OTTOMAN RULE AND THE BALKANS, 1760-1850:
CONFLICT, TRANSFORMATION, ADAPTATION

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For many Ottomans and non-Ottomans during the Ottoman period, the 1790s represent a period of turmoil and a precursor to Westernising modernity, even if for different reasons. From a strict Ottomanist point of view, the reform programmes of the Nizam-i Cedid and 'conservative' reaction to it are the highlights of this decade. For a national Balkan historiography, such as the Greek, on the other hand, the 1790s are important as the aftermath to the French Revolution. The Revolution by itself, as well as through propaganda activity actively undertaken by French agents and sympathisers in the Ottoman lands, gave fresh impetus to the movement known as the 'Modern Greek Enlightenment' and its adherents, and eventually contributed to the national 'awakening' of the Balkan peoples and their breaking away from the Ottoman Empire; like the reforms introduced by the Ottoman government, so the rationalist ideas of the Enlightenment annoyed and provoked reaction among 'conservative' Christian circles. Thus, if we may put it in rather sketchy terms, both on the Muslim and the non-Muslim sides, the closing decade of the eighteenth century saw forces representing a new Western-oriented spirit striving against traditionalists.

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1 S. J. Shaw's *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III, 1789-1807*, Cambridge, Mass. 1971 is still the standard textbook for this period, rich in information but old-fashioned in its approach.

2 On the Modern Greek Enlightenment, see K. T. Dimaras, *Neoellinikos Diaphotismos* [Modern Greek Enlightenment], 3rd ed., Athens 1983. On pp. 1 and 5-6 Dimaras defines Modern Greek Enlightenment as an optimistic intellectual tendency (but not a proper philosophical system), marked by faith in the power of reason, the ability of humankind to evolve and achieve happiness, in progress, in education and religious tolerance, as well as in the dignity of all human beings. Modern Greek Enlightenment extends over the last decades of the eighteenth and the early decades of the nineteenth century, that is, roughly over the period from 1774 to 1821.

3 According to Philippou Ilou, the 1790s were marked by the first big crisis caused by the reaction of the Greek Orthodox Church to Enlightenment (P. Ilou, *Koinonikoi agones kai Diaphotismos: he periiptose tet Smyrnes (1819)* [Social Struggles and Enlightenment: The Case of Smyrna (1819)], Athens 1986, 41 n. 67).
Obviously, these two developments, namely the Nizam-i Cedid and the spread of the philosophical and political ideas of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, did not occur in two separate worlds; they were phenomena which—no matter how imperfect or shallow one may argue that their impact or understanding was—concurrently affected the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire, which are our particular point of reference in this paper. However, one may be led to think otherwise, since they are often studied independently of one another. Leaving this point aside for the time being, we will first proceed to an overview of the major phenomena of the 1790s.

The 1790s started with the Ottomans fighting against the Russians and the Austrians in the Balkans and ended with the Ottomans fighting to ward their traditional ally, France, off Egypt with the assistance of Britain and their former and future enemy, Russia. However, the 1790s are thought of today as an important landmark in Ottoman history not really for the wars against the Austrians, the Russians or the French, but because of the accession of the reforming Sultan Selim III (1789-1807) to the throne. The advent of the nineteenth century of the Muslim era coincided with a new sovereign who introduced the nizam-i cedid, the new order army, in 1794. Selim’s initiative was the most significant reforming attempt to that day (and was later interpreted as the culmination of traditional reform and a precursor to the sweeping reforms of the Tanzimat era), but did not emerge out of thin air. On the one hand, it responded to an urgent and alarming pro-

4 There are several studies of the impact of the French Revolution on the Ottoman Empire, but most of them are either restricted to diplomatic contacts and the impact of the Revolution on Istanbul or focus on the Muslim elite and inhabitants of the Empire or refer to the nineteenth and twelfth centuries; see, for instance, B. Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey, London 1963, 33-72, as well as the collections of articles in RMMM, 52-53 (1989) and CEMOTI, 12 (1991). Gérard Groc admits that concrete information about the reception of the French Revolution in major Ottoman urban centers other than Istanbul is scarce (G. Groc, ‘Les premiers contacts de l’Empire ottoman avec la Révolution Française (1789-1789)’, CEMOTI, 12 (1991), 21).

