Patterns of Protoindustrialization in the Ottoman Empire. The Case of Eastern Thessaly, ca. 1750-1860

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The purpose of this essay [1] is to present the case of the rise and decline of the Eastern Thessalian rural industries that were part of the larger regional entity of Ottoman Thessaly. The latter provides an ideal case-study that permits us to examine how in a pre-industrial society smaller homogeneous regions that were complementary to each other, constituted a large "balanced" regional entity. Mechanisms of regulation answered the sometimes abrupt fluctuations of the demographic and economic aggregates, and any large-scale economic or demographic mutation was followed by rearrangements that secured the regional equilibrium. The use of the protoindustrial model is extremely helpful in this perspective.[2]

It is not of course the first time that such an attempt has been undertaken in the field of South-eastern European and Ottoman studies. Çaglar Keyder was the first to consider applying the protoindustrial model to Ottoman history. He found this model inapplicable to the economic history of the Orient since he defined protoindustry as a "*part of the autonomous transition towards capitalism*". This definition, no matter how interesting it might be, goes counter to the accepted definition

[1] This paper is based on my doctoral dissertation: *Recherches sur l'Economie et les Finances de villages du Pélion, région d'industries rurales, ca.1750-1850.* E.H.E.S.S., Paris. Oct. 1989 (xxvi + pp. 867)

[2] We consider the latest definition given by F. MENDELS [1984] as the standard one.

of the protoindustrial model, and it is too rigid to take account of the multiple facets of industrial development in the Balkans.[3] M.R. Palairet was the first to attempt a full study of an industrial sector in the Ottoman Europe, namely the woollen textiles of Eastern Roumelia, that were proved to be a "*protoindustrial failure*".[4] It would thus be quite difficult to relate M.R. Palairet's approach to Ç. Keyder's, the former being principally empirical in its findings and conclusions while the latter is mainly derived from a rigid conceptual definition. These approaches are mutually incompatible. As will be seen, my analysis of the rise and demise of the Thessalian rural domestic industries agrees to a large extent with Palairet's analysis of the decline of the Bulgarian wool industries. I must nevertheless point out some fundamental differences which principally come out of a distinct methodological approach. Nowhere in M.R. Palairet's papers is the geographical outline of the region under study fully presented and examined. One gets the impression that he is studying the wool industries wherever they are found in Eastern Roumelia, regardless of their specific location, whether in rural areas, small towns or large urban centres like Plovdiv or Sliven. Furthermore, he does not give us a detailed account of the reasons for which he believes he is confronting a case of protoindustrial development and decline. He simply goes on calling all non-mechanized wool industries protoindustrial, regardless of their location and organization of labour. This theoretical lacuna excepted, M.R. Palairet's work made him a pioneer in showing that the demise as well as the rise of rural industries in Eastern Roumelia was linked to the agrarian structure of the whole area under discussion, and not to a presumed massive in-

[3] KEYDER, Ç. [1981] cf. The most useful part of Ç. Keyder's contribution is his acute criticism of nationalistic historiographies which consider that the Levantine economies were in a process of maturing for an autonomous passage to capitalism, on the eve of European interference and massive imports of manufactured goods, and the subsequent peripherialization of these regions.

[4] See PALAIRET, M.R. [1982, 1983]. A more theoretical paper comparing the Bulgarian and the Thessalian examples was later presented by PALAIRET, M.R. [1985].

vasion of, and subsequent competition with, European manufactured goods. Christina Agriantoni has also examined protoindustrialization in early independent Greece. In her otherwise useful, solid and excellently documented thesis, when examining the origins of Greek industrialization she points out that protoindustrialization was a complete failure in the southern provinces of today's Greece.[5] It is regrettable that she does not go further in explaining what exactly she considers to be a protoindustrial failure, as one gets the impression she is talking either of concentrated manufactures or of rural artisans in general. In a later paper she generally discards the possibility of protoindustrial growth in the Mediterranean countryside pointing out that there is an incompatibility between protoindustrial activity and the commercial plantation agriculture of the Mediterranean world (vineyards, olive and mulberry groves).[6]

1. Thessaly in the first half of the XVIIIth century: a regional system on the eve of protoindustrial growth.

Thessaly is composed of two adjacent plains (the plain of Trikkala in the west and the less fertile plain of Larissa in the East separated by the low Revania hills) surrounded by high mountainous ranges, except for the south-eastern part which is open to the sea through the large protected Pagasiticos Gulf. The mountains can be broadly classified in two groups: those of the Northern, Western and Southern sides, forming parts of the Pindus range and their prolongations, and those of the Eastern coast (from Olympus to Pelion) facing the Aegean Sea. The former (called hereafter *continental mountain range*) was part of the wide area dominated by semi-nomadic[7] Christian pastoral-

[5] AGRIANTONI, C. [1986, pp. 15, 33, 53, 287]

[6] AGRIANTONI, C. [1988]

[7] See X. DE PLANHOL [1962, pp. 311-314], for the use of the term "*semi-nomad*" in this case. On the Valachian and Greek speaking pastoralists see: AMAE TURQUIE M&D 22, n.103 de Boilecomte "*Rapport sur les Valaques occidentaux*" (1833). SIVIGNON, M. [1975, pp. 319-335].

ists, while the latter (called hereafter *littoral mountain range*) was populated by a sedentary agricultural Christian population of small-owners. In the plains, the village communities (called *çiftlik* villages) were generally inhabitated by sharecroppers who had inalienable rights of perpetual tenancy and possessed by Muslim landlords[8] living in the cities where they formed the leading social and political provincial elite. These rich landlord families constituted local notable dynasties (*ayan*) that dominated any aspect of social and economic life in the sharecroppers' villages.

