mountain passes between Epirus and Thessaly, a strong factor in his rising power,⁵² although he partly owed his ascent to the presence of the transhumant Vlachs. Like the local notables of his era, Ali Paşa was granted official governmental posts in return for,

46. Adanır, "The Ottoman Peasantries", p. 305; Kursar, "Being an Ottoman Vlach", p. 122.

47. See, for example, Ariel Salzmann, "An Ancien Régime Revisited: 'Privatization' and Political Economy in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire", *Politics & Society*, 21:4, pp. 393–423; Yayıoğlu, *Partners of the Empire*; Antonis Hadjikyriacou, "Revisiting the Millet Debate: The Theory and Practice of Communal Representation in Pre-Tanzimat-Era Cyprus", in Marinou Sariyannis (ed.), *Political Thought and Practice in the Ottoman Empire* (Rethymno, 2019), pp. 71–96.

48. Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi*, vol. VIII (Istanbul, 1996), p. 83.

49. Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, pp. 185–186, 195, 208.

50. Traian Stoianovich, "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant", *The Journal of Economic History*, 20:2 (1960), pp. 234–313, 277.

51. For the land regime in Thessaly during Ali Paşa's rule, see Fatma Öncel, "Land, Tax and Power in the Ottoman Provinces: The Malikane-Mukataa of Esma Sultan in Alasonya (c.1780–1825)", *Turkish Historical Review*, 8:1 (2017), pp. 54–74, 63.

52. Dimitris Dimitropoulos, "Aspects of the Working of the Fiscal Machinery in the Areas Ruled by Ali Paşa", in Antonis Anastasopoulos and Elias Kolovos (eds), *Ottoman Rule and the Balkans, 1760–1850: Conflict, Transformation, Adaptation* (Rethymno, 2007), pp. 61–72, 70.

among others, a promise to ensure the settlement of the transhumants.⁵³ Consequently, Ali Paşa and his men continually attempted to plunder Samarina, the major centre of the Vlachs.⁵⁴ As Ali Paşa became the supreme power in the region in the early nineteenth century, a significant part of the transhumant Vlach community in Epirus fell into his sphere, which resulted in the eradication of their former privileges, particularly their tax exemptions.⁵⁵ The reactions of the Vlachs varied; some of them fled their summer village of Samarina, some co-operated with Ali Paşa and enjoyed new privileges by joining his entourage as tax collectors and land stewards, while others continued transhumance but now under Ali Paşa's conditions.⁵⁶

That latter group, who continued their transhumant lifestyle between the upland villages and lowland *çiftlik*s – both of which were controlled by Ali Paşa – actually faced no great changes. They continued to rent *çiftlik* pastures for their animals, they were not forced to settle permanently in the lowlands, and were probably not forced from animal husbandry into arable agriculture. An important reason for this was that the economic dynamic based on symbiosis between animal husbandry and agriculture continued in Ali Paşa's *çiftlik*s, since winter pasture rents usually constituted almost half the cash revenues for the *çiftlik*s.⁵⁷

After Ali Paşa's reign ended in the 1820s, the ensuing power vacuum in Thessaly created difficulties for the Vlachs. Large-scale brigandage increased and the insecurity of mountain passes made their journeys more difficult. Moreover, the Greek revolution of 1821 "laid all wealthy Christian villages open to suspicion and plunder"⁵⁸ while another important transformation was the introduction of "*beğlik*", a system of centrally enforced sheep tax. The system was organized through local notable Balkan families, and one wing of it encompassed the route from Epirus to eastern Macedonia.⁵⁹ Seeking protection against brigandage, the Vlachs continued to winter in lowland *çiftlik*s, but that was not a desirable option for them because the cost of grazing their animals in *çiftlik* pastures dramatically increased after the

53. Reşat Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants, and Refugees* (Washington, DC, 2009), p. 83.

54. Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, p. 147.

55. *Ibid.*, pp. 150–151, 187.

56. *Ibid.*, pp. 152, 205.

57. For instance, in Ali Paşa's *çiftlik*s at Alasonya, winter pasture rent (*koyun kışlası*) constituted almost half of total cash revenue. See Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri [hereafter, BOA], D.BŞM.MHF.d.13300. For the method of calculation, see Fatma Öncel Yusufoglu, "Agrarian Relations and Estate (*Çiftlik*) Agriculture in Ottoman Thessaly (c.1780–1880)" (Ph.D., Boğaziçi University, 2018), pp. 114–115.

58. Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, p. 187.

59. Andreas Lyberatos, "Men of the Sultan: The *Beğlik* Sheep Tax Collection System and the Rise of a Bulgarian National Bourgeoisie in Nineteenth-Century Plovdiv", *Turkish Historical Review*, 1 (2010), pp. 55–85, 62.

*çiftlik*s were confiscated from Ali Paşa by the Ottoman state. In fact, over less than a decade the *çiftlik*s doubled what they charged for grazing.⁶⁰

Nevertheless, despite the *çiftlik*s' increasing their revenues from rent paid by the Vlachs, the central Ottoman authority did not benefit in the same way. During Ali Paşa's period, almost half the cash revenue of the *çiftlik*s was sent to the central treasury, but that proportion decreased to fifteen per cent after Ali Paşa.⁶¹ The main reason for the decrease was that, in the post-Ali Paşa period, the *çiftlik* superintendents appointed as intermediaries by the central authority and the local power-holders named as *kocabaşı*, *subaşı*, *sekan*, *kabya* increased their shares of the revenue. The *çiftlik* superintendent's annual cash rent from the pastures was around 55,000 *guruş*, ten times more than the treasury's share.⁶² Consequently, the central Ottoman power began to believe that it was seeing too little profit from the transhumant Vlachs. Economic and political motivations therefore coincided in the fear that the Vlachs might join the region's rebel groups. The result was attempts by the central government to sedentarize the Vlachs.