5 Shaw, Between Old and New, 21-68, 262-82; E. Z. Karal, Selim III’ün hatı-â hamayunî [The Imperial Rescripts of Selim III], Ankara 1942, 23-50. See also I. K. Vashadarevish (ed.), Historia Archaela Macedonii. II. Archion Veronias-Naousas 1598-1886 [Historical Archives of Macedonia. II. Archive of Veronion—Naousa, 1598-1886], Thessaloniki 1954, 249, no. 254 (28 March 1799) for a decree announcing the alliance between the Ottoman Empire and Russia; and Lewis, Emergency, 67 for an anti-French proclamation.

6 The term nizam-cedid is used to describe both the new-style army formally introduced in 1794 and the whole reform programme of Selim III inaugurated in 1792 (E. Z. Karal, Selim III’ün hat-â hamayunî – Nizam-cedid – 1794-1807 [The Imperial Rescripts of Selim III, Nizam-cedid, 1789-1807], 2nd reprint, Ankara 1958, 22). The term is used to describe the new-style army even though it was officially proclaimed in 1794 (ibid., 127-31).


9 There is extensive bibliography on Riche. From among the scholarly production of the last few years, one may consult P. Kritomilidis, Régas Velestitas: teoria tis praxeis [Riccius Velestinis: Theory and Action], Athens 1998, in conjunction with the remarks in his ‘Epitomistikes prootheses tes metagnos tou Riga’ [Prepossession of Critical Scholarship on Riccius], in M. Ethymiou and D. Costogiroglou (eds), Time ston Riga Veletzitas/Manipagei to Riga Velestitas, [Athens] 2002, 45-55; A. I. Manis, ‘H politekik ideologiou tou Riga’ [Riccius’ Political Ideology], in Ethymiou and Costogiroglou (eds), Time ston Riga Veletzitas, 13-32; C. M. Woodhouse, Rigeos Veletzitas: The Proto-Martyr of the Greek Revolution, Lismui Eivias 1995. For a brief survey of earlier bibliography, see Kritomilidis, Regas, 15 n. 1, and the other works cited here.

10 See, for instance, a report written in 1796 as well as the comments by the editor: S. I. Aschalias, ‘Pragmatikoteter apo ton helliniko III sionon’ [Realities from the Greek Eighteenth Century], in Stathmos protos to ena hellenike kolonia [Miletos Towards Modern Greek Society], Athens 1965, 1-47. The existence of such a text is very interesting for our purposes because its author probably lived in Itise (Gr. Thiva), that is, in a town which, similar to Karagef, our case study, was not a major cultural or commercial centre.
Pazvantoğlu of Višnja. The Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, who was methodically expanding his authority in the 1790s, was another such figure with a heavy impact on life in the Balkans in the early decades of the nineteenth century.12

The 1790s also witnessed attempts at centralisation and increased efficacy of the state mechanism. These attempts had mixed results, depending as always on the ability of the state to make local societies, their leadership but also its own agents respect and implement the provisions of its decrees.13 One such attempt with an impact on Ottoman provinces was the creation of the so-called Grain Administration (zahire nezareti) in 1793. This was a special agency with its own treasury; its aim was to guarantee the proper supply of Istanbul with cereals and to supervise both the supply system and the bread market in the capital.14

Another special treasury was set up by Selim III in order to meet the cost of building a new army. This treasury was appropriately called the New Fund (irad-ı cedid hazinesi); several sources of income were accumulated under its umbrella.15 At the same time, Selim and his advisors tried to increase state income in general and to put state finances into better shape, partly through closer inspection of accounts.