The complementary relation between the agrarian system of the Thessalian plains and the pastoral "way of life" of the seminomadic population of the Pindus range has been observed by all those who study the Thessalian region. The pastoralists of Pindus were the most important group practising animal husbandry in the adjacent Thessalian plains that were part of their winter pastures. They were among the larger owners of pack animals and the leading transporters of the region. They were also extensively involved in woollen cloth production and commercialization, parallel to their movements either as pastoralists or as commercial transporters. Transportation and trade took specific routes linked to a hierarchical chain of annual fairs. The rigid land tenure system in the plains permitted this symbiosis of mountainous "*inversely trashumant*" pastoralism and the field system in the sharecroppers' villages. Each pastoral community had its principal village and summer pasturages on the mountains and, following centuries-old trajectories, moved every autumn into the plains where its traditional winter pasturages were rented from Muslim landlords or from "independent" (that is non-sharecropper) peasant communities. There was a close relation between the economic interests of the landowners for steady monetarized revenues and the need of the pastoral community for constant winter pastures, as there was a close re-

[8] On agrarian relations in the plains see: LAWLESS, R.I. [1977].

lation between the extremely low demographic density in the plains and the land tenure system. Population growth in the plains was checked by social as well as by "purely natural" factors. The extension of the village's animal husbandry, the choice of crop rotations and last but not least, the eventual break-up of the constraints imposed on the field system, were opposed by the landowners and their representatives in the sharecroppers' villages, leading to the perpetuation of the rigid relation between "ideal-size" farm units and the number and size of peasant households. The unhealthy conditions of the extensively marshy lowlands added a natural factor to this demographic system.

The cities constituted an important part of this complementary regional complex. The richest pastoralists and their families rented houses in the cities, while for at least seven months a year the effective demand for urban goods and services and the demand for food increased in the towns and the surrounding agricultural area where the pastoralists temporarily settled. In the long term an active trade in pastoral goods and services (wool and woollen clothes, milk, cheese and meat, part-time seasonal employment in agriculture and transportation) for local agricultural and urban goods and services (grain and other foodstuffs, industrial goods, boarding accommodation and other petty urban services) was engaged mainly through the urban commercial network. The urban population was itself partly renewed and sustained by pastoralists who had permanently settled as full-time merchants and craftsmen in the cities. Industrial and commercial activities, mainly concentrated in the urban areas until ca. 1750, were under strict guild regulations. They formed part of a vivid crafts system whose production was destined for the local as well as the interregional markets. We know that in a way typical of the late Ottoman period, the guild organisation of the Muslim urban populations and the "janissary" corps were mutually infiltrated — especially in Larissa, the largest and most important urban centre. Throughout the XVIIIth century a growing part of the commercial and artisan

population of the cities was Christian or Jewish. The climate of intolerance, especially that imposed by the "janissary" — artisans of Larissa, was nevertheless felt by the Christian populations, and since 1770 it made their life and status extremely precarious in this large city.[9]

The sedentary agricultural population of the Eastern Thessalian littoral mountain range constituted another part of this regional complex. Their agricultural and demographic characteristics sharply contrasted this eastern mountainous zone from that of the plains. A zone of high demographic pressure [9a] and intensive, but deficient, cash-crop agriculture of small-owners [9b] with strong communal institutions, dominated by a class of Christian communal notables and merchants, was confronted by the zone of low demographic pressure and surplus cereal extensive agriculture in the plains, having rudimentary communal institutions and being dominated by the great Muslim landowners and notables living in the cities. The inhabitants of villages in the littoral mountain range were always short of the necessary complementary revenue, and they were seasonally employed in the

[9] On the social and religious tension in Larissa (ca. 1750-1820) see BJÖRNSTHÅAL J.J., [1783 t. 4, pp. 129-132]. POUQUEVILLE, F.C.H.L. [1820, t.3, p. 359].

[9a] This mountainous region showed a relatively high population density already at the beginning of the XVIIIth century. We have calculated that in the beginning of the XIXth century (ca. 1815), the general population density of the Pelion Mountain communities was 58 inhabitants per km^2. In the nearby villages in the plain density was lower than 15. In 1881 after half a century of slow but steady demographic growth in the lowlands, the entire province of Thessaly and Arta (including Pelion) had reached only 22 inhabitants per km^2 (with 69 inhabitants per km^2 in Pelion). We have furthermore extrapolated that in ca. 1700, before the rise of rural industries in Eastern Thessaly, population density in Pelion would have already been as high as 39 inhabitants per km^2.