CENTRAL ATTEMPTS AT SEDENTARIZATION IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

The 1840s marked the beginning of long and difficult decades for the Vlachs. Their transhumant status became an official concern for a number of reasons and eventually the matter of their sedentarization came under consideration. However, that was not an unchallenged process, either for the state authorities or the Vlachs. The seasonal migration of Vlachs was from the sub-province of Ioannina to the sub-province of Trikala. Clearly, therefore, the consensus and cooperation of the governors of those two administrative regions were prerequisites for the Vlachs' sedentarization. However, not only did the local governors fail to establish such cooperation, the local and central Ottoman authorities too experienced certain disagreements on the matter. For their part, the Vlachs themselves at the time never accepted sedentarization unanimously and most of them continued their transhumance.

It was during the Income (*Temettuat*) Surveys of 1845 that, for the first time, the transhumant status of the Vlachs became an official question for the Ottoman authorities. In an effort to fulfil the *Tanzimat* Edict of 1839, Income Surveys assessed tax obligations according to each household's ability

60. In 1822, annual pasture rent per *çiftlik* became 5,700 *guruş* in Thessaly. See BOA.KK.d.7461. For the method of calculation, see Öncel Yusufoglu, "Agrarian Relations and Estate (*çiftlik*) Agriculture", pp. 146–147.

61. Comparison of BOA.D.BŞM.MHF.d.13300 and BOA.KK.d.7461.

62. BOA.KK.d.7461.

to pay.⁶³ For example, a document dated 1845 reveals the governor of Ioannina asking the central authority in Istanbul whether or not the Vlach communities and their income should be registered in the Income Surveys.⁶⁴ The same local governor presented the Vlachs as a large community keeping sheep and horses, adding that they were not registered in previous population censuses because of their regular migration to summer and winter pastures in the region. The governor stressed, however, that they were paying all currently due taxes and dues to the authorities. The local governor implicitly objected to including the Vlachs in the Income Surveys and therefore in the new tax regime for three reasons. Firstly, because the settled communities needed the Vlachs to transport grain produced in imperial *çiftliks* and elsewhere; secondly, because the total sum of the dues and taxes the Vlachs were already paying was greater than that of the taxes paid by the settled communities; and thirdly, because if they were oppressed they might very well flee to the Greek side. Nevertheless, the governor felt obliged to ask for official instructions from the centre. In the end, the central decision concurred with local opinion, the matter was postponed, and the Vlachs ordered to be kept exempt from the new income registers for the time being.⁶⁵

That document from 1845 reveals a critical but otherwise hidden role of the Vlachs in the *çiftlik* economy, namely that it was their job to transport grain both within and outside Thessaly. Given that the region was divided by mountains and that brigands had become a major problem, the safe and regular flow of produce was vital to the Thessaly *çiftliks*. In the absence of workable alternatives, transhumant Vlachs were a good solution to the problem, and that helped delay their sedentarization.

In 1857, however, the Grand Vizier passed on the official decision taken by Meclis-i Vala (The Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinance) to settle the Vlachs in order to eliminate their alleged links to brigandage.⁶⁶ The uprisings in Ioannina and Trikala during 1854–1855 had created a fear in the state authorities that transhumant groups would join the brigands, but even so it was a dramatic change to the official status of Vlachs within the Ottoman order. The Vlachs had been traditional allies of the empire since the conquest of the Balkans and had long ensured the security of the mountain passes.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, the text of the 1857 decision reveals the official stance regarding their migration patterns, the political motives behind their sedentarization, and the proposed method of implementation:

63. Stanford J. Shaw, "The Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Tax Reforms and Revenue System", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 6:4 (1975), pp. 421–459, 422.

64. BOA.A.DVN.MHM.2/29.

65. *Ibid.*

66. BOA.A.MKT.UM.273/96.

67. For instance, see Kursar, "Being an Ottoman Vlach", p. 132.

During summers, Vlachs are living in Samarina, Avdela, and Perivoli, villages of Konitsa and Grevena in the sub-province of Ioannina. These communities are leaving their villages during winter with their families in order to graze their animals and move towards the winter pastures in the villages and *çiftlik*s of Trikala. Among them, there are people aiding thieves, and they are brigands themselves. In order to prevent these illegal acts, the Vlach families are to be prohibited from transhumance. Only a necessary number of shepherds can bring the sheep to the winter pastures. These families will be permanently settled to proper places, their population will be recorded, and the proper amount of taxes and dues for exemption from military service will be collected.⁶⁸

Although the official argument viewed the Vlachs as aiding the brigands, they were themselves victims of brigandage during the 1850s. Their money was extorted from them, their animals and valuable goods expropriated, and finally their houses were burnt down during the retreat of the brigands.⁶⁹

In fact, the settlement decision of 1857 did not bring any immediate change to the long-established migration pattern of the Vlachs. A document dated 1859 from the governor of Trikala attests that many Vlachs disobeyed the travel ban and some hundreds of families moved from Ioannina to Trikala for the winter.⁷⁰ The governor stated that it was impossible to return them with his few gendarmes, and that, in any case, further oppression would create tension. Moreover, any attempt to return them during the winter would have caused their deaths, which would have been against the wishes of the state. The Vlachs caused no trouble during their stay in Trikala, so the governor implored that precautions be taken by Ioannina's governor to prevent the Vlachs from starting their next autumn migration from there to Trikala.

When the decision to settle the Vlachs was applied more rigidly, the community raised objections. In 1860, large Vlach communities from villages in Ioannina were prohibited from wintering in Trikala⁷¹ because the settlement decision of 1857 began to be applied, so that only a few shepherds were permitted to bring their stock to the winter pastures of Trikala, and then only on condition that they leave their families and the rest of the community behind. However, the Vlachs of Ioannina sent a petition claiming that physical conditions made it impossible to stay where they were in winter and that they wished to continue their practice of moving their communities to Trikala for the winter and returning together to Ioannina for the summer. But the Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinance refused their request and repeated its 1857 decision to allow only the shepherds with their flocks to go to the winter pastures. The rest of the Vlach community were to be permanently settled. The security discourse behind that decision was as follows. Vlachs were not

68. BOA.A.MKT.UM.273/96.

69. Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, pp. 155, 188.

