

ΤΟ ΟΘΩΜΑΝΙΚΟ ΚΤΗΜΑΤΟΛΟΓΙΟ  
ΤΟΥ ΡΕΘΥΜΝΟΥ



Έκδοση – Μετάφραση – Σχολιασμός  
ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΑ ΜΠΑΛΤΑ – MUSTAFA OĞUZ

ΙΝΣΤΙΤΟΥΤΟ ΝΕΟΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΩΝ ΕΡΕΥΝΩΝ (ΕΙΕ) – 98  
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*Tapu-Tahrir 822*

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*Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών*

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Θ. ντε Χιόστρεζ 9, Ρέθυμνο 741 00

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*Εξομύλιος:*

*Έλενα Νταντή*

ΕΚΤΥΠΩΣΗ

**Καλαϊτζάκης**  
ΕΚΔΟΤΙΚΕΣ ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΣΕΙΣ

ΚΕΝΤΡΙΚΟ: Αττική, Κουντουριώτη 138, Ρέθυμνο 741 00

Τηλ. 28310 22867, 28310 55573 Fax: 28310 28258

e-mail: info@kritip.gr

ΕΓΚΑΤΑΣΤΑΣΕΙΣ: 5ο χλμ. επαρχιακής οδού Ρεθύμνου – Αμμοίων

Τηλ. 28310 27517, 28310 27617 Fax: 28310 27615

e-mail: info@kalaitzakis.net www.kalaitzakis.net

## ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΜΕΝΑ

<i>Πρόλογος</i> .....	9
<i>Ειχαριστίες</i> .....	11
<i>Συντομογραφίες</i> .....	15
<b>ΕΙΣΑΓΩΓΗ</b> .....	19
<i>Η απογραφή</i> .....	19
<i>Γραφείς, αντιγραφείς και προβλήματα μεταγραφής</i> .....	26
<i>Σημειώσεις για τον αναγνώστη</i> .....	30
<i>Μεταγραφή</i> .....	32
<i>Πίνακες</i> .....	33
I: <i>Ναχιγιές Ρεθύμνου</i> .....	33
II: <i>Ναχιγιές Μυλοποτάμου</i> .....	36
III: <i>Ναχιγιές Αμαρίου</i> .....	39
IV: <i>Ναχιγιές Αγίου Βασιλείου</i> .....	41
<i>Γλωσσάρι</i> .....	45
<i>Πηγές – Βιβλιογραφία</i> .....	49
<b>ΕΚΔΟΣΗ</b> .....	69
<i>Livâ-i Resmo</i> .....	71
I: <i>Nahiye-i Resmo</i> .....	71
II: <i>Nahiye-i Milopotama</i> .....	241
III: <i>Nahiye-i Amari</i> .....	387
IV: <i>Nahiye-i Ayvasil</i> .....	463
<i>Ευρετήρια</i> .....	541
<i>Γενικό ευρετήριο</i> .....	543
<i>Ευρετήριο οικογενειακών ονομάτων</i> .....	599
<i>Summary</i> .....	609
<i>Εικόνες</i>	