[9b] We have estimated that in 1836, in Zagora, a village that had grown up to be a small town of rural wool industries on the Pelion mountain, the average size of a family farm was only 0.9 hectare. No tax payer had a farm larger than 3 hectares while almost 20% of all tax payers had only a very small plot of less than 0.1 hectare, being almost landless. Under the given agricultural structure we have furthermore estimated that the minimum size of a farm owned by a tax payer had to be between 0.4 and 0.7 hectare in order to guarantee the vital minimum for the survival of a family unit of 3 to 5 members respectively. Only 40% of all tax payers possessed more than necessary 0.7 hectare.

plains agriculture which, as a counterpart, provided them with foodstuffs. Before the advent of protoindustry, the steady demographic surplus was syphoned off through familial emigration strategies, either on a seasonal or a semi-permanent basis (as craftsmen, merchants or even as rank and file members of the secular or ecclesiastic bureaucracy of the Orthodox Church) to cities, thus renewing the always deficient urban population of the empire. We should add that their position close to the open Aegean Sea provided them with the possibility of maritime contacts with the larger world of the Greek Archipelago. In the last decades of the XVIIth century, their silk production was partly absorbed by the Chios merchants for their manufactures and partly exported through the Epirotan ports to Italy, while olive-oil was (at least in the begining of the XIXth c.) exported to Salonica.[10]

2. The conditions for the rise of rural domestic industries.

In the second half of the XVIIIth century, growing strains were evident in the urban Thessalian industries dominated by the guild system[11], a development observed in other cities of Ottoman Europe as well. The thriving textile and dyed cotton-yarn centre of Tyrnavos, a city near Larissa that had been the biggest urban industrial centre of Thessaly in the middle of the XVIIIth century, was considered to be declining by most Greek or foreign observers in the last decades of this century.[12] A study of the life-term (malikane) tax-farm leases for the period 1760-1810, showed that the taxes on industrial activities in the major urban centres of the Empire — contrary to those of com-

[10] Mertzios, K.D. [1949, pp. 250-252; 313-316; 373]. And especially the Memorantum of the merchant J.B. Gourette dated 7 Dec. 1725, and attached to ANF/AMAE, B1 993, Salonica: Le Blanc 7 Jan. 1726.

[11] On the constraints imposed in Larissa by the guild system cf., Ntrougoulis, G.V. [1985, p. 242 sq].

[12] Philippidis, D. and Constantas, G. [1791, p. 99]. Leake, W.M.[1838, t.4, p. 296].

mercial sectors that showed a much faster rate of growth — were declining or stagnant, or on rare occasions slowly growing in a period of rising prices and galloping currency devaluation.[13] These observations confirm the impression of most European travellers and the conclusion we can reach from any other evidence we possess. The stagnation and relative decline of Ottoman industries in the second half of the XVIIIth century is now considered to be a solidly proven phenomenon. But it is, I regret, an ill-defined phenomenon. By "industries", most of the specialists mean the urban ones, whose stagnation in the XVIIIth century was followed by a rapid deindustrialization after the end of the Napoleonic wars and the Treaties of Free Trade. Allowances for regional differences are made, but the global picture is one of a continuous stagnation, decline and fall of Ottoman industries. Innovation was sought after in attempts to introduce centralized and mechanized production. The causes of this long process of decline are rarely thought to be different from those determining the overall process of imperial decline in the presence of European armies and manufactures.

On the contrary, rural industries located in mountainous eastern Thessalian towns and villages, since ca. 1750 and until the end of the Napoleonic wars, showed a remarkable propensity to growth. Their rise is poorly, but clearly documented, and we must stress the fact that they tended to produce the same products as their urban counterparts, themselves imitating the standard products of the great Levantine urban and industrial centres (Constantinople, Salonica, Bursa, Damascus, Halep, etc.).[14] They were not innovating, either in products and techniques, or in opening up new markets, but they responded positively, on the one hand, to the growing strains of the guilds sys-

[13] GENÇ, M. [1976, p. 295]. Only the dyed cotton yarn stamp-tax of Serres, showed an oppositive and constant rate of increase, confirming the expansion of this production, destined for central European markets in town and country.

[14] PHILIPPIDIS, D. and CONSTANTAS, G. [1791, p. 122]. PHILIPPIDIS, A. [1815, pp. 139; 154].

tem and the worsening enterpreneurial climate in the urban industrial centres and, on the other hand, to the continuous growth of effective demand for dyed cotton yarn in Central Europe and for textiles in the Empire whose population was expanding all along the XVIIIth and the XIXth century.[15] These characteristics facilitated the diffusion and growth of rural domestic industries of any type in the Eastern Thessalian zone.

To begin with, in a period of growing insecurity in lowland town and country, the mountainous regions of Eastern Thessaly usually enjoyed a privileged and secure position since they belonged to imperial religious foundations (*evkaf*), and thus were protected by the administration of the imperial Harem, which held the superintendence (*nazirat*) of these foundations. In these non-sharecropping villages, the communal institutions were further strengthened, and sometimes formal or informal federal ties were established between them. Thus, in a period of decentralization and fragmentation of political power in the Ottoman provinces, the eastern Thessalian communities showed a tendency towards political concentration and the ability to secure a direct liaison with the Constantinopolitan centres of decision-making (either imperial or ecclesiastical).

In the same period, in most of the Eastern Thessalian villages and small towns, the rising social strata of community notables had been capable of actively controlling the communal budget and finances and sometimes even the communal tax-farm, a development that made them the predominant actors in local society.[16] The communal notables (*kocabaşi*) rose from the role of simple political intermediaries to that of a social elite. Contrary to popular opinion, they were not a landowning aristocracy, since they only possessed estates of a modest size. Their landed possessions gave them social prestige but not economic power. They were mostly money-lenders and merchants. We

[15] On the population growth of the Ottoman Europe, cf. McGowan, B.[1981, pp. 80-104].