Karaferye (Veroia in Greek), seat of a kadi, was a rather small provincial town lying some 75 kilometres west-north-west of the district’s (sancak) administrative centre, Salónica. Félix Beaujour, who served as the French consul in Salónica, estimated on the basis of cizye receipts, military recruiting rolls and corn consumption that Karaferye’s population amounted to around 8,000 inhabitants in the 1790s.16 According to another contemporaneous source, a Geography published in Greek in 1791, Karaferye was an old town, seat of a metropolitan, inhabited by more Chri-

13 See examples in Shaw, Between Old and New, 117, 120, 126-27, 133-34, 171, 178.
15 Y. Cezar, Osmanlı maliyesinde buanıma ve döşenm döneni (XVII.”yı dan Tıznim”a mali tarih) (The Period of Depression and Change in Ottoman Finance (Financial History from the Eighteenth Century to the Tanzimat)), [Istanbul] 1986, 155-297.
16 F. Beaujour, A View of the Commerce of Greece, Formed after an Annual Average, from 1787 to 1797, [Paris: T. Hartwell Horne, London 1800], 82-86. Beaujour estimated that the ratio of city dwellers to peasants in south-western Macedonia and Thessaly was 1 to 3. Concerning the accuracy of his estimate, he himself pointed out that the data of Ottoman registers should be used cautiously (ibid., 82).
18 There is a multitude of studies based on cizye. For a list of studies published from the 1950s up to 1996, one may consult EP, s.v. ‘Sijilli: 3. In Ottoman Administrative Usage’ (S. Faroqi).
19 Karaferye Sicili (hereafter KS) vol. 100/pag 26entra 2 (30 April 1790). The sicil of Karaferye are kept at the Imlakia branch of the General State Archives of Greece in Veroia.
20 Vardavellis, Historika Archia, 243-45, no. 250 (9 July 1786), 246-48, no. 252 (23 December 1786); 248-49, no. 253 (9 March 1799); 249, no. 254 (28 March 1799). The fact that the imdad for the Muslim year 1214 was defined as kazımiye (instead of isfahane) in a decree of the divan of Salonica may be an indication of the distance which in fact separated the sancak from the theatre of war (KS 102/4671/11 June 1799). The emphasis on religion in decrees about the French invasion of Egypt is by no means surprising and continues a very long state tradition, but may be seen, on the ideological level, as one indication – even if incidental in nature – of why, at a time of growing pressure from Christian powers and dissemination of nationalist ideals in the Balkans, non-Muslims felt increasingly estranged from the great Islamic empire whose subjects they were.
enth century remain more or less the same throughout, even if actual content and distribution vary depending on the particular events, needs and developments of a given year. As in earlier years, incoming orders alternate with lists of local expenses to be distributed among the population of the region (masarî-i vilayet defterleri) and other entries. Several of these entries refer to tax issues, such as tax collection and tax farming, but there are also entries about debts, either personal or communal, some of them actually being related to taxation. A particular form of taxation, for which a number of entries survive, is the obligatory sale of cereals for the needs of the population of Istanbul (muhabayen). Another group of entries concerns brigandage and action to be taken against brigands. Other entries refer to the appointment of officials, such as governors of the sanâcie of Salonica. A few entries have to do with timars: allocation, subletting, and one about a ti-
mars holder complaining to higher authorities that the villagers had not paid tithe in three years. Finally, as is typical of the surviving Karaferey sicils of the late eighteenth century, there are very few entries which relate to what theoretically constituted the bulk of everyday activity of the court of justice, that is, litigations, as well as registrations of such events as real estate transactions, the fixing of market prices, the distribution of the estates of the deceased among their heirs, and conversions to Islam.21

However, if we turn to a closer investigation of the contents of particular sicil entries of 1794-96, we will discover reflections of the administrative reforms of the 1790s. For instance, a sultanic decree that was received by the Karaferey court of justice on 9 October 1795 and copied in the kadi's register does reflect the spirit of the new era. This decree referred to issues concerning the proper collection of the tax on alcoholic liquors, the so-called risâm-ı zecriye (or zecriye resmii).22 After setting the rate of the tax at 2 paras per okka for wine and 4 paras for raki and other drinks and allowing a tax-exempt quantity for own use by non-Muslims only, a great deal of emphasis was placed on and space dedicated to following the proper accounting procedure and preventing embezzlement. The collectors (âmil) were required to compile detailed inventories of their daily activity; these inventories should include the details of those selling spirits, the quantity taxed, as well as the place of origin and the destination of the vendors. Depending on the distance of the region from Istanbul a copy of the inventory was to be sent daily or weekly or monthly or at least once every two or three months to the capital for inspection. The collector was also required to compile a final register with the total of the tax revenue at the end of the year and submit it for inspection by the principal collector (muhasusi), a tax-farmer, who had to verify the register's accuracy locally. If the tax revenue from a particular region was found to be below a set rate (40 kisse=20,000 gurusu), a 10% fine was to be imposed on the collector's salary and expense allow-

