

**HISTORY OF PREVEZA IN THE XVI<sup>th</sup> CENTURY  
ACCORDING TO THE OTTOMAN TAXATION REGISTERS\*.**

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In this paper three topics will be presented:

- 1) A brief account of the establishment of Ottoman rule in Epirus.
- 2) A description and general characteristics of the Yanya (Ioannina) tahrir defters (taxation registers).
- 3) The population and living conditions in Preveza in the sixteenth century.

The first Ottoman raids and expansion into Epirus started in the fourteenth century after the battle of Chermanon (1371)

The Ottomans rule was established in Epirus with well known methods of Ottoman conquest. Initially the Turks were simply mercenaries for local Christian lords. Later, taking advantage of the local conflicts and alignments, they reduced the Christian lords to vassality. During the rule of Murad I and Bayezid I, the Christian lords of Epirus had to pay Harac to the Ottomans. The Ottoman expansion was halted after the battle of Ankara in 1402<sup>1</sup>.

It is a well known fact that the Ottoman rule was firmly established in Epirus during the period of Murad II. When Carlo Tocco died in 1429 without leaving an heir, his nephew, Carlo Tocco II was involved in a civil war between himself and Carlo's illegitimate children. Memnun, who was one of five brothers requested help from Sultan Murad. Following the occupation of Thessaloniki (March 1430), part of the Ottoman army was directed against certain Albanian chiefs who had re-

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<sup>1</sup> Zachariadou, Marginalia on the history of Epirus and Albania (1380-1418) WZKM 78 (1988) 195-210.

volted, while another part continued towards Ioannina under the command of Sinan Paşa, Rumeli Beylerbeyi. Murad II and Sinan Paşa in conformity with the principles of Şeria, Islamic law, invited the city authorities to surrender in a letter in the Greek language. These aman-names are the earliest documents which show the rights and privileges granted to non-Muslims accepting the Ottoman suzerainty. After receiving guarantees on the future position Ioannina was incorporated into the Ottoman Empire peacefully<sup>2</sup>. After the death of Carlo II in 1449 Arta was annexed to the Ottoman State.

The Ottomans, after the conquest, applied the timar system in order to establish strict central administrative control, timar being the system similar to that of Byzantine Pronoia and it was the revenue granted by the Sultan to the military and administrative officials for military services rendered to the state<sup>3</sup>. The need for land to distribute as timars was one of the main reasons which forced the state to make new conquests. In order to establish the timar system the Ottoman government had to determine on the spot in detail all sources of revenue in the provinces and to draw up registers showing the distribution of these revenues. A commissioner (emin) was appointed to accomplish the survey (tahrir) and he was assisted by a scribe (kâtib) to enter the items in register. The commissioner investigated old records collected data village by village, about the heads of the families, the extent of lands they possessed, the number of those unmarried and widows. They also determined the quantity of the different crops raised during the previous three years and calculated the average annual income. They also ascertained the annual income of sources of revenue such as vineyards, orchards, çiftliks, mills as well as the markets and commercial taxes of the cities. It was in the detailed register (mufassal defter) that these data were recorded.

When the register was complete the officials prepared summary registers (icmâl defteri) to show the distribution of revenues as fief (timar)<sup>4</sup>.

2 M. Delilbaşı, Selânik ve Yanya'da Osmanlı Egemenliğinin Kurulması, Belleten LI/ 199 (1987) 75—101.

3 For relations with Pronoia and timar, see; S. Vryonis, The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth century, Berkeley-Los Angeles, 1986 (second ed) pp. 468—470.

4 For timar system, see: H. İnalcık, Hicri 835 tarihli Suret-i Defter-i Sancak-ı Arvanid, T.T.K. 1987 (second ed) ppXI—XXXVI. Ö.L. Barkan-E. Meriçli, Hüdavendigâr Livası Tahrir Defterleri, Ankara, 1988, pp. 1—104.