[16] Cf. Inalcik, H.[1980, p. 332 sq].

can argue that in the first half of the XVIIIth century, they rose from the position of commercial intermediaries to that of independent entrepreneurs. In some cases their economic interests largely surpassed the local level, being merchants and financiers at the top level of the Constantinople and Galata money-market. They totally controlled production of agricultural (olive oil and silk) and industrial goods (texiles, dyed cotton yarn) by a system of cash-advances and communal finance controls. They were often partners of the local groceries and were constantly acting as money lenders, sometimes directly paying the taxes of the small-producers. They were the pivotal elements in our protoindustrial structure, providing finance, organization, marketing opportunities and linking the local producer to the distant interregional markets of the Empire or, in the case of dyed cotton yarn, of Central Europe. They played a leading role in the diffusion and financing of rural industries. Their rise is clearly connected with the role they secured as intermediaries in the silk trade.

Silkworm breeding and raw silk trade were the solid base upon which any further expansion of cottage industries stood. The silk trade provided the necessary accumulation of capital in the hands of community notables and merchants.[17] Silkworm breeding continued to be the most active non-agricultural occupation of the peasant families after the definitive decline of the cottage industries, well into the second half of the XIXth century. The zone of silkworm breeding covered almost the whole of Eastern Thessaly, and it was much larger than the area of cottage industries clustered around a few small-towns or large villages like Ayia, Ambelakia and Raspani, Tzaritzani, Makrinitza and Portaria, Zagora and Vlaholeivado. We shall use the expression protoindustrial clusters to refer to those small areas of cottage industries (see figure).

[17] For the silk trade and consumption in Pelion see AMAE, TURQUIE M&D 8, Salonica: Arasy, V.J. 24 April 1777, ff. 132-133, 136. BJÖRNSTÅahl, J.J. [1783, t.4, pp. 131-132]. BEAUJOUR, F. [1800, t.1, pp. 251-253]. URQUHART, D. [1838, t.1, pp. 331-332).

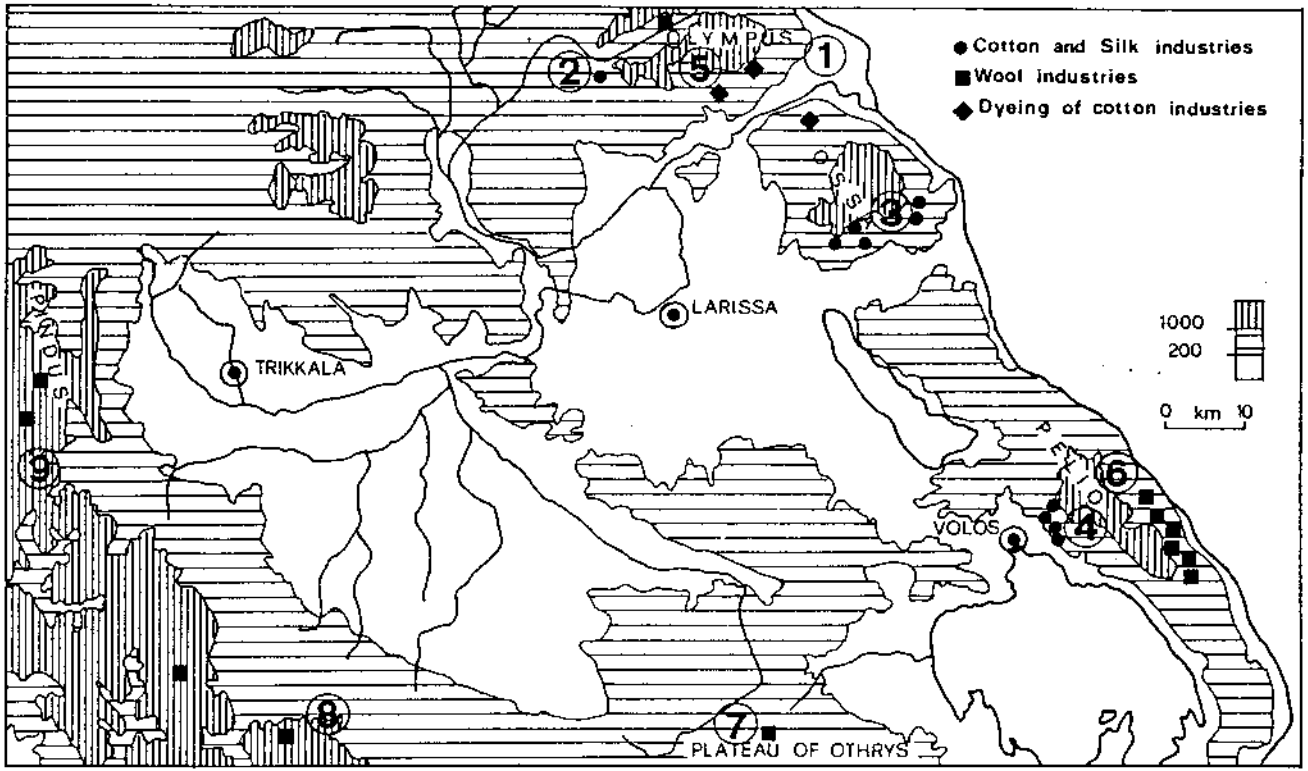

Figure: The protoindustrial clusters in Thessaly.