## SUMMARY

### **The census**

Immediately after the fall of Candia, as was usual for every newly conquered land, the Ottoman masters conducted a census, in order to record the productive capabilities and to adjudge the tax. According to A. Androulidakis-Kopasis, Secretary General of the Administration of Crete and subsequent Governor of Samos: “It was then that the first cadastre was drawn up, in two large tomes”. These are the analytical registers TT 825 and TT 822 in the Ottoman Prime Ministerial Archive (BOA) in Istanbul. The first (TT 825) covers the sandjaks of Candia and Siteia, and the second (TT 822) the corresponding ones of Chania and Rethymnon. It is obvious that the Ottomans adopted the administrative division of the four *territorii*, of the period of Venetian Rule. Copies of the codices now in the Istanbul Archive also existed in the General Administration of Crete, at Chania. A. Androulidakis-Kopasis consulted these cadastres, “those commonly known by the Turkish title *Defter-i hakani*”, in order to find data, when he was ordered to examine the issue of the vakifs in Crete. Impressed by the volume of information and its importance for the island’s history, he presented them in a short essay, as “they were unknown to the public of Crete and particularly to the Christian”. In this work he mentions that one tome had already been lost by 1882 and that the other, which survived, comprising about one thousand pages, of oblong format, on thick glossy paper, contained the record of the properties in East Crete, in the districts of Pediada, Mirabelo, Rizo, Malevisi, Kainourio, Siteia, Ierapetra, Mesa Lasithi, Temenos, Pyrgiotissa and Monofatsi. Consequently, the tome that was lost, “where and when is unknown”, from the General Administration of Chania was a copy of TT 822 in the Ottoman Prime Ministerial Archive.

The registers are not dated. Nonetheless, we know that the census was carried out in 1670 by Ebu Bekir Effendi, the first defterdar of Crete, who in kadi documents of 1670, such as the copy of the dedication of the mosque built by Kaplan Mustafa

Pasha in the Great Kule of Candia (27 September 1670), signs as “census-taker and secretary Ebu Bekir Effendi, deftedar of Crete”. He remained in this office until September 1671. Moreover, the date 1673 in the supplementary notes of the nishandji Abdurrahman Abdi Pasha in TT 822 also functions as *terminus ante quem*.

From the Ottoman fiscal register TT 822 we edit the pages referring to the sandjak of Rethymnon. The dimensions of the codex are 58 x 22 cm. and those of the paper 57 x 21 cm., which is indeed thick and glossy, having been processed appropriately (*kağıt âharlı*). Total pages 662. The codex has been conserved, has a new binding and part of the pages, which over time had been destroyed by damp, is restored.

Register TT 822 includes the census of both sandjaks of West Crete. Analytically:

L i v a ( s a n d j a k ) o f C h a n i a

p. 2	nahiye of Chania
p. 82	nahiye of Apokoronos
p. 174	nahiye of Kisamos
p. 278	nahiye of Selimos

L i v a o f R e t h y m n o n

p. 330	nahiye of Rethymnon
p. 450	nahiye of Mylopotamos
p. 552	nahiye of Amari
p. 608	nahiye of Aghios Vasileios

We observe that the internal division too of the sandjak of Rethymnon copies the corresponding Venetian one of the *territorio di Rettimo*: *Ville sotto la città di Rettimo* is the nahiye of Rethymnon, *Ville sotto il Castello Milopotamo* the nahiye of Mylopotamos, *Ville sotto il Castello Amari chiamato Apano Sivrites* the nahiye of Amari, and, last, *Ville sotto il Castello San Baseglio chiamato Cato Sivrites* the nahiye of Aghios Vasileios.

Recorded by village in each nahiye are the owners of land with the size of the holdings according to their crops and olive trees. Noted at the end, where these exist, are village landholdings

without owner and therefore uncultivated, because these too were taxed. The *kanunname* on the first pages of TT 825 notes that the island's landholdings were considered *araz-i harâciye*, that is obliged to pay land tax. So, the registers TT 822 and TT 825 record exactly this taxation. The head-tax census of the population of Crete, which, as the *kanunname* of TT 825 attests, was conducted at the same time as the property census, corresponds to register TT 980 in the Ottoman Prime Ministerial Archive. Data relating to the head tax of the settlements in the sandjak of Rethymnon are given each time in the notes accompanying the edition.

First of all, it is stated explicitly in the *kanunname* that the landholdings are mulks: "These taxed landholdings constitute complete property of their possessors, who have the right to sell them, to buy them and to dispose of them as they wish. After their death, they are apportioned, exactly as happens with whatever other property goods, to their inheritors, on the basis of the inheritance law, which is dictated by the Sacred Law". It is also declared categorically that in order for the Ottoman State to continue to collect land tax, the landholdings are confiscated and allocated to another farmer "in the case where their owner has escaped or had not the means to farm them and therefore the fields remained uncultivated".