21 Cf. B.A. Ergen, Local Court, Provincial Society and Justice in the Ottoman Empire: Legal Practice and Dispute Resolution in Canakkale and Kastamonu (1652-1744), Leiden-Boston 2003, 33-43 and n. 5.
22 For this tax, see Cezar, Osmanli malîye sistemi basâlum, 183-86.

23 KS 101/36/2 (June-July 1795; the exact date of issue is illegible).
25 Cezar, Osmanli malîye sistemi basâlum, 174-83; cf. Shuw, Between Old and New, 120, 125, 129.
26 Selim issued a decree about the reform of the timar system (timar kanunu) in 1791/92 (Cezar, Osmanli malîye sistemi basâlum, 177).
27 KS 101/22/2 (1 March 1795).
This kind of blending between old and new forms is evident throughout the sicle. One can find recurrent references to the nizam-i cedid and the irad-i cedid in entries which otherwise may not differ from older ones in their general outlook. As noted above, the tendency towards closer inspection of the financial affairs of the district by the imperial centre must have been another observable change for the society of Karafereye, or at least its leadership. A reflection of this tendency may also be found in the periodic registers which contained the communal expenses of the region and their distribution among the local population. State inspection of these registers antedated Selim III, but it seems that there was an (abortive?) attempt at a more rigorous application of this measure during the 1790s. The presence in Karafereye of a state inspector whose task was to check local registers of distribution of the tax burden must have been a living reminder of this centralising tendency.

Mubahaya was another procedure that was affected by the policies of Selim III, and imperial decrees about it bear the marks of reform. For instance, two major innovations of the 1790s, that is, the purchase of cereals at market price (rayic) and not from the kazas as a whole but directly from specifically named notables and officials who were big landowners, tax-farmers of the title and granary owners (ashab-alaka ve asgar ve erbab-i gift ve ziraat [or çiftlik] ve embar), are reflected in two surviving decrees of 1795. Moreover, one of these two decrees is very lengthy, which seems to be a general tendency of the 1790s, and rather elaborate about procedural issues as far as securing the proper dispatch and sale of cereals is concerned. Finally, those familiar with state hierarchy may not have failed to notice that the superintendent of cereals (zahtire nazari) had now been awarded the prestigious rank of Third Treasurer of the Imperial Treasury (sükk-i sela), which was an expression of the increased concern of the state for the provision of Istanbul with cereals.

Undoubtedly, a more systematic examination of the Karafereye sicle of the 1790s will lead to further elaboration of the picture concerning the effect of the Nizam-i Cedid on the region. But if sicles are a valuable source for the study of administrative reform as such, what about its possible impact on the mentality of Ottoman subjects, and what about other contemporaneous phenomena, such as the impact of the Enlightenment on Karafereye? Changes in mentality and ideological currents are intangible, but this does not mean that they do not leave any marks behind. It is very doubtful though that these can be found in court records; it is much more likely to trace them where research on the Enlightenment has focused and still focuses, that is, in the publications of scholars, merchants and revolutionaries, in the dissemination of books and pamphlets, in memoirs, in letters, in architecture, decoration and other forms of material culture.

Where do these observations lead to in terms of the impact of the Nizam-i Cedid on a Balkan region such as Karafereye? Karafereye sicle entries suggest that not long after the promulgation of Selim's innovations, the new administrative spirit reached the Balkan provinces through imperial decrees of a mostly financial and fiscal nature. On the other hand, nowhere is it to be seen a radical departure from older forms as was to be the case in the middle of the nineteenth century with the much broader Tanzimat reforms. It is undeniable that at least certain circles in Karafereye must have wondered what exactly this new thing, the Nizam-i Cedid, was, but they must not have felt that their life was seriously upset. The registers for the distribution of local expenses and taxation provide some indication as to this: as seems to be the case in other regions too, even though the regular register was inspected by the state agent, another register of the same year concerning the payment of fees to the governor of Salonica contained no reference whatsoever to the new regime. Even if inspection of the regular register was indeed very rigorous, what prevented local notables from transferring illegal exactions to the other register?