70. BOA.C.ZB.47/2329.

71. BOA.A.MKT.MVL.115/96.

settled anywhere, they did not have a homeland, and were not subject to taxation. They were in a state of tribe and transhumance because they were migrating in summer and winter. Moreover, most of them aided the bandits and acted as brigands during the Greek issue. The head of the community was invited by the local government, the total number of the community was recorded, and a joint surety contract (“*kefalet-i müteselsile*”) was assigned to them.⁷² The new practice of keeping the families in Ioanninan pastures and sending shepherds and animals to Trikala was decided upon the consent of the community. Plus, many families were permanently settled in villages of Ioannina, Trikala, and Bitola. Any decision reversing the travel ban on the families risked motivating the newly settled ones to leave their villages and return to their transhumant status, and this would have violated security.⁷³

The Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinance’s decision to settle the Vlachs was imposed with the following logic.⁷⁴ Firstly, there was deemed to be no need for a new population census because the Vlachs had already been recorded; they came under *kefalet-i müteselsile*, with records kept in Ioannina. Secondly, it was necessary to send livestock and shepherds to winter pasture during winter, which would pose no threat to good order; and thirdly, the rest of the community would be permanently settled in their villages. Their tents, except for the few needed for their animals, were to be sold by the local assembly (*meclis*) and the money returned to the community.

The sale of the tents was sought as a precautionary measure, to force the Vlachs to settle. The tents – simple but effective – were actually made from long and very thick blankets with thin crossbars as support, and the Vlachs used them as shelter from full sun or heavy rain to help sustain their migratory patterns.⁷⁵

The repeated decisions that the Vlachs should be settled were not so easily applied. The sources reveal that, in 1860, the lack of cooperation between the governors of Ioannina and Trikala created a dispute between them.⁷⁶ During October 1860, the latter wrote to the former four times, reminding him to follow the procedure of the travel ban on the Vlachs, which required him to prevent them from migrating to Trikala during the autumn. The Trikala governor asked first that the district governors and mountain guards of Ioannina be warned to be more careful in this matter. He went on to point out that many Vlachs had already crossed the mountains to Kalabaka, while the remaining Vlach population, following hard on their heels, were already almost there. The Vlachs were refusing to return, and it would be much more difficult to send them back once the place had become overcrowded

72. For “*kefalet-i müteselsile*”, see Yayınoğlu, *Partners of the Empire*, p. 150.

73. BOA.A.MKT.MVL.115/96.

74. *Ibid.*

75. Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, p. 15.

76. BOA.MVL.921/45.

with the newly arriving Vlachs. The governor of Ioannina replied that the responsible officials had been informed and were doing their best to stop the families still in Ioannina from setting out and return those already on the way. Meanwhile, a collective petition of Vlach families claimed they had not been informed of the travel ban by the governor of Ioannina until half their population had already been on their way for a month, while the rest had recently set off.⁷⁷ With their journey halted on the mountains they sent representatives to Istanbul to ask permission to travel, for without it their families, waiting on the mountains, would not be able to survive. They also said that they could not live in their home villages during winter because of the harsh weather.

Finally, the governor of Trikala wrote to the Grand Vizier (*Sadaret*) for a solution. The governor stated that, although Trikala was following the orders issued the year before on the travel ban for the Vlachs, Ioannina's officers had proved to be ineffective and as a result the Vlachs had reached Trikala. The Trikala governor then claimed that accepting the Vlachs at Trikala would violate the order to ban them from travelling, but that refusing them access would subject their crowded community of 8,000–10,000 people to harsh winter conditions. The governor also supported the Vlachs' claim that they had not been informed in time by Ioannina's governor. The sources do not include the Grand Vizier's reply, but it is not difficult to guess it from similar contemporary ones. The usual reply, as in 1861, allowed their one-off passage this year in view of the harsh weather, but all measures must be taken to prevent their passage the following year.⁷⁸

1860S: A NEW CONTEXT FOR SEDENTARIZATION

The sedentarization of transhumant communities in northern Greece entered another phase during the 1860s as the region's landholders began to take new action to settle pastoral communities on their landed estates. Before discussing the details of their action, the effects on the region of political-economic developments at imperial and global levels should be explained, since the landholders needed to develop various sedentarization strategies in response to rural change in the 1860s. Those developments were, firstly, limited integration to long-distance markets. The available data show that, during the 1860s, the grain supply of the Thessalian lowlands was usually consumed by the local population and the provincial armies.⁷⁹ Moreover, a considerable supply of agricultural produce was sent to Istanbul to provision the Porte and its military

77. *Ibid.*

78. BOA.A.MKT.UM.446/12.

79. Result of the analysis of the following account books of *vakyf-çiftlik*s: Atatürk Kitaplığı, Pertevniyal Valide Sultan Evrakı [hereafter, AK.PVS.EVR.] 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2184, 2189,

forces. In many Balkan regions, state intervention to keep grain prices low and provisioning policies in general limited production of crops for the open market.⁸⁰ Because Istanbul was relatively close, provisioning of the capital from the Balkans went on longer than in other regions of the empire – in Transjordan, for instance, subsistence agriculture had been replaced by cash crops for external markets by the second half of the century.⁸¹ The Ottoman state's focus on provisioning as a main pillar of its economic policy was to be expected of a rural empire and was closely connected to its emphasis on fiscal strength.⁸² It was, nevertheless, a “selective interventionism” that was applied in a rather more relaxed way to the provisioning of urban centres other than the capital, and more cooperatively in provincial politics and economy.⁸³ So it was that despite rising global demand for and an increasing price of wheat, northern Greece did not enter into long-distance markets.