The *kanunname* continues by stating that there are two categories of land tax:

a) *Harâc-i mukâseme*, which covers the tax on fields in which cereals are grown, regardless of whether there are fruit trees here and there on their surface. The proportion of tax on the cereals produced is one kile in five (mine'l-hums) and one okka in five on the olives.

b) *Harâc-i mukâta'a*, the farmers pay on the yields of their vineyards, vegetable gardens and orchards. The tax on each *cerip* of vineyard or garden corresponds to 10 drams of silver. Noted in the registers is the sum of 120 aspers per *cerip* (= 60 square cubits) as tax on first-class or fertile landholdings (*a'la*). Owners of middle-class landholdings (*mutavassıt*) paid 60 akce, and those of third-class landholdings (*edna*) 30 akce.

The census of Crete as well as of various island in the Cyclades, which was carried out also after the fall of Candia, differs from the classic Ottoman censuses in the Balkans from the fifteenth to the early seventeenth century, in which the actual or potential production capability of a settlement was measured in order to determine the tax, without measurement of the cultivated landholdings or recording of the economic status of each taxpayer. On the contrary, in the case of the census of Crete, the owners of landholdings are recorded, in other words the land property of the inhabitants of the settlement is registered. Thus, it resembles the logic of the Venetian system, which produced the *catastici*, the *cadastres*, as well as a host of contracts of buying and selling, which are preserved in the protocols of the island's notaries. In these contracts, which specify the terms of the concessions, are given compulsorily the essential data on the land, the name of the village or the region to which it belonged, the name of the possessor or predecessor, its size and its borders. So, Venetian domination perpetuated the Byzantine taxation practice, which was based on the size and not the yield of the landholding. *Mutatis mutandis*, the *harac*, depending on the kind of crops and the quality of the soil, refers to the Byzantine *telos*, which the landowner paid to the state. This is a tax that was calculated on the value of the land, officially defined and dependent on the kind of crop, the quality of the soil and the region.

So, we believe that the discussion on the land-owning system in Crete on the morrow of the Ottoman conquest is expended mainly with theological-economic interpretations, whereas it ought to take seriously into consideration also the previous status quo on the island, which the new rulers were obliged to respect in order to consolidate their occupation. In this perspective, the testimony of the *kanunname* of Cyprus (1570) is unique, because it associates the tax of the Ottomans with that of the previous regime. Described are the leasing relations of feudal lords and tenant farmers during the period of Venetian Rule, and indeed for the settlers (*parikoz tâifesi*), it is noted that in the new status quo too they have *corvée* obligations, as in the time of the Venetians. The Ottomans levy a *harac* on the land and the farmers pay one fifth of the harvest, because in the case of Cyprus too the landholdings were considered *arazi-i harâciye*. Characteristic is



the commentary of H. Inalcık : “The most important tax imposed on the peasants is without doubt *a ‘shar* (tithes). This is an Islamic tax collected in kind in a given ratio from every kind of crop. By order of the Sultan it was fixed in Cyprus at one fifth for all the reaya alike. In the 1572 tahrir register it is pointed out with each village that it amounted to one fifth (*khums*)”. Since the sultan “accepts” as of full ownership the landholdings both in Crete and in Cyprus, the taxation of necessity deviates from the tithe of the Sacred Law and a new ratio is imposed, one fifth of the production, a ratio also demanded from Muslims. Consequently, an interpretation of the seemingly innovative manner of taxation should, in our view, be sought in fiscal reasons associated with the procedure and the ways of the Ottoman conquest.