29 KS 101/9 (13 June 1795). This inspector’s title is cited as “davgilla alaşılık geldiklerinden kaza-rıcebur tevrisit defnatı nazari” in a decree addressed to him (KS 101/452 (31/1-9/21/1796). This latter entry has been translated into Greek by Vardavellis, Historica Archeia, 240-42, n. 248. For reaction to the appointment of such an official, see Orçay,UBY, 293.

30 Güran, ‘The State Role in the Grain Supply’, 30-31. The author remarks that “royic purchasing was begun only after the foundation of the Grain Administration” (ibid., 30), but then refers to decrees which were issued prior to its establishment and deal with rayic purchase of cereals (ibid., 31 n. 20 and 31; 33 n. 30).

31 KS 101/27 (9-17 July 1795); KS 101/33 (5-14 September 1795). Even though most of the cereals were to be provided by specific individuals, certain quantities were allocated to the people of Sildrekap and Karafereye collectively.

32 According to KS 101/27, smuggling and mixing of mubahaya wheat with other cereals, such as barley, rye, straw, and wild oats, were two of the problems facing the state.

33 Shaw, Between Old and New, 175-76. This official and his rank were cited in both decrees.

34 In fact, the extension of the authority of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa to the district of Karafereye in the last few years of the eighteenth century (1798) may have proved for the region a much more critical change than the Nizam-i Cedid.

35 See, in this context, Shaw’s concluding remarks concerning the limitations of Selim’s concept of reform (Shaw, Between Old and New, 405-07). See also how the report of 1796 (n. 10 above) describes the situation in Thiva concerning continuing fiscal oppression of the local population (P. Ph. Christopoulos, ‘Hr. petrion Kontokostakon periacho kuta ta tele ton II0 acron’ [The Area around the Corinthian Gulf in the Late Eighteenth Century], EGHSM, 3 (1971-72), 457-60).

36 KS 101/20 (16 July 1795).

Puschalis Kitromilidis, a specialist in the Modern Greek Enlightenment, has suggested that the social roots of “revolutionary mentality” in the Balkans were “slender,” but it is reasonable to assume that news about the French Revolution had reached a town such as Karafere, given the activities (such as the planting of ‘trees of liberty’) of French agents and sympathisers in Istanbul and elsewhere. Even if we suppose – for the sake of our argument – that the people of Karafere had no knowledge whatsoever of the dramatic events in France, is there any chance of them being unaware of the struggle between the Church and the ‘philosophers’? As a matter of fact, a true propaganda war broke out in 1798; the Ottomans, the Russians, the French, the British, the Orthodox Patriarchate, as well as private individuals sympathetic with (or working for) one or the other side, were involved in it.

Even though scattered and few in number, still there are some pieces of information which suggest that Karafere Christians in fact were not impervious to the social and ideological developments and struggles of the late eighteenth century. For instance, the Bishop of Campania, Theophilus, a liberal scholar acquainted with the ideas of the Enlightenment, passed through Karafere in 1773 and the local ruler Samatian Bekellisd composed an epigram in his honour on this occasion. Furthermore, the surviving correspondence of Theophilus demonstrates that he had contacts from and in Karafere, and that he once asked the Metropolitan of Karafere to find him lodging for the duration of a short stay in the town. The epigram of Bekellisd is in itself an indication that there existed in Karafere by a certain “Bekela”, who was knowledgeable in scholarly Greek (“savant dans la langue grecque littéraire”); the French diplomat and numismatist does not specifically cite when this happened, but it most likely was before 1793.

This Bekela must have been a relative of Bekellisd. At least one member of the same family was a merchant who settled in Hungary. Merchants often were promoters of learning and indeed Bekela was a superintendent (eparchos) of the Greek school of Pest and sponsored the publication of books.