The earliest tahrir defters of Liva-i Yanya (Ioannina) which must have been drawn up after the capture of the city in 1430, are no longer preserved in the Turkish Archives. The earliest detailed register of Epirus is kept in the Prime Minister's Archives (Başbakanlık Arşivi) dating from H. 972 (1654) the call number is 350; the second detailed registers has also been preserved in the same archive. It dates from the year 987 (1579). the third detailed registers dated 991 (1583) was preserved in Ankara in the Cadastral Archives (Tapu Kadastro). In addition there is a summary (icmal) register of the same year in Ankara.

In order to establish more accurate data I had to compare these three detailed registers with each other, from which I learned in fact the third register which is preserved in the Cadastral Archive in Ankara, is just a copy of the second register and the accounts are all identical.

According to these registers of the sixteenth century Liva-i Yanya (Ioannina) was divided into two Kazas. The first one is Kaza-i Yanya, the second Kaza-i Narda (.....)

Kaza-i Yanya was divided into districts or Nahiyes as follows:

Nahiye-i Malkas (Μαλκὰσι)

Nahiye-i Kurenduz (Κούρευτα)

Nahiye-i Çarnaçošta (today Δωδώνη)

Nahiye-i Zagorya (Ζαγόρι)

Nahiye-i Laka (Δάκκα)

Nahiye-i Podgoryani (today Ναρακάλαμος)

Nahiye-i Konice (Κάπσα)

Nahiye-i Rinase (today ριζά)

Kaza-i Narda (Arta) was divided into

1- Nahiye-i Bobolyani (?)

2- Nahiye-i Radoviz (Ραδοβιζί)

3- Nahiye-i Çemernik (τσουμερκα)

4- Nahiye-i Roguz (ρογοι)

5- Nahiye-i Girebene (Γρέβενα)

As for Preveze it was a town dependent on Rinase, which was a nahiye of Narda (Arta). Nefs-i Preveze (the city itself) was given as a timar to merdan-ı kala-i Preveze (garrison soldiers)

### POPULATION OF PREVEZE

During this period the tax-paying unit consisted of a peasant household with a farm of a certain size. This unit was called çift-hane by H. İnalcık<sup>5</sup>. In the registers all the heads of each tax-paying unit were recorded. A married man with his family constituted a fiscal unit, only the name of the head of the household appearing in the list. Tax-paying unmarried man (mücerred) in the registers are marked with the arabic letter "mim". Although in some defters widows and persons with tax exemptions are mentioned, I haven't come across such categories in the Yanya defters.

In the register of 1564, 30 house-holds and 13 bachelors

In the register of 1569, 50 house-holds and 20 bachelors were recorded. In the former they were entered as individuals 43 nefers (tax-paying unit), in the second register 70 nefers.

Between 1564-1579 the number of households in Preveza increased from 30 to 50, the number of bachelors rose from 13 to 20. Although we don't know the exact size of a household at that time, if we adopt the co-efficient five as our multiplier in determining the average size of household, we find 150 tax payers in the first register and 250 tax payers in the register. This maybe accepted as the approximate population of Preveza. Here, I have to emphasize that the Ottoman military and official personel are not included in this figure. Only in the summary (icmal) register, 1 dizdar (commander of stronghold), 1 Kethuda (steward), 75 müstahfizan (garrison soldiers) were recorded. We can add those figures to the population of the city.

From the tahrir defters we understand that Preveze was a small settlement containing only 150 individuals (tax-payers) in the registers of 1564. But the whole district of Nahiye Rinase consisted of 1696 household and 400 bachelors were recorded in the first register.

In the sixteenth century the population of Preveza consisted of only Christians as well as all the villages and Nahiyes in Epirus. There was only one Muslim community, with 50 households which I found in Nefs-i Yanya (the city Ioanninc). This shows that, the Turks applied neither a deportation nor colonization policy in Epirus.

<sup>5</sup> I am grateful to Prof. İnalcık who discussed some of the problems with me in writing this article. For çift-hane system, see- his important article, The Emergence of Big Farm, çiftliks: State, Landlords and Tenants, Studies in Ottoman Social and Economic History, Variorum Reprints, London, 1985. pp. 105-126.