I. Cotton and silk cottage industries. 1. Ampelakia, Rapsani and the surrounding villages. - 2. Tzaritzani. - 3. Ayia and the surrounding villages (Southern Ossa Mt.). - 4. Makrinitza the surrounding villages (NW Pelion). - II. Woolen Cloth Industries. 5. Vlaholeivado and surrounding villages (Lower Olympus). - 6. Zagora and surrounding villages (Eastern Pelion). - 7. Goura and the surrounding villages (Orthys Mt.). - 8. Agrapha villages. - 9. Valahian pastoralists on Pindus Mt.

The natural resources of a mountain village in Eastern Thessaly (abundant sources of water power, local production of silk and some dyestuff materials) were also a precondiction of industrial development. The privileged position of Eastern Thessaly, standing both on the internal overland caravan and on the maritime trading circuits, facilitated the circulation of food stuffs, raw materials and semi-finished or finished goods. The sharecroppers' villages in the plains produced corn and cotton for the upland "independent" industrialized villages. Furthermore, the poor sharecroppers' families engaged in spinning formed the first link in the chain of transformation of the raw material (cotton) into cloth. The high population density and the agrarian structure of the upland villages, in this area of seasonally unemployed small-owners, produced an abundant reserve of cheap seasonal domestic peasant labour. This was the main supply of male, female and infant labour that merchants organized in cottage industries.

All the characteristics of the protoindustrial model, as recently defined by F. Mendels [1984], are thus combined in our case:

1. The rise of rural, mostly domestic, industries in mountainous Eastern Thessaly in the middle of the XVIIIth century, as an answer to the growth of the effective demand for fabrics, texiles and clothes in the *extraregional and distant* Levantine markets in a period of growing rigidity and constraints in the stagnant or even relatively declining urban industry dominated by the guild system.

2. A *bifurcation* of rural Thessaly into a homogeneous agricultural surplus zone in the great Thessalian plains, and a zone composed of the surrounding smaller mountainous regions of rural domestic industries. We would add however that the agricultural surplus was produced under precapitalist relations of production and that its commercialization was to a large extent assured through extra-economic constraints.

3. The *seasonal* involvement of peasant households in this

industrial occupation had a *dynamic and expansive* character. This period of protoindustrial development constituted a time of unprecedented material and cultural development for the protoindustrial villages and small towns. The complementary revenues that the peasant families could obtain permitted them to sustain rapid demographic growth in a period of growing material ease on the eastern Thessalian mountains.

4. Forms of commercial control, ranging from the Kaufsystem to cash-advances and the Verlager system, were adopted by the merchants and intermediaries that dominated industrial production. They were mostly Christians, originating from the mountainous districts and sometimes residing (they or their partners) in the distant urban markets (Constantinople, Salonica, Smyrna, Alexandria, Vienna, Leipzig etc.). They belonged to the upper strata of the local notables (*kocabaşi*) of the richer agricultural communities, building their commercial networks on personal clientship relations as well. The close relation (or sometimes identification) between communal notables and merchants or "middlemen" was one of the peculiarities of our case.

3. Two patterns of protoindustrialization.

In Thessaly, in general we can isolate two different patterns of protoindustrialization that are firmly, but not exclusively, connected to the two different mountainous regions of Thessaly: the continental and the littoral ranges and their respective populations. The cotton and silk cottage industries were concentrated on the littoral mountain range and produced by sedentary non-pastoral peasant communities. The woollen rural domestic industries were mainly established in the continental mountain range among the semi-nomadic pastoralists of Pindus. Zagora and six other small towns and villages in the north-eastern slopes of Pelion - a non pastoralist area — and the Valachian villages around Vlacholeivado on Lower Olympus were the only villages producing woollen stuffs in eastern Thessaly. They both

used the techniques of production and the division of labour proper to the semi-nomadic Valachian pastoralists of Pindus. Furthermore, they used the same method of itinerant commercialization, common not only to Valachians, but to most of the large woollen stuffs producers in the European part of the Ottoman Empire.

4. The silk and cotton rural industries.

In the case of the cotton and silk industries in Eastern Thessaly, access to the raw materials' market (cotton, silk, dyes) was open and free. Silk was locally produced by women, while cotton was produced and partly spun in the nearby plains or later, when the protoindustrial activities reached the peak of their expansion, was imported from Anatolia (port of Smyrna) and Macedonia (ports of Salonica and Orphanos near Serres).[18] Sharecropping families of the villages in the plains engaged in spinning and formed part of the chain of cotton processing. Cleaning and spinning the raw cotton constituted the most important source of non-agricultural complementary income for the sharecroppers' family. They worked seasonally during the slack agricultural period providing spun cotton for the cottage industries.[19] The rigid land tenure system and the intensive surplus-extraction relations of production forced the sharecoppers' families to exert an additional work effort in order to produce and partly process raw cotton. Poverty in the plains "*subsidized*" upland rural domestic industries, offering an extra cheap workforce of spinners. At the same time the land-tenure system in the plains was an obstacle to any movement of the demographic surplus from the uphill industrial zone down to the sharecropping plains. In the upland cottage industries we observe a strict division of labour in the peasant-artisan family.

[18] Stamatoyiannopoulos, M. [1984, pp. 193-204].