43 The Diocese of Campania was situated in the plain between Salosica and Veria.

44 On Theophilus, see D. S. Giannis (ed.), Nomikón potikhein kai syntauchhein eis haplou phrasin hypo tou patriarchoi ellinologistou episkopon Kamenias kyrikos kyrikos Theophilos tou ex Ioannina (1788) [Law Book Composed and Arranged in the Common Language by His Most Eminent Holiness the Bishop of Campania Theophilos of Ioannina (1788)], Thessaloniki 1960, 1-260; the epigram was published by S. Efthiaradis, ‘Ho Kammiani Theophilos ho ex Ioannina’ [Theophilus of Ioannina, Bishop of Campania], Epirotopa Chronika, 2 (1927), 72. A catalogue of books that Theophilus must have consulted in the course of his life can be found in D. S. Giannis, ‘H viviotebke tou Theophilou Campania (ho pneumatikos kosmos heno philoleutheres despotes)’ [The Library of Theophilus, Bishop of Campania (The Intellectual World of a Liberal Bishop)], Ho Eroteme, 1 (1963), 33-46.

45 M. A. Kalinderis, Ta tria epigrapha tes Demetrios Vlacholikou Kozanis 1676-1808 [The Unbound Documents of the Municipal Library of Kozani, 1676-1808], Thessaloniki 1951, 62-63, 71-72, but also 60-61, 126; Efthiaradis, ‘Kammiani Theophilos’, 70, 76-77, 246, 259, 259-61, 62; V. A. Myaktiakh, ‘Theophilou Kammian ou gia ke hmera’ [Works and Days of Theophilus, Bishop of Campania], Theologia, 7 (1929), 54-55, 116-17, 119-20, Theophilus also sent a petition to the Metropolitan of Salonica on behalf of a monk in Karafere (Efthiaradis, ‘Kamnian Kammiai Theophilos’), 258. Theophilus and two of his correspondents, Daniel, Metropolitan of Karafere, and Theophilus, the Verolion Metropolitan of Servia and Kozani, were contacted by a Russian agent in 1789 in the context of the war between the Ottomans and the Russians (Histrorìa tou hellenikou ethnous, vol. 11, 91).

46 E. M. Cousinayre, Voyage dans la Macédoine, vol. 1, Paris 1831, 68. Compare with three eighteenth-century Greek inscriptions of a stilted linguistic style published by P. Papazotos, He Veria kai hol nae tol (llos-Ios ol) [Veria and its Churches (Eleventh-Eleventeenth Centuries)], Athens 1994, 89, 147-49, 156-57. However, most eighteenth-century Greek inscriptions from Veria are brief and contain spelling mistakes. We may note here that Papazotos discusses in some eighteenth-century church frescoes and icons, concepts and styles that in his view announce the Greek Enlightenment (ibid., 231-32, 295-96).

subscribed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, but this is scarce.* Finally, we do know that there were local merchants under foreign protection in Karafere, which presumably presupposed and entailed some form of contact with the West, on the other hand, there is hardly any systematic information on late eighteenth-century domestic architecture in connection with the rise of a Christian bourgeoisie.**

Karafere was neither a big urban centre nor a junction, while very little is currently known about the social, economic and intellectual conditions in the town and its countryside during the eighteenth century. The point in evoking its case in the context of a paper that seeks to locate the imprint of the Nizam-ı Cedid and Greek Enlightenment on the Balkans is that it is comparable to several other little-studied towns in this part of the Empire with mixed populations of Muslims and non-Muslims. Having made this remark, I should make clear that I by no means suggest that the study of a Balkan region in the 1790s is or should be exhausted in the study of the impact that the Nizam-ı Cedid and the Enlightenment had on it. The reason I have chosen to focus on these two phenomena is only because of their emblematic character as dominant themes of what schematically might be called ‘Ottomanist’ and ‘national Greek’ historiographies, which form the point of reference for the last section of this paper.

Undoubtedly, in recent decades national historiographies have begun to take the Ottoman context into consideration; Ottomanists, on the other hand, have moved beyond the study of the state and its institutions towards analysing Ottoman society and economy. However, a lot still needs to be accomplished. For instance, where do the realities of what has been called the Age of Greek Enlightenment by Greek historiography and the period of the Nizam-ı Cedid by Ottomanists meet in historical writing? This paper does not purport to be exhaustive or conclusive, but aims at suggesting research possibilities that have not been fully explored yet.

