Mapping Ottoman Epirus: Order of Debt

Fatma Oncel, Ali Yaycioglu, Antonis Hadjikyriacou, Erik Steiner
Center for Spatial and Textual Analysis (CESTA), Stanford University

After the execution of Ali Pasha in 1822, the Ottoman fiscal officers initiated a massive postmortem settlement to reveal his debts and credits.

Project Overview
In this project, we examine probate inventories to visualize and analyze how debts were restructured and how Ali Pasha's wealth was redistributed in an empire-wide debt network. In addition to maps, we are using graphs, timelines, and network diagrams.

TRANSCRIPTION
18 Haci Kural Efendide Tapeteideni
Nureddin nam kimesesinin Selçekte çiftliğinin
hesabından dolayi zimmeti, sene 1232

=39776.5 gurya 9 para
Kezilik çifti-i mezbur salanyesinde senen
233
=30007.5 gurya 7 para
= 12780 gurya 16 para
ili kitâ talvî mucebince
= 25054.5 gurya 10 para
=47225.5 gurya 6 para

STRUCTURED DATA
Entry Number
18
Name of liability holder
Selçekte çiftliği (Selçuke farm)
Name of intermediary
Haci Kural Efendide Tapeteideni Nureddinin
Location
Askvnya Province, Tepelen District
Liability holder location
Source of liability
Agriculture
Date of liability
1237
Amount of liability
47225.5 gurya 6 para
Parties involved in transaction
Ali Pasha

KEY CHALLENGES
Overlapping claims
Ottoman fiscal and revenue management institutions recognized overlapping territorial and tax-related claims, which creates difficulties for identifying the “owner” of land or revenue.

Categorizing revenue sources
Debt registers usually provide summary data for the revenue source, which probably incorporates multiple revenue types, yet it often is not clear from the term coined in the source.

Identifying village and farm names
Correct translation of village and farm names from the Arabic script can be a challenge especially when the place name does not exist in other sources.

Location of debt collectors with the amount of debt due to Ali Pasha
Circle size represents amount of debt
Type of Collector
- common people
- community
- higher notables
- lesser notables
- no intermediary
- Orthodox clergy

Ali Pasha claimed several tax items from the peasant communities across Epirus and beyond. His functionaries and associates collected revenues on his behalf, and they periodically delivered these revenues to the provincial treasury in Kavala. However, in most cases, the peasant communities were not able to pay their dues and became indebted to Ali Pasha.

Source and amount of debt to Ali Pasha
Circle size represents amount of debt
Revenue Sources
- agriculture
- commerce
- imperial monetary tax
- livestock
- loan
- manufacture
- real estate
- security
- unknown

The "unknown" category is composed of the cases by the debt type of which could not be easily fit into the other eight categories. Many cases refer merely to the method of debt collection, but not the exact source of debt. Agriculture is the second-ranking category and livestock third, followed by real estate and security.

1748-1914
2943
Number of Ottoman-Turkish sources (documents and document collections) about Ali Pasha housed in Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives

offer 1820
110
Number of sources pertaining to the debts and credits of Ali Pasha after 1820. After his execution in 1822, the Ottoman imperial authorities went in search of and recorded his receivables (debts, liabilities and their holders).

This project focuses on single debt inventory from this period.

September 1822
420
Number of records in a single inventory prepared eight months after Ali Pasha’s death in September 1822.

The image shown is a single page of one of the few registers listing the “receivables” (aракал) of Tapeteideli Ali Pasha.