[19] AMAE, série CCC 15bis, Salonique: F. Beaujour, f.117 (1793). Cousinery, M.E.M. [1831, t.1, pp. 162-163].

Women and children spun the raw cotton and reeled the silk thread, while men were mostly weavers of cotton-silk (*boğasi*), silk (*ibrişim, fytili*) or mixed cotton-silk (*alaca*) stuffs. The commercialization of the products was in the hands of the merchants, and did not necessitate the physical presence of the producer who lived his entire life in his village. We do not know to what extent the merchants and local communal notables were involved in the organization of production, but we must assume that the system of cash-advances helped them dominate this branch as well. The production was destined to local and distant markets of the empire and the products followed the Ottoman imitations of Indian cotton stuffs. No guild system of regulations can be traced in this area.

A part of the cotton spun by sharecroppers' families or by women in the upland villages was destined for a special branch of production, that of dyed cotton yarn, exported to the markets of Central Europe where it was used for the production of cotton cloth. It was a rural, but not a domestic industry, controlled by merchants and specialized, highly-paid artisans, sometimes organized in guilds even in these rural areas. Already thriving well before the middle of the XVIIIth century in the Thessalian cities (Larissa, Tyrnavos), the industry was diffused, ca. 1750, by artisans working in the urban industries, to their rural upland districts of origin, the eastern Thessalian villages like Ambelakia, Rapsani, Tzaritzani, Ayia and other neighbouring villages, in North eastern Thessaly.[20] It was later diffused southwards by merchants of the above-mentioned villages, to the district of Northwestern Pelion (Makrinitza, Portaria, Katihori, Ano Volos). There, the local merchants and communal notables were soon able, partly at least, to control the production. We have clear indications that the communal institutions were used as a means to obstruct foreign merchant-competitors, such as the French vice-consul at Volos, J. Bartélemy, and his

[20] Stamatoyiannopoulos, M. [1984], Nikolopoulos, I. [1987].

local Greek partners, who tried to establish a large dyeing workshop near Katihori village.[21]

It is interesting to note that in the same period cotton and silk weaving were introduced in the Eastern Thessalian villages. The merchants who dominated dyed cotton yarn output were probably the same as those dominating the cotton and silk cloth weaving and certainly those who completely controlled cotton spinning. The growing export of dyed cotton yarn to Central Europe constituted the motor of protoindustrial expansion in the cotton-silk industry. In a period of rapid depreciation and subsequent devaluation of the Ottoman silver piaster, the steadily growing mass of solid European currency, appropriated by the exporting merchants, permitted them to turn themselves into important merchants and financiers, partly living in their village of origin or in the distant urban markets of Central Europe (Vienna, Leipzig, Budapest) and the financial centres of the Empire (Constantinople, Smyrna, Salonica).[22] The growing export market for dyed cotton yarn provided the protoindustrial regions with capital that was also invested in cloth production. The close link between demand for dyed cotton yarn in a distant foreign market and the general economic and demographic equilibrium in most clusters of cottage industry in Eastern Thessaly, were to become a potentially destabilizing factor threatening even the areas not directly dependent on European demand.

5. The woollen cloth industries.

The coarse woollen cloth-producing industries show quite a different pattern. There is a clear distinction between the weaving stage undertaken mainly by women, and the stage of itine-

[21] Beaujour, F. [1800, t.1, pp. 290-294).

[22] Beaujour, F. [1800, t.1, pp. 274-285). Magnis, N. [1860: 97]. Stamatoyiannopoulos, M. [1984, pp. 259-260].

rant tailoring of the cloth into cloaks, by men. In the case of Pindus pastoralists (either Valachian-speaking or Greek-speaking — like the Agraphiotes — but with the same "way of life" which was undiscriminatingly called "Valachian" — meaning generally shepherd — by sedentary peasants) wool was spun and woven into coarse woollen stuffs (*skouti*) by women. The woollen stuffs were later tailored into coarse cloaks by Valachian artisans and merchants, living in the urban centres of consumption, or by itinerant Valachian tailors moving through pre-defined routes in the rural areas. This mode of production and seasonal itinerant commercialization was not different from that used by the Bulgarian coarse woollen cloth (*aba*) industries.[23]

In Thessaly, the organization and the methods of production of woollen stuffs were those of the Valachian pastoralists, merchants and artisans. In Eastern Thessaly, the two existing centres of production were directly or indirectly linked to the Valachian system of production and commercialization. The Valachian population of Vlacholeivado was linked to the circuit of production organized in the form of a putting-out system by the Calarytes merchants,[24] while the Zagora villages (which was the only protoindustrial group in Thessaly producing woollen stuff without having a local production of wool), does not seem to have been directly involved in such a relation. Zagoriote merchants and financiers, already present in the great imperial centres of trade and finance before the rise of local woollen stuffs industries, dominated this production.

In the Ottoman Empire, access to the relatively closed market of wool was usually a privilege enjoyed by urban guilds, selected groups of merchants and the pastoralists themselves. The largest part of the annual wool production in continental Greece was captured by those "privileged" groups. The price of the

[23] Todorov, N. [1970, p. 241 sq]. Palairet, M.R. [1982, 1983].
[24] Leake, M.W. [1838, t.3, p. 330].

wool that remained and reached the free market was in that way artificially raised. Persistent European (mainly French) demand did the rest. The villages near Zagora, closely connected to the administration of the imperial religious foundations (*evkaf*), imported their wool from Morea and from the region of Leivadia, itself a possession of the same administration.[25] It is probable that the Zagoriotes enjoyed a privileged access to the wool production of Leivadia due to their common dependence on the administration of the imperial religious foundations.