Admittedly, sometimes incompatibility between national Balkan historiographies and Ottomanist approaches to the same period and area seems to originate in differences in the nature and purposes of available sources. For example, the Karafere stethoscope of the 1790s give very limited information on non-Muslims: they are presented as traditional imperial subjects, whose activity was more or less limited to paying taxes and following their traditional daily routine (with all its hiccups, including brigand attacks, to which we will soon turn our attention). On the other hand, non-Ottoman sources of the same period suggest that even though Christian communities remained traditional in their outlook, they exhibited willingness to accept new ideas and practices.

The case of Tsasos Karatosos could be cited here as another local instance of discrepancy between Ottoman and non-Ottoman sources. Karatosos, who was a renowned martolos of Karafere and its region, and one of the principal defenders of Agustos (Naousa) against Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, according to Greek sources and scholarship, could be one of the “Agustos people” (Agustos kasabas ahilleri chil-i zimmetiden iken) whom Ottoman authorities praised for attacking brigands, but treated as anonymous subjects, not being keen on identifying them by name.

More interaction between different historiographical fields is a prerequisite to overcoming the particularities of the source material in order to be able to view a town such as Karafere as a whole rather than as the place of residence of two distinct, unrelated socio-religious groups, Muslims and Christians—even if it is ultimately demonstrated that Christians took little notice of the Nizam-ı Cedid reforms and Muslims were not really interested in the French Revolution and its ideas, or that there was limited ideological interaction between the two groups (or as far as other relevant pursuits were concerned).

Furthermore, there are several research issues that await a more open and meaningful approach by both Ottomanist and non-Ottomanist historians. Brigandage is, I believe, one of them. This particular topic carried very special weight in Greek historiography for several decades and does

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48 Myias has compiled a list of subscribers from Karafere. Six titles and eight subscribers (two metropolitan) are recorded for the period 1792-1807. Three persons subscribed to one title of interest in 1797 (a "Theaurus of Grammar"), the other book published in the 1790s being a religious one. Subscribers from Karafere subscribed between 1804 and 1807 for a book on Logic, Metaphysics and Ethics, Thucydides' Peloponnesian War edited by Neophyto Doukas, a History of Greece and a book on mathematics and science. It is noticeable, though, that most of the eight subscribers did not reside in Karafere (G. K. Myias, ' Syndromos vivzion apo ten Veroia kai se Naousa metax 1758-1839', [Book: Subscribers from Veroia and Naousa, 1758-1839], Makradeson he meroiologion Spondenon, 70 (1992), 245-46). As was to be expected, the number of publications and subscribers increased significantly from about 1805 onwards.


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52 KS 101/22/1 (24 July 1795). According to Chionidis, Karatosos and his family lived in Dileslevi near Agustos. They moved to Agustos around 1798 (Chionidis, 'Schediasma', 309-10).

53 Cf. J. Stratos, 'Ottoman Rule Experienced and Remembered: Remarks on Some Local Greek Chronicles of the Teuchelis', in P. A. Atzmon and S. Faroqi (eds), The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography, Leiden-Boston-Köln 2002, 217-19, on how major political developments may be absent from local chronicles: observe a similar phenomenon in Christopoulos, 'He peri ton Kerthakion periotecho', 430-71 (nevertheless, maybe its references to "πολεοδομος" [new tax] are related to the fiscal measures of the Nizam-ı Cedid).
to a lesser degree even today, as brigands have often sweepingly been treated as heralds of Greek independence and ascribed a concrete national identity and national motives. However, this picture changes when one studies the Ottoman sicles. For instance, the sicles of Karaferye demonstrate that brigandage was a perennial problem in the district, and groups of brigands occasionally upset local life and created a general feeling of insecurity beyond religious or ethnic boundaries. Most incoming decrees give us very little specific information on the exact activities and motives of brigands, who are usually referred to simply as “heyardis [i] eskya”, while only a few brigands—mostly band leaders—are mentioned by name. Even though there were undoubtedly Christians among them, several brigands whom we know by name were not Greek freedom fighters, as traditional Greek historiography would have them to be, but Muslim Albanians; Albanians were in fact often targeted by state decrees as agents of disorder and destabilization. Thus, entries from 1794-95 refer to Albanian brigands who had established themselves in the countryside of Karaferye and attacked travellers, while after an attack on a village they even passed through the town of Karaferye along with their hostages. Sicles clearly are biased state documents with an interest in restoring order rather than in investigating the deeper roots of brigandage or exploring the motives of brigands, and thus one could argue that it is only natural that outlaws are usually depicted by Ottoman court records as common criminals devoid of any higher (let alone national) ideals. On the other hand, as examples from various times and places prove, this does not always preclude the possibility of sicles which provide evidence of brigands and outlaws whose mo-