Since the study that will enhance this tax register’s importance as a historical document is pending – its processed data will be presented in due course – we confine ourselves here to citing the exceptionally interesting remarks by A. Androulidakis-Kopasis. “The cadastres were compiled primarily to facilitate the collection of taxes, therefore neither the locations of the fields, nor their boundaries are described, and for this reason the given cadastres do not resemble the actual cadastres. So, those inhabitants who have disagreements about the boundaries and the locations of their fields are deceived if they hope that they will resolve them with the help of these defters. Even so, however, the given cadastres can yield significant information on the taxation system, which was hitherto unknown, and allow us to find: a) the number of Muslim and non-Muslim owners in that period, and consequently to form an idea of the island’s population; b) the extent of the cultivated land and the number of fruit trees, and so to arrive at some conclusions on the state of agriculture; c) the amount of taxes proportionate to each village, district and the entire island.

### **Scribes, copyists and problems of transcription**

TT 822, like all fiscal registers, is written in *siyakat* script, “Very difficult to read and coded, which is why very few Ottomans who knew how to read and write were able to read it”, as A. Androulidakis comments. Reading and transcribing the register presented particular difficulties, in addition to the usual

difficulties of *siyakat* – essentially it is a form of shorthand –, without the diacritic signs (*nokta*) that differentiate the letters of Arabic script. The paleographic difficulties in fiscal registers always lie in the transcription of the place names and personal names. There were no particular difficulties in reading and identifying toponyms in the liva of Rethymnon, except in the case of some minor place names, for which no data were found, which is why some are accompanied by a question mark (?). Since there were no changes in the settlement pattern of the island, there were no changes in the place names, which differ only in a very few cases of settlements, and indeed very recently.

In Crete, and in the island domain in general, there were no changes in the naming of settlements, unlike what is observed in other regions, such as the Peloponnese, where successive population movements, invasions and occupations, brought not only desertions but also migrations and alterations in the toponymic map, which furthermore underwent the final “cleansing” from Slavic, Albanian and Turkish place names in the early nineteenth century. That is why it is extremely difficult to identify the place names of an Ottoman register of the Morea, particularly in the early centuries. And in an even earlier stage, it is extremely difficult for the researcher to read and to transcribe correctly barely-legible toponyms, since the data that would help him are absent, that is, there are no references to the history of the settlements. In Crete, the censuses of Fr. Barozzi, P. Castrolifaca and Fr. Basilicata, as well as the reports of Venetian officials, contributed decisively to reading the toponyms in TT 822. The Venetian sources were after all the basis of all the subsequent studies on the development of the population and the settlement pattern, and are a reference point for the subsequent Ottoman *status quo*, during which no changes were made. Indicative is G. Gryntakis’s observation that some minor place names in the village of Prases in the nahiye of Rethymnon, which are recorded in notarial acts of Marinos Arkoleos (1643-1646), appear identical over half a century later in kadi documents.

The difficulties we faced in transcribing the register concerned the reading of the personal names in the *liva* of Rethymnon, and were encountered because the register was copied by scribes in the central service of the *Defterhane*, who

were not familiar with Cretan personal names. So, fatefully, they confuse some similar-shaped letters of *siyakat* in the original manuscript, because they had difficulty in recognizing their minor specificating differences. We are not in a position to know how careful was the script in the defter that reached the capital, to be copied and kept in the Imperial Office of the registry of landed property (*Defterhane*). However, it is certainly not fortuitous that the copyists do not make similar mistakes in Turkish words.

To give some typical examples: we observe that the copyists confuse the letter *vav* (v) with *dal* (d), so that the name *Voulgaris, Voulgarakis* is written sometimes as *Dourgaris, Dourgarakis*. Correspondingly, *Dalaportas* was written *Tzalaportas*, because in this case the copyist mistook the *dal* (d) of *siyakat* for *zim* (c). We reached this conclusion after the multiple crosschecks and indexings pointed out the different ways of writing the same name, which very often coexisted on the same page, the previous page or the next one. In many cases this is the same person or a member of the same family in the village. With the three indexes in all compiled in the course of processing and checking the transcription of the register, firstly the different forms of the names were collected. In most cases they were due to anagrammatism, to the development or elision of phthongs, the tropes of consonants and vowels, etc., and can be attributed either to the scribe who made the census *in situ*, or to the copyist in the *Defterhane*.