We are totally ignorant of how the woollen stuffs production "*in the Valachian way*" was introduced in the Zagora villages, but the spur may have been given by the attested immigration of Valachian merchants and craftsmen into the region after the destruction of the thriving city of Moschopolis, in Northwestern Macedonia, by Albanian bandits in 1768. The first mention of Zagoriote coarse woollen cloth is made in 1777, by a French envoy in Salonica.[26] The rise of this new industry in eastern Pelion is probably a factor in the origin of the decline of maritime activities in Zagora, since part of the available male labour-force turned from sailors to tailors. The maritime legacy of Zagora had nevertheless served them well, since we have evidence that the commercialization of Zagoriote woollen stuffs in the Greek Archipelago was made by ships carrying Zagoriote woollen cloth and itinerant tailors.[27]

The itinerant mode of commercialization of the product is not different from that of the Piedmont artisans. Many observers made that comparison already in the XIXth century, talking of the common strategy of seasonal migration of men and their standard itinerant manufacture of woollen cloth.[28] Such a mode of commercialization would also demand another charac-

[25] Beaujour, F. [1800, t.1, p. 149]

[26] AMAE Turquie M&D 8: Salonique Arasy, V.J. 24 April 1777

[27] Beaujour, F. [1800, t.1, pp. 328-329], Bartholdy, J.A. [1807, t.2, pp. 183-184] Philippidis, A. [1815, p. 191].

[28] Boué, A. [1846, t.2, pp. 57-58].

teristic of the Piedmont itinerant tailors, that of a chain of credit which the tailor advanced to the individual client or to the local retail merchant. The tailor himself was indebted to a stronger merchant, who in turn was the debtor of a financier. In the case of Zagora, where access to the closed market of wool was both difficult and expensive, the role of great financiers was certainly extended to providing producers with wool. In Constantinople, a number of rich merchants and financiers originating from Zagora existed before the rise of the woollen cloth industry. The existence of a guild of Zagoriote tailors, did not constitute a major obstacle to the predominance of great financiers, as the case of the Philippoupolis guilds has shown.[29] It is clear that the "*rich who profit from the trade of woollen cloaks*" (as compared to the "*poor that produce it*")[30] are to be found among these great merchants and financiers.

6. The demise of the Thessalian rural industries.

The protoindustrial development was part of a major rearrangement of the larger regional equilibrium in XVIIIth century Ottoman Thessaly. Starting immediately after the end of the Napoleonic wars, the protoindustrial system repeatedly failed to confront European competition or to answer the continuous disequilibrating shocks severing one link after another in the chain of each protoindustrial cluster. The reallocation of natural resources, both in the agricultural surplus-creating zones and in the protoindustrial zones, coinciding with the reorientation of the merchants' and "capital holders" (I. Wallerstein's "accumulators") strategies of "investment" were generally the results both of European penetration and competition and of the centralizing policies of the reforming bureaucrats of the Ottoman

[29] Todorov, N. [1970, pp. 237-239].
[30] Skouvaras, V. [1981, t.1, p. 190].

Empire and the newly emerged nation-states in the Balkans.[31] The way they were locally implemented and the forms they took were closely related to the particular state of "demographic-economic" equilibrium of each region. In Thessaly, the mechanisms of regulation failed. Parts of this area (especially a large part of Eastern Thessaly) were cut off from their former regional complex and entered into closer links with other areas, during the long global process of integration of the Ottoman economy and society into the world capitalist economy. As we shall see, the rhythm of de-industrialization differed according to the nature and to the form of larger regional equilibriums, some protoindustrial clusters declining earlier and more abruptly than others.

Each type of textile production in Eastern Thessaly suffered its own process of decline. We can thus make a distinction between the ways in which cotton-silk and the woollen industries declined. A special reference must also be made to the decline and transformation of the silk breeding activities, a female occupation in almost all the villages of Eastern Thessaly. The decline process started after the end of the Napoleonic wars and the subsequent massive imports of British cotton yarn into Central Europe and the Ottoman markets. The Treaties of Free Trade did not constitute the final — or even principal — blow to the local textiles, but they precipitated their end. They simultaneously opened up markets of raw materials, like the wool market, to European demand. During the same period, the centralizing efforts of the imperial bureaucracy succeeded in extirpating all local autonomy in the mountainous regions, while improving material conditions in the cities and relaxing the climate of intolerance. The expansion of raw material exports to Europe, such as silk reeled in the "piedmontese" style, the only kind compatible with the needs of the Lyon silk industries, stimulated, in the ex-

[31] Our conclusions are close to those of M.R. PALAIRET [1985, p. 261].

porting port-towns, a process of industrialization dependent on the export trade with Europe.