## TAXATION OF PREVEZA

In the Ottoman Empire as in the other Islamic states, society was divided into two large groups, first, the military class which comprised all who were directly employed in the Sultan's service, that is the military groups, bureaucrats, religious men and their families and dependents. This group was not engaged in production directly and was exempted from any kind of taxation. The second group, whether Müslim or non-Müslim, called "reaya" was engaged in productive activities-trade and agriculture-and had to pay reaya taxes. This class was considered producers and tax-payers. According to the Ottoman theory all reaya and land within the realm belonged to the Sultan. This concept must not be misinterpreted as meaning that the Sultan actually owned the land and population. State control represented a principle to establish the central authority and maintain a specific agrarian regime.

The Ottoman tax system based on both stipulations of the Shar'ia, Holy law and the Sultanic authority, Örfi law, derived from the personal authority of the Sultan. Örfi taxes applied widely throughout the Empire and were often referred to as "adat" (customary) because they mostly included some pre-Ottoman local taxes. The most important of the Shar'ia taxes were the tithe (öşür). In principle one-tenth of the agricultural produce, the poll-tax (cizye or harac) was collected from non-Muslims in three groups according to their ability to pay, the market control taxes the sheep tax were included in this category. The principal tax in the category of Örfi law was Çift-resmi. "Çift" was a plot of land of sufficient size to sustain one peasant family able to pay tax to the State (the land owner). Çiftlik was the basic agricultural unit and according to the fertility of the soil its size varied from 60 acres (dönüm) to 150<sup>6</sup>.

Peasants who hold çift had to pay an annual cash tax called Çift resmi, a fixed levy in the amount of generally 22 Akçe. The counterpart of the Çift-resmi was "Ispence" which was the most important regular tax paid per household by the non-Muslims ear market for the fief holders. In the register of 1564 the total revenue from Ispence in Preveza was 1075, in the register of 1579 it was 1750. In both registers 25 akça Ispence was the amount paid per hane.

Before explaining the agricultural taxes of Preveza, I have to point out that these taxation registers were not intended to list all sources of

6 H. İnalçık, Osmanlılarda Raiyyet Rüsümü, Belleten XXIII/ 92 (1959) 575—610.

peasant taxation, they included only levies which were earmarked for only the timariots and central treasury (hassa-i hûmayun). The most important tax cizye (poll tax) and levies on livestock, avarız-ı divaniye (extraordinary taxes) and tekalif-i örfiye assessed occasionally to meet military campaign needs, were excluded from the registers<sup>7</sup>. Therefore, these tax records only offer us a very general picture of the social and economic structure of Preveza.

Depicted below are the tables from the register of 1564 and 1579 showing the population and taxation with the crops subject to tithes and dues.

Table 1. The Register of 1564

POPULATION	ISPENCE	TITHES	INKIND	AKÇES
Household: 30 Bachelor: 13	1075	Wheat	20 himl	1200
		Wildwheat	20 himl	880
		Weetablegardens		185
		DUES		
		Hay		180
		Chicken		70
		Transit		1250
		Monopoly X		2000
		Market sales		2000
		Fine and levies		125
		TOTAL		8965
				(9000)* Scriber's total

\* The military had the privilege of being able to sell the wine produce which was delivered to sell the wine produce which was delivered to them as part of the tithes before any peasant could bring his wine produce to the market. This restriction or monopoly is called Monapolye.

Table 2. The Register Of 1579

POPULATION	ISPENCE	TITHES	IN KIND	AKÇES
Household: 50 Bachelor: 20	1750	Wheat	40 himl	2400
		Barley	20 himl	880
		Corn	2 himl	88
		Oat	2 himl	56
		Vineyards		200
		Flax		150
		Hemp		100
		DUES		
		Hay		300
		Monopoly		2000
		Transit		1400
		Market sailes		2000
		Acorns		100
		Fruits		50
		Veg. Gardens		100
		Levies for fields watchmen		100
		Chicken		50
		Levies and fines (crime and marriage)		732
		TOTAL		12456
				(1240)
				*Scrib's total

7 Ö.L. Barkan-E. Meriçli, *ibid*, pp 18, H. Lowry, *Changes in Fifteenth-Century Ottoman Peasant Taxation: The Case Study of Radilofo, Continuity and Change in Late Byzantine and Early Ottoman Society*, ed. Bryer-Lowry, Birmingham -Dumbarton Oaks, 1986, pp. 32.