Secondly, loss of established commercial networks. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Greek and Vlach merchants lost the influence they once had in continental Europe because of “the spread of brigandage, the advent of the Industrial Revolution in western and central Europe, the concentration of the Balkan trade in the hands of fewer and more powerful Balkan merchants, and the rivalry of new nationally conscious bourgeoisies”.⁸⁴ One particularly important change for the Vlachs was the catastrophic effect on their woollen textile industry after the invention of the power loom in western Europe.⁸⁵

Thirdly, provisioning policies. In addition to being offered on the market, grain and meat from northern Greece continued to be used to provision Istanbul. Meeting the grain demand of both local markets and Istanbul necessitated the recruitment of more labour. However, uprisings in Ioannina and Trikala during 1854–1855 caused considerable loss of population from the towns and villages in Epirus and Thessaly.⁸⁶ A labour shortage came about when peasants fled to the uplands to escape the brigands, the best available solution to the shortage being the recruitment of Vlachs who seasonally migrated to the lowlands. However, their recruitment as farmworkers

3838, 4063. For further information, see Öncel Yusufoglu, “Agrarian Relations and Estate (*Çiftlik*) Agriculture”, p. 219.

80. Michael Palaret, *The Balkan Economies c.1800–1914: Evolution without Development* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 40.

81. See Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire*, p. 14.

82. Şevket Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 12.

83. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

84. Stoianovich, “The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant”, p. 312.

85. Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, p. 187.

86. For the land shortage in mid-nineteenth century Thessalian *çiftlik*s, see Alp Yücel Kaya, “On the *Çiftlik* Regulation in Trhala in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: Economists, Pashas, Governors, *Çiftlik*-Holders, *Subaşı*s, and Sharecroppers”, in Elias Kolovos (ed.), *Ottoman Rural Societies and Economies* (Rethymno, 2015), pp. 333–380, 338.

would gradually draw them away from animal husbandry, which, in turn, eventually created a meat shortage.

Fourthly, monetization of the economy. *Çiftlik* owners were forced to pay ever more hard currency as tax to the Ottoman treasury, which was struggling with budget deficits. Rent paid for pasture by the Vlachs was a major source of cash to the *çiftlik* owners, so that interrupting the Vlachs' animal husbandry affected the *çiftlik* owners' income.

Fifthly, commodification of land. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, agricultural land in the Ottoman Empire began de facto through tenure and usufruct rights to acquire the characteristics of private property,⁸⁷ and it became increasingly commodified from the 1840s. Legal changes paved the way as land became better defined and easier for potential entrepreneurs to exploit. However, land as a commodity did not become available to everyone. There was no open market, but land acquisition was restricted to certain members of a state-supported elite, including members of favoured dynasties, high-ranking officials, *vakıf* deputies, and local notables.⁸⁸ The first prerequisite for land to become a well-defined commodity was its enclosure, with inclusion of common pastures into landed estates always a vital step towards that.⁸⁹ Clearly, transhumant communities and their flocks were not compatible with landholders' desire for enclosure, so to prevent trespass on their lands Thessalian *çiftlik* holders wanted the Vlachs to give up their migratory lifestyle.

ECONOMIC MEANS OF SEDENTARIZATION

In response to the rural changes noted above, Thessalian landholders had to develop different social and economic ideas. Sustaining grain production, animal husbandry, rents for pasture, and preservation of the newly enclosed lands were the landholders' major economic goals, but they were not a homogeneous class and adopted differing strategies to achieve their aims. Some *çiftlik* owners recruited Vlachs as agricultural workers, others continued to

87. Özer Ergenç, "XVII. ve XVIII. yüzyıl Anadolu'su'nda toprak tasarrufu ve mülkiyeti üzerine değerlendirmeler", *Osmanlı Tarihi Yazıları: Şehir, Toplum, Devlet* (Istanbul, 2013), pp. 215–245, 217.

88. Öncel Yusufoglu, "Agrarian Relations and Estate (*Çiftlik*) Agriculture", pp. 184–200.

89. For the Ottoman context, see Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade and the Struggle for Land, 1600–1800* (Cambridge [etc.], 1994), pp. 69, 138. For the enclosures in early-modern England, see E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York, 1963), p. 238; *Idem*, *Customs in Common* (London, 1991), p. 128; J.M. Neeson, *Commoners: Common Right, Enclosure and Social Change in England, 1700–1820* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 223. For early-modern France, see Noelle Plack, *Common Land, Wine and the French Revolution: Rural Society and Economy in Southern France, c.1789–1820* (Farnham [etc.], 2009), p. 133.

keep them employed as livestock breeders, while many adopted a combination of both. Nevertheless, all their attempted solutions had as their common purpose the sedentarization of the Vlachs. Having seen the central state's forceful yet mostly ineffective attempts to sedentarize the Vlachs in previous decades, the *çiftlik* owners in Thessaly had to find their own ways to persuade them to settle. The landholders still owed their own power to their personal and institutional connections to the power of the central state, for as dynasty members, high-ranking central officials, and old-established *vakıfs*' deputies they enjoyed the advantages of any state-supported elite. It is therefore impossible to detach the source of their strength from the central authority, although a significant point to be noted is that Thessalian land was not directly owned by the Ottoman state as imperial landed estates (*Çiftlikat-ı Hümayun*).⁹⁰ Nor did the state-supported landowning elite live in Thessaly; they were absentee landlords reliant on local intermediaries to manage their estates. It was those local intermediaries who implemented the changes, who negotiated with transhumants, and who undertook the main role in their sedentarization.