In order to check this vast and disorderly material in the indexes of the proper names, we gathered the different writings of them in groups with reference to the corresponding personal name, as we found it attested in Greek or Latin characters in the notaries' protocols, in the indexes of publications of Venetian documents, as well as in specialist studies on Cretan names, which have inventoried corresponding sources. This classification was of decisive importance, because essentially it brought the material under control. For this reason we considered it useful to append it in the form of an index, for the reader who does not know Ottoman paleography. Furthermore, thanks to this classification there also emerged the problem of the erroneous copying of the name, usually by changing one consonant, in most cases the initial one. Thus, to stick with the same example, in the

case where we supposed that the proper name *Dorgari*, as we saw it written in the register, referred to the name *Drongaris* – which could well be the case from a paleographic viewpoint, and is moreover attested in this period –, we realized that it is actually *Voulgaris*. The copyist had understood as *dal* (d) the perhaps not very clearly written *vav* (v) of the first scribe, as we actually ascertained by re-inspecting the original. The proximity of the name *Dorgari* to the name *Voulgaris*, which in its writing is beyond suspicion from the paleographic view, removed any hesitation we had about this deduction.

So we applied the following principle: In our publication we transcribe the name as we find it in the register, for example *Dorgari*, and we give its correction in brackets [= *Burgari*], when we are certain that our assumption is correct, as certain – this we stress – as editors of such texts can ever be. Because in the case of some feminine family names, such as *Amiradopula Anculi* and *Amiracopula Anculi*, we were not certain whether the double entry is due to the fact that the copyist did not distinguish the almost similar-shaped letters *dal* and *tzim/tsim* of *siyakat*, or whether the duplication is due to “*tsitacism*”, in which the *t* or *d* was changed into *ts* or *tz*. We could cite several examples. However, the reader will have the opportunity to see many such cases for himself, when running through the lists of owners.

Naturally, similar errors were also made in the copying of numbers. The differences identified in the areas of the villages or the number of olive trees are due to the copyist’s inability to distinguish most times the number 2 from 3 in Arabic, either in the sum or in the individual entries.

In some cases we could speak also of *lapsus calami* by the scribe, on observing the repetition of the name in consecutive entries, because in cases of synonymy he adds before the name of the second entry the word “*diđer*” (= other), in order to differentiate them. This is usually done for Muslim names, which, as we know, do not have surnames to distinguish them.

We assume that the scribe who worked *in situ* to compile the cadastre was assisted in his task by the notaries of the region or collaborated closely with the heads of the villages, whom the

Venetians called *contestabile* or *motti*. How else can entries of the type *Manoli pote Papa Aleks*i (p. 333), *Vasil pote Anemo* (p. 338), *Aniza pote Pavli* (p. 609), *Elena pote Mihal* (p. 609), *Yani pote Pavli* (p. 610), etc., be interpreted? It is clear that they refer to a typical practice of the Venetian period, during which kinship with a deceased ancestor (*quondam*) is defined in notarial documents by the word “*pote*”. There are innumerable examples in published notarial documents. This observation possibly legitimizes the hypothesis that the Ottoman census-taker had a *bussola* in his hands, most probably a Venetian cadastre or a kind of census, whilst he was taking of the census. In the case of the Peloponnese, during the second period of Ottoman rule, this seems to have been very likely, as far as we can deduce from TT 876, which we have examined. However, proof of this hypothesis demands systematic research in many registers and from different regions. Nonetheless, the fact that the census-taker in Crete uses the term “*pote*” instead of the corresponding Turkish one indicates that he copies a local habit, similar to that of Zante, if we recall the Si(gn)or Nionio in Karangiozis of our childhood: “They call me Si(gn)or Dionissio Fringo, son of *pote* (= late) good Angelo, I’m from Zante”. It is certain that the Ottomans conducted a census *in situ*. This is documented by the way of writing certain personal names. The name *Siphis*, *Siphakis*, for example, is written several times with a thick S (*Şifi*), also used in the place names Prases, Rethymnon (*Praşes*) or Vryses, Amari (*Virişes*), which fact means that the scribe heard a similar pronunciation and recorded this. The same is observed in the case of the name Kephali, for example, which is recorded *Çefali*.