54 This concept is epitomised in the textbook treatment of ideiotes and maronikes in Historia tou hellenisou ethnous, vol. 11, 417-22. It is interesting to juxtapose Historia’s (1975) and Stanford Shaw’s (1971) approaches. Shaw also speaks of brigands and bandits in the Balkans, but in a very different light: for him, bandit and brigand bands were primarily actors in the antagonism between the state and the provincial Muslim notables (Shaw, Between Old and New, 212, 227-28, 235-36, 242-46, 301-04).
55 Vasxavellis has published several sicles entries related to brigandage (Vasxavellis, Historika Archeias, passim).
56 See, for instance, KS 101/54/1 (24 August 1785).
57 See, for instance, A. Anastasopoulos, “Lighting the Flame of Disorder: Aysen Insisting and State Intervention in Ottoman Karaferye, 1756-59”, LIT, 8/1 & 2 (2002), 83-84 (unfortunately this article was printed with mistakes: Thus, the first sentence of the second paragraph on p. 83 should read: “At this point the Ottoman authorities connected the problem in Karaferye with the issue of Albanian presence in the region”; the fifth sentence of the second paragraph on p. 84 should read: “According to the document, Mustafa borrowed money from Hasan, transferred the debt to the population of the kazas by having them sign notes of acceptance, then Hasan terrorized them for its repayment”; p. 84 n. 44: it is not “document no. 18” and “document no. 16” but “entry no. 18” and “entry no. 16”). See also F. F. A. Anstis, “Albanians and “Mountain Bandits”: in idem (ed.), The Ottoman Balkans, 1750-1850, Princeton 2005, 87-113.
58 KS 101/8 (25 October 1794). This entry has been translated into Greek by Vasxavellis, Historika Archeias, 233-34, no. 241.
59 KS 101/22/1 (24 July 1795). I assume that they are the same brigands as above, because they were heading to Kastoria, where the Albanian brigands had established their base. This entry, too, has been translated into Greek by Vasxavellis, Historika Archeias, 236-37, no. 244.

Karaferye (Veroia) in the 1790s

were no enmity towards the state and its agents; still, whether discontent with the established order goes hand in hand with ethnic or national consciousness is at best debatable.

To conclude, closer interaction between Ottomanist and national Balkan historiographies will certainly result in a more balanced picture of the last decades of the eighteenth and the early decades of the nineteenth century, a crucial period, which still remains relatively obscure, at least for the southern Balkans. The 1790s were not a time of revolutionary changes, but, when examined as part of a long continuum, they contributed to breeding phenomena that were later to fully develop and dominate the early part of the nineteenth century (to name but a few: rise of nationalism, revolts and revolutions for national liberation, state reforms, issues of orientation and identity). Moreover, we should aim at also broadening our scope by fruitfully combining studies of the major phenomena of this period with case studies of particular Balkan regions, based on as wide a spectrum of sources as possible.

60 Ibid., 112-14, nos 139-140 (25 April 1705-21 June 1705); S. Faresghi, “The Life and Death of Outlaws in Κορφα”, in I. Baftalou and S. Faresghi with R. Veloj (ed.), Armağan-Festschrift für Andreas Tietze, Prague 1994, 59-76; cf. Ullrich, Saraban da ephkyel, 94.
61 Dimara treated the decade 1791-1800 as a precursor to the phenomena that dominated the first two decades of the nineteenth century as far as Greek Orthodox society was concerned (Dimaras, Diaphorismos, 245-62, esp. 246-47). Dimaras focused on issues of ideology, culture, social etiquette, and fashion, and spoke of “phenomena that signalled modernity” in the period 1800-20.