The promise of security was one of the strategies tried by the landholders. To counter the insecure conditions created by the brigands in the mountains, the *çiftliks* offered the "protection" not only of their lowland geography; the owners could also deploy considerable power at local and imperial levels. Seeking shelter in the lowland estates of powerful landholders – in return for accepting the status of sharecroppers – had been a common phenomenon in the Balkans since the late eighteenth century.⁹¹ The *çiftliks* who recruited Vlachs perhaps also expected that they would be able to shift to labour-intensive agriculture for the production of cash crops.⁹²

Settling permanently and becoming sharecroppers was not the only condition under which the Vlachs would be accepted in the *çiftliks*. In preference to dealing with interminable disputes with settled sharecroppers, a number of *çiftlik* landholders rented arable land to transhumant or semi-settled communities.⁹³ In certain *çiftliks*, agreement with landholders gave the Vlachs free or at least inexpensive access to pasture in return for cultivating land.⁹⁴ Moreover, Vlachs with livestock who were recruited by *çiftliks* established a class of "wealthy sharecroppers" since the sharecropping agreement included only

90. For research on the imperial landed estates, see Anıl Aşkın, "The Environment, Institutions, and Economy in the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire: The Imperial Landed Estates of Mihaliç (1840–1850)" (MA, Boğaziçi University, 2017).

91. Adanır, "The Ottoman Peasantries", p. 301.

92. Mehmed Ali Paşa sedentarization in Egypt of certain pastoral groups resulted in seasonal labour migrations and the introduction of cotton – a pattern followed in other parts of the empire. See Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire*, p. 93.

93. Socrates Petmezas, "Bridging the Gap: Rural Macedonia from Ottoman to Greek Rule (1900–1920)", in Lorans Tanatar Baruh and Vangelis Kechriotis (eds), *Economy and Society on Both Shores of the Aegean* (Athens, 2010), pp. 355–395, 375.

94. *Ibid.*

crops and not livestock. Vlachs who owned livestock were therefore able to make a profit from their animals.⁹⁵ Since the fallow system continued in the *çiftlik*s, livestock brought by the transhumant communities provided a valuable manure supplement.⁹⁶ Vlachs continued to supply *çiftlik* owners with significant cash revenues related to grazing, which made up as much as eighty per cent of the total annual cash revenue of the *vakıf-çiftlik*s in Thessaly during the 1860s and 1870s.⁹⁷

This transitory phase of semi-settled transhumance raises the question of “*perakende*”. *Perakende* is a term used prevalently in the Balkans but its meaning is not fixed, always depending on context. Ionescu defines *perakende* for mid-nineteenth century Thessaly as “parasites”, meaning dispersed peasants “who did not engage in agriculture (*çift işlemeyen*) or had abandoned cultivation (*çiftten çıkmış*) but continued to live in the *çiftlik*”.⁹⁸ He emphasized that “they were to be urged into land cultivation: on the one hand, they were to pay 50 *guruş* in rent for their habitation, and, if they had animals, 5 *guruş* pasture fee per sheep and goat, and 25 *guruş* per cow and mare that they raised, on the other”.⁹⁹ Nevertheless, the term *perakende* acquired a relatively new meaning in the following decades. The term *perakende* might in fact have included the transhumant and semi-settled Vlachs who lived seasonally in the *çiftlik*s. *Vakıf-çiftlik* accounts for the 1860s and 1870s refer to Vlach groups as “*perakende* Vlachs” (“*perakende Ulahları*”).¹⁰⁰ However, the term might equally have been applied to sharecroppers living in the *çiftlik*s but who had abandoned cultivation, and who were not Vlachs. A later use of *perakende*, especially during the early twentieth century, was for *çiftlik* households other than those of sharecroppers, whether they were temporary residents or not.¹⁰¹ In other words, *perakende* became the general name for small-scale merchants and guild members, a definition which might include Vlachs, who were also well known as manufacturers.

Agreements between Vlachs and *çiftlik* holders did not always work to the clear benefit of either party. For instance, in many *çiftlik*s, settled transhumants tended to abandon cultivation in favour of raising animals.¹⁰²

95. Kaya, “On the *Çiftlik* Regulation in Tırhala”, p. 338.

96. Palairot, *The Balkan Economies c.1800–1914*, p. 61.

97. Result of the analysis of the following account books of *vakıf-çiftlik*s: AK.PVS.EVR. 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2184, 2189, 3838, 4063. See Öncel Yusufoglu, “Agrarian Relations and Estate (*Çiftlik*) Agriculture”, pp. 229–231.

98. Cited in Kaya, “On the *Çiftlik* Regulation in Tırhala”, p. 366.

99. *Ibid.*

100. AK.PVS.EVR. 4063, 2184. Settling transhumants and nomads to *çiftlik*s was a common phenomenon of the era. For an example from the Bursa region, see Zeynep Küçükceran, “Production in a Waqf *Çiftlik*: A Case from Mihaliç, Hudavendigar”, in Kenan İnan *et al.* (eds), *Proceedings at the 22nd CIEPO Symposium* (Trabzon, 2018), pp. 599–608, 603.

101. Petmezas, “Bridging the Gap”, p. 375.

102. Kaya, “On the *Çiftlik* Regulation in Tırhala”, p. 372.

Consequently, animal husbandry became more dominant than agriculture in the second half of the nineteenth century, which was counted among the reasons for the rural stagnation in the region during the end of that century.¹⁰³ In other cases, however, Vlachs undergoing sedentarization had to pay extra fees and rents. For instance, unlike settled tenants they both paid housing rents and settlement fees (*iskaniye*).¹⁰⁴

Unlike the Kurdish and Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire, the transhumant communities of northern Greece were not controlled by powerful tribal chiefs, which meant they had no leaders who might have been able to devise strategies to help in their negotiations with landholders; but, as it was, the Vlachs had to do their own negotiations.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, the absence of such chiefs meant there was no one for the central authority to contact directly, to negotiate with, or challenge. In normal situations, the presence of tribal chiefs enabled the central authority to follow strategies intended to break ties not only between chiefs and their tribes, but also between tribes and landholders.¹⁰⁶

LEGAL MEANS OF SEDENTARIZATION

In addition to economic strategies, Thessalian landholders exploited the law to ensure the sedentarization of transhumants. As discussed above, the agreements the landlords and transhumants came to had the potential to encourage animal-rearing communities to abandon cultivation, so that landlords also sought to bind them to cultivation while settling them in *çiftlik*s.¹⁰⁷ Similarly to the case of their use of economic strategies, the provincial landholders had to rely to a great extent on the state's capacity to enable them to formulate and enforce the appropriate legal basis of sedentarization. Two legal texts were found to serve their purposes extremely well, those being the Bylaw of Trikala (1860) and the Ottoman Land Code (1858).