### **The edition**

We have tried to present the picture of the register in the most functional manner possible. The solution of the table was chosen as the most suitable, because this bypasses the main problem: the non-specialist reader can read the text unimpeded, if of course it is ever possible to read unimpeded a table with names and numbers, and furthermore, if a table can ever be considered a text. First and foremost, the question as to what extent our choice is correct for publication remains open for those who wish to remain attached to the picture of the source and consider the imprinting of it the main, perhaps the only, duty of the editor. They confuse

devotion to rendering the primary form of the text with the interventions and the critiques in the text, whereas clearly these are two different things. The publication of the register which we give is diplomatic. So, the tabulation of the data in the register can be paralleled with the corresponding line numbering adopted by editors of manuscripts. We reiterate that we edit a fiscal register, a cadastre, which as a source is by its very nature full of numbers and does not contain text in the classic sense. There are only the briefest notes, which explain to the Ottoman accountants and tax-collectors the reasons why there is, sometimes, in this defter a deviation from the general rule and draw their attention to it. These notes usually refer to sultanic decrees that had diverted the *status quo* from the usual practice of the sacred law. Also, very frequently notes record in the margins of the codex changes and amendments made over time to the original compilation of the register.

Theoretical discussions and practical applications in the edition of Ottoman fiscal registers prove sterile, when they are trapped in useless scholasticism. With our choice we wanted to avoid this danger, since the specialist, the Ottomanist, is in any case familiar with sources of this type and their publication problems. Therefore, he understands behind the editor's choices the source, as this was handed down by its original compiler. This is the purpose of the few photographs included in the book, to illustrate the source for the reader, not to impress.

The persons entered in the register were numbered from right to left, and the names and their property data are given in this order in the columns of the table. The area of the fields, vineyards, orchards, vegetable gardens, as well as of uncultivated landholdings, is calculated in *cerips*. Also entered in the appropriate column is the number of olive trees of each owner. The recording of the inhabitants' rural property closes with the totals of cultivated and uncultivated areas in the village. There follow the taxation and the amounts of taxes for each crop, depending on the quality of the soil, which determined the yield and therefore the tax.

The punctuation is ours, that is the comma separating the two names of the entry, the patronymic or the definition of the

land (*arz-i harâci*), when its owner was Muslim. Denoted in brackets are letters or syllables that were added to the Turkish text, in order to render a name correctly. Also in brackets with the equal sign is the name we suppose exists behind the one written down by the Ottoman scribe, e.g. Mentamoditi [= Pentamoditi]. Nowhere has the correction been adopted silently, not even in the case of indubitable *lapsi calamus*. The corrections of the sums are also given in brackets. To facilitate the reader and to economize the footnotes, such corrections are not put in the notes but are given inside brackets in the edition. The footnotes provide information on Ottoman officials, the toponyms, as well as commentary on the terms, the references to inhabitants, monasteries and settlements in the *liva* of Rethymnon, in kadi documents or in other published and unpublished Ottoman sources that we have processed, or even in notarial and various documents of the Venetian period. We opted for footnotes on the same page, so as to facilitate the use of the source.

Turkish works relating to offices, taxation and administration of the Ottoman Empire are explained briefly in the glossary. In some cases, when there is text in the source, the translation is given in the relevant footnote, so as to make the source accessible also to the reader who does not know Osmanli.