## AGRICULTURAL TAXES IN THE REGISTER OF 1564

Monapolye (Monopoly)	22. %
Gendüm (t. on wheat)	13.3 %
Mahlût (r. on wild wheat)	9.7 %
Öşr-i bostan (t. on garden vegetables)	2 %
Resm-i giyah (t. on hay)	2 %
TOTAL	49 %

## COMMERCIAL AND TRANSIT TAXES

Bac-ı siyah (d. on market sales)	22 %
Geçit öte yaka (transit dues)	14 %
TOTAL	36 %
Other taxes	14.2 %

## AGRICULTURAL TAXES IN THE REGISTER OF 1579

Gendüm (wheat)	19.3 %
Monapolye (Monopoly)	16 %
Şa'ir (barley)	7 %
Resm-i giyah (d. on hay)	2.4 %
Bağat-ı müselmanan (Vineyards)	1.6 %
Öşr-i keten (t. on flax)	1.2 %
Öşr-i kendir (t. on hemp)	0.8 %
Resm-i bostan (d. on garden vegetable)	0.8 %
Resm-i bellut (d. on acorns)	0.8 %
Erzen (corn)	0.7 %
Resm-i meyve (d. on fruits)	0.4 %
Alef (Oats)	0.4 %
TOTAL	51.4 %

## COMMERICAL AND TRANSIT TAXES

Bac-ı siyah (d. on market sales)	16 %
Resm-i geçid (transit dues)	11.3 %
TOTAL	27.3 %
Other taxes	21.2 %

We can understand from the tables of the taxation register (49 % in register of 1564, 51.4 % in the register of 1579) was paid by the villagers of Preveza for their agricultural products. As far as grain is concerned wheat and barley came first in importance. The total of the market and transit dues was slightly less than the agricultural taxes with 36 % in the first, 27.3 % in the second register.

Ispence, which was the most important hearth tax on non-Muslims, was 12 % in the first, 14 % in the second register compared to the total revenue for timariots. There is another tax category "bâdihava" which included several taxes such as fines, marriage tax and dues taken for the field watchmen. This occasional customary tax was 1.4 % in the first register increasing to 6 % in the second register.

In conclusion, Preveza in the sixteenth century was only one of the towns of Nahiye Rinase, the population consisting of exclusively Christians. As was the rule for all non-muslims, the people of Preveza had to pay Ispence. During this period, as the commercial taxes demonstrate, there were quite important commercial activities and heavy river traffic in this town. However, it must be emphasized that the economy was heavily dependent on agricultural products, including wine produce.

This small settlement later in modern times, has become one of the most important trade centers of Epirus.



PREVEZE, TAXES  
1564

	%
	MARKET DUES 22
	MONOPOLY 22
	14 TRANSIT DUES
	13.3 WHEAT TITHES
	12 ISPENCE
	9.7 WILD WHEAT TITHES
2	VEG. GARDENS TITHES
2	HAY DUES
1.4	LEVIES AND FINES
0.8	CHICKEN DUES
TOTALS 8965	

PEREVEZE, TAXES  
1579

	19
	WHEAT
	16
	MARKET DUES
	16
	MONOPOLY
	14
	ISPENCE
	11.3
	TRANSIT DUES
	7
	BARLEY
	6
	DUE ON LEVIES AND FINES
	2.4
	HAY TITHES
	1.6
	VINEYARDS TITHES
	1.2
	FLAX TITHES
	0.8
	ACORNS
	0.8
	HEMP TITHES
	0.8
	VEG. GARDENS TITHES
	0.8
	DUE FOR FIELD WATCHMEN
	0.7
	CORN TITHES
	0.4
	OATS TITHES
	0.4
	FRUIT DUES
	0.4
	CHICKEN DUES
TOTALS 12456	