The Bylaw of Trikala was passed in 1860 to address the reorganization of Thessaly's rural economy.¹⁰⁸ The law followed the rural disorder of the 1850s, which had been due mostly to heavy indebtedness of the peasants and was prepared by commissions composed of representatives of the *çiftlik* holders.¹⁰⁹ The bylaw in its final form regulated the rights and obligations

103. Petmezas, "Bridging the Gap", p. 374. See also Socrates Petmezas, "Patterns of Protoindustrialization in the Ottoman Empire: The Case of Eastern Thessaly, c.1750-1860", *Journal of European Economic History*, 19:3 (1991), pp. 575-604, 577.

104. Fatma Öncel, "Agrarian Production and Revenues in Vakıf-Çiftlik of Tırhala from 1860s to 1880s", in Inan *et al.*, *Proceedings at the 22nd CIEPO Symposium*, pp. 475-487, 483.

105. For similar tribal strategies, see Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire*, pp. 118-120.

106. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

107. Kaya, "On the *Çiftlik* Regulation in Tırhala", p. 372.

108. BOA.İ.MVL.463/20920.

109. Kaya, "On the *Çiftlik* Regulation in Tırhala", pp. 350-354.

of the relationship between the sharecroppers and *çiftlik* holders. It also defined the property rights of *çiftlik* lands, including meadows, winter pastures, trees, forests, vineyards, orchards, and buildings, and proposed measures to expand agriculture and limit animal husbandry. The bylaw was formulated in the aftermath of the Land Code of 1858, which was the first major central attempt to codify land ownership and tenure practices in the Ottoman Empire.¹¹⁰ Both codes imposed severe restrictions on the transhumant Vlachs' use of pastures as well as their animal breeding activities. Moreover, by enclosing most of the common pastures and limiting animal husbandry to what was acceptable to the *çiftlik* holders, the new codifications were applied effectively and imposed severe changes on rural life in northern Greece, creating the socioeconomic basis for the settlement of the Vlachs.

According to Article 8 of the Bylaw of Trikala, the peasants were to be taxed on excess livestock, while Article 21 imposed non-fiscal obligations intended to induce the Vlachs to cultivate as much as possible on pain of punishment if they did anything to harm agriculture. Related to that, articles 9, 11, and 24 of the bylaw contained restrictions on animal-breeding to be applied to sharecroppers. To prevent the commercial use of animals – an activity that would have lured them away from agriculture – the Vlachs were now to be subject to a fee, “*otlakiye*”, to be paid if the number of their animals exceeded what they needed for subsistence purposes. Article 12 stipulated that if the sharecroppers wished to produce and sell animal products or other commercial items such as vinegar or molasses, they must pay rent to their landlords for suitable premises. Finally, under Article 26, any sharecropper born in a *çiftlik* was prohibited from leaving it, thereby binding sharecroppers to the land. Article 18 of the Bylaw defined *perakende* as “residents of a *çiftlik* who did not practise agriculture”, which most probably referred to transhumants or semi-nomads in the process of being sedentarized. The article stated that they should be directed towards cultivation and imposed housing rents and an “*otlakiye*” fee.

Far from the least significant part of the Bylaw consolidated the property rights of the *çiftlik* landholders by granting them rights over common land at the expense of animal-rearing communities. Under Article 6, meadow (*otlak*) was to be reserved for draught animals and could be used only with the permission of the landlord, while Article 8 gave the landlord authority to collect the winter pasture tax (*kışlak*) on behalf of the state, thereby strengthening landlords' possible future claims on such land. In a similar vein, Article 12 obliged landlords to provide houses and barns to the peasants.

110. Huri İslamoğlu, “Property as a Contested Domain: A Reevaluation of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858”, in R. Owen (ed.), *New Perspectives on Property and Land in the Middle East* (Cambridge, MA, 2000), pp. 3–61.

The Land Code of 1858 was applied generally to the entire Ottoman Empire¹¹¹ and did not deal directly with either Thessalian *çiftlik*s, or pastures. Nevertheless, its articles on *çiftlik*s and pastures indirectly supported Thessalian landholders' claims to enclose pastures and hence to create the conditions for sedentarization of the Vlachs. The Code clearly defined and effectively supported the settled communities' rights over pastureland. By replacing communal ownership of land with individual proprietorship, "it was also a clearly and strongly anti-tribal measure".¹¹²

The Code defined two categories of pasture, namely those that were on abandoned or derelict land (*arazi-i metruke*) and state-owned land (*arazi-i miriyye*). Abandoned pasture was accepted as the common property of villages,¹¹³ acknowledging the exclusive right of villages to particular pasture lands. In cases where more than one village held pastures collectively, each village had an equal right to use the land for livestock. Villages involved in collective use of pasture were prohibited from selling their share of the land; nor were they permitted to build on it, plant trees on it, nor cultivate it.¹¹⁴ In a similar vein, the Code stated that the frontiers of each pasture should be kept as they had been acknowledged in ancient times.¹¹⁵

Pasture on state-owned land was regulated by expanded but more nuanced terms of the Land Code. Both individual and collective tenure of summer and winter pasture alike was recognized on state lands, for which purpose pasture holders were given a title deed and obliged to pay a state pasture tax.¹¹⁶ The Code stated that pasture held by title deed was not to be left abandoned for more than three consecutive years and that the tax on such land must continue to be paid regularly, failing which the land could be transferred to other applicants.¹¹⁷

Article 99 of the Land Code is probably the most critical part of it in terms of the pastures,¹¹⁸ for it makes a clear distinction between pasture on abandoned land held by commoners and pasture on state land and owned by *çiftlik*s.¹¹⁹ According to Article 99, the usufruct rights (i.e. the right of animal grazing) of the *çiftlik* pastures belonged exclusively to the *çiftlik* owners, who held title to the pasture. However, acquisition of title was a controversial process. According to the Title Deed Regulation of 1859, issued immediately after

111. "Arazi Kanunnamesi ve Zeyli", 1274/1858. *Düstur*, Tertip 1, Cilt 1, pp. 165–199 [hereafter, the Land Code].

112. Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire*, p. 103.

113. Article 5 of the Land Code.

114. Article 97 of the Land Code.

115. Article 98 of the Land Code.

116. Article 24 of the Land Code.

117. Article 84 of the Land Code.

118. Article 99 of the Land Code.

119. Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Türk Toprak Hukuku Tarihinde Tanzimat ve 1274 (1858) Tarihli Arazi Kanunnamesi", in *Idem, Türkiye'de Toprak Meselesi* (Istanbul, 1980), pp. 291–375, 338.

the Land Code to explain the details of its implementation, the authorization of the local ruler (*muhtar*, imam or council member) was sufficient to obtain title.¹²⁰ Considering the close relationships between large landholders and local rulers, who were usually among the notables, such landholders would have experienced little difficulty in taking possession of common land with the official sanction of the law and its executors. Common pasture, with no existing title deeds and with no identifiable owner, was naturally perceived as the easiest target of this trend in acquisition of land. As a result, *çiftlik* owners had the right to prohibit access of fellow villagers to pastureland. Article 99 consequently triggered an increase in the number of *çiftlik* pastures especially during the later period of the empire.¹²¹ Although the Land Code did impose certain measures to prevent the expropriation of common land, they were rendered insufficient by Article 99's creation of such enormous possibilities for *çiftlik* owners to seize it.¹²²

AFTER GREEK INDEPENDENCE

When Thessaly was ceded to Greece in 1881, the course of the section of border between the Ottoman state and Greece running from Thessaly to Epirus left the Vlachs' summer pastures on the Turkish side and their winter pastures on the Greek side, which was naturally a great hindrance to the Vlachs' pastoral movements. Furthermore, a customs barrier was set up¹²³ so that, in the end, the Vlachs' traditional route to Thessaly from the west fell into disuse.¹²⁴ As a result, a significant number of Vlachs abandoned sheep farming (Figure 4) to settle permanently in towns,¹²⁵ where they evolved from being carriers and muleteers to become commission agents and independent merchants.¹²⁶ Meanwhile, because of the depredations of the brigands, those groups of Vlachs who had not yet gravitated to towns and villages were forced to choose longer migration routes to ensure their safety.¹²⁷ The non-settled groups continued their economic activities as muleteers and traders in timber, wool, and cheese into the early twentieth century.¹²⁸

120. Articles 3 and 4 of Title Deed Regulation.

121. *Ibid.*

122. For example, Article 101 states that pastures belonging to commoners could not be subjected to transaction, nor could they be granted in tenure under title deed to any individual.

123. Sivignon, "The Demographic and Economic Evolution of Thessaly", p. 394; Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, p. 76.

124. Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, p. 17.

125. *Ibid.*, p. 16, 176.

126. Lawless, "The Economy and Landscapes of Thessaly during Ottoman Rule", pp. 509–515, 520.

127. Wace and Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, pp. 11, 16.

128. *Ibid.*, pp. 71–72, 74, 80, 201.

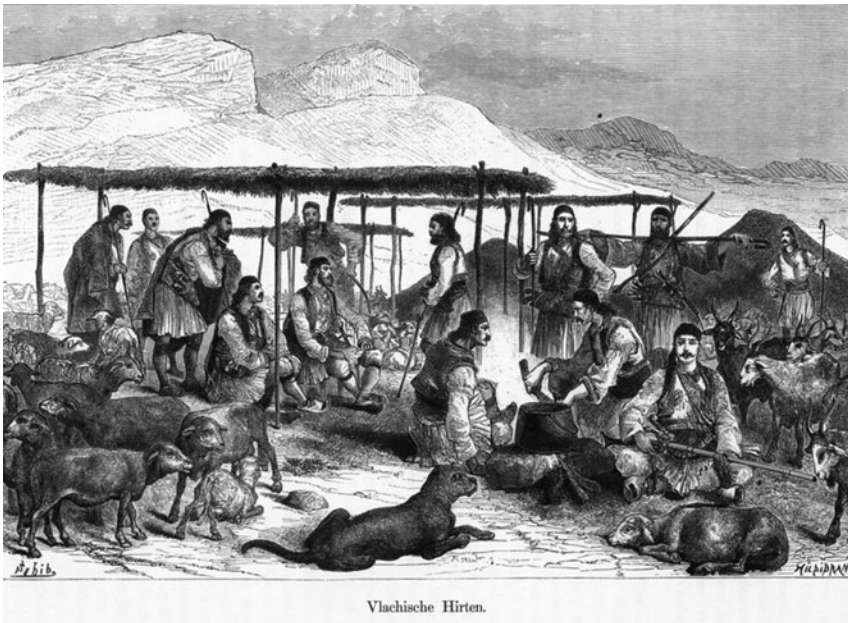


Figure 4. “Vlach shepherds in Greece.” Illustration from Austrian author Amand von Schweiger-Lerchenfeld’s travel guide to Greece.

Amand von Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, Griechenland in Wort und Bild. Eine Schilderung des hellenischen Königreiches (Leipzig, 1887 [Kettwig, 1992]), p. 166.

The province of Ioannina remained Ottoman territory for a number of decades after 1881, so that the sedentarization of Vlachs accustomed to spending their summers in the Ioannina mountains remained a problem for the Ottoman authorities. Ultimately, however, a decision of the Council of State (*Şura-i Devlet*) dated 1893 may be considered decisive for the sedentarization of the Vlachs in Ioannina.¹²⁹ In fact, the Council’s decision was not to sedentarize the Vlachs; instead, it ordered Ioannina to allow their seasonal transhumance. The decision underlines state recognition of the economic benefits brought by the Vlachs, especially the major part they played in the supply of meat. Some suggest, too, that Ioannina’s sedentary agriculture managed to improve without the input of the Vlachs, who, in any case, lacked the “nature and ability” (*“hilkat ve istidad”*) for it. The possible cost of sedentarization is also plausibly suggested as a severe financial burden for the state. The Council’s decision also questioned the security concerns surrounding the Vlachs’ migration, stating that to reside in insecure locations would be detrimental to their occupations and general interests; it was therefore not to be

129. BOA.MV.74/21.

expected after all that they would ally themselves with brigands near the Greek border.

The Council of State's decision confirms for us that, even after its provisioning policies had been slowly abandoned, the Porte still expected its demand for meat to be met from the Vlachs' flocks. In other words, the Council perhaps wished to restore the Vlachs' status to what it had been in the early modern period when they were seen as trustworthy allies, skilful animal-breeders, and hardy muleteers. Nevertheless, after the significant institutional changes undertaken by the landholders of Thessaly during the second half of the nineteenth century, that was no longer a realistic prospect.

CONCLUSION

The sedentarization of transhumants is an important subject in nineteenth-century rural history everywhere, and in northern Greece the majority of the transhumant Vlachs had been settled by the end of that century. Some Vlachs became settled cultivators in the lowland *çiftlik*s of Thessaly, others settled permanently in their home villages in Epirus. For the ones who continued their transhumant way of life, the introduction of new frontiers in the 1880s after the annexation of northern Greece by the Kingdom of Greece made their journeys more difficult. The frontier changes resulted too in disconnection from Istanbul, which until then had been the Vlachs' main customer for their animal produce.

It had been a long and challenging century for the Vlachs, which included a transformation that went beyond the settlement of a rural community. This article has shown that sedentarization was a process through which power struggles were worked out at various political and economic levels, and this analysis of the attendant global, imperial, and provincial dynamics reveals their institutional basis. This article is a result of a chronological survey of the origins and characteristics of sedentarization in northern Greece throughout the nineteenth century, with an emphasis on local actors and events.

At the beginning of the century, transhumance was still the predominant way of life of pastoral communities. Provincial governor and landholder Tepedelenli Ali Paşa eliminated certain of their fiscal privileges and even took a number of Vlach villages into his own possession as part of his estates. That said, in the absence of any systematic intention on the part of the imperial and provincial regime, and mostly because of the symbiotic relationship between transhumance and the economy of the Thessalian lowland *çiftlik*s, no substantial changes occurred in the patterns of the Vlach's transhumance. By the 1840s, however, fiscal and political concerns arising during the period after Ali Paşa stimulated imperial policies intended to eliminate transhumance and for two decades the Ottoman state attempted to settle the Vlachs of northern Greece, although with effects that remained limited. Despite the

conventional view that the Ottoman administration after the 1840s became highly centralized, the case of the Vlachs shows that certain political decisions taken centrally did indeed face challenges and resistance. The central decisions for sedentarization taken in the 1850s failed because, for the most part, they gained no backing from the social and economic institutions whose support was needed to facilitate a settled society. In short, neither landholders, nor pastoral communities wanted it. It was not until the 1860s that changes at imperial and global levels created the setting for a new land and labour regime that led to rapid rural change in northern Greece.

The main argument of this research is that the landholders of the Thessalian *çiftliks* applied sedentarization as a solution to challenges they faced under the Ottoman land and labour regime of the 1860s. After the failure of the central authority's attempts at forced sedentarization in the 1840s, the landholders realized that they must adopt a combination of strategies that included negotiation, persuasion, and compulsion. Promises of protection against brigands, the renting of land to induce migratory communities to become permanent or semi-settled sharecroppers, and provision of free or inexpensive access to pasture all established sustainable conditions that were attractive to many Vlachs. The landholders sought compulsory means too, although they differed from the earlier military-based enforcement attempts made by the state. The landholders later chose instead to apply mainly economic and legal constraints. As a state-supported elite, the landholders were able to rely heavily on the state's capacity to implement laws and regulations that increased landholders' control over use of pasture and the raising of animals, changes that led to widespread settlement of pastoral communities in *çiftliks*. Here, it is crucial to note that the transformation did not include change of use of pasture to arable land, nor did it lead to the total abandonment of animal husbandry in favour of sedentary agriculture. There was still pasture, but most of it came to be incorporated into *çiftlik* land and its use fell under the control of the *çiftlik* holders.

Nevertheless, there are other concerns in the world than the institutional constraints that define relationships among people, land, and even nature itself. When the narrator of the "Dhiava" documentary asks Vlach shepherds why they did not use motor vehicles as the few other remaining transhumants did, Tsiogas Anthoulis replies saying, "The sheep are animals. They're loaded 180 or 200 to a truck. They get bashed about. But on foot they graze as they go. They know the terrain. So do the dogs and the shepherds. They're not humans who can wear safety belts. When the truck brakes, they get bruised."¹³⁰ Transhumance as an economic activity has been moulded by changing land and labour relations over two prior centuries and represents continuity of the collective memory of the Vlach community.

130. *Dhiava: Autumn Journey*, dir. Salmon and Hope.