7. The cotton and silk industries.

The first rural industrial branch to receive a blow was that of cotton spinning and dyed cotton yarn. The British cotton yarn established new norms for cotton texiles, and the hand-made yarn was at the same time more expensive and less good than British one. The Ambelakia merchants, already aware of the possible fatal consequences of British competition in 1810[32], imported a German spinning machine in their mountain village of origin in 1817. They faced the anger of local women who were consequently reduced to unemployment and deprived, along with their families, of their main and most lucrative source of complementary (and monetarized) income. Women openly sabotaged the mechanized production that even without their intervention did not prove capable of standing up to British competition. The death of the German mechanic after some years gave the final blow to this isolated effort in mechanized cotton spinning in Thessaly.[33] Within a few years the thriving cotton yarn dyeing centres of Thessaly were demolished. The rich merchants emigrated to the large urban centres, either in Central Europe or in the Ottoman Empire where they could continue their purely commercial enterprises. The protoindustrial producers themselves either turned to other industrial or agricultural activities (in the areas of North-eastern Pelion, Ayia villages, Tzaritzani) or emigrated to the rising urban industrial and commercial centres of the empire. That latter option was chosen by many of the pauperized producers of the Ampelakia and Rapsani villages in Northen Ossa and the Lower Olympus Mountains, who emigrated to Serres.[34]

[32] Clarke, E.D. [1816, t.4, pp. 286-287].
[33] Nikolopoulos, I. [1987, pp. 175-180].
[34] Magnis, N. [1860, pp. 16-17], Boué, A. [1846, t.2, p. 75].

The partial substitution of local by imported cotton yarn, deprived the sharecropping families in the plains of their necessary (and possibly their only) regular monetarized complementary income. The same effects were felt in the mountain villages, where the unemployed female labour-force was extensively occupied in silk-worm breeding and cotton spinning. During this same period cotton and silk stuffs were produced by male weavers, generally using local cotton thread in the weft and British imported cotton thread in the warp.[35] The demolition of rural industries in the Ayia region, the North-western and eastern Pelion was much slower than in the Ampelakia and Raspani areas. We know that the protoindustrial centres in eastern Thessaly were active until the early 1860s, producing cotton and silk texiles for distant interregional markets.[36] It is clear, though, that the dynamic and expansive nature of its early phase was then missing. Furthermore, a most important change took place. What we have called the economic ties connecting Eastern Thessaly and the adjacent plains were broken down one after the other.

The sharecropping families and the great landowners saw no benefit in producing cotton any more, except for their own personal consumption. Cotton, raw or spun and dyed, had been a major export of Ottoman Europe until the end of the Napoleonic wars. After ca.1815 it was substituted by Egyptian and American cotton in the European markets. A link in the complementary relations between plains and littoral mountains was broken. In the cottage industries another link was broken inside the domestic unit when women ceased to spin cotton yarn for the male weavers. In Makrinitza, on North-western Pelion for instance, a new division of labour was now adopted (ca. 1830-1840) that did not necessitate any cooperation between family members. Women, still occupied in silk-worm breeding activities, turned

[35] URQUHART, D. [1836, t.2B, p. 50].
[36] MAGNIS, N. [1860, pp. 12-13, 49-50, 55-57, 94-96, 98].

away from spinning to the knitting of woollen stocks (*çorap*) that were commercialized locally or even to distant markets, while men continued their separate work as cotton and silk stuff weavers. Later, in the 1850s, they even partly abandoned this occupation and were mainly occupied with the tanning of leather imported from Latin America and subsequently exported to Constantinople and other urban markets.[37] One after another, the protoindustrial centers closed, until 1880, when, after the annexation of Thessaly to Greece, new perspectives were open to the demographic surplus of the few remaining centers of cottage industries. M. R. Palairet had shown that in the urban cotton and silk textile industries of Tyrnavos, which survived until 1860 as exporters to regional markets, the new security enjoyed by potential Christian landowners and the opening up of their access to the land market, induced the capital holders and the community notables to invest in the land. In the same manner, many producers turned to the readily available land to secure the necessary income.[38]

A parallel blow was given to rural silk-worm breeding activities. In the last years of the 1830s, Ottoman subjects, mostly "protected" (*beratli*) merchants, or foreign citizens, introduced the mechanized silk reeling industry in the exporting ports of the Empire from Salonica and Serres in Macedonia to Bursa and the Lebanon. A growing part of the cocoon production was now directly transferred for processing from the agricultural regions to the exporting ports, and a growing part of the "added value" was thus displaced from the rural to urban areas while the depreciation of hand-reeled silk further disadvantaged the rural producer continuing in that activity. That evolution led directly to the pauperization of the peasant families as D. Urqu-

[37] MAGNIS, N. [1860, pp. 49-50, 55-57].

[38] M.R. PALAIRET [1985] underestimated, I believe, the obstacles the producer still confronted in ca. 1850 if he wanted to establish himself in the lowlands. He does not make clear the distinction between urban Tyrnavos and "rural" Ampelakia (a village turned into an isolated upland small town).

hart had predicted.[39] Fierce competition between the rural silk stuff producers and merchants and the mechanized silk reeling industries for the appropriation of the rural silk production was thus engaged. In Macedonia it seems that the Salonica "industrialists" succeeded in appropriating the cocoon production of the surrounding villages. However, in Thessaly the cocoons were locally reeled by women in the silk-worm breeding villages and this production was partly used by the Thessalian cottage industries producers until the 1850's, when the rising cocoon prices overcame the local producers' resistance.[40] Later in the same decade the silk-worm disease further limited silk production. The producers' resistance had delayed the demise of the silk cottage industries and had altogether aborted any "export-dependent" industrialization. Only later, in 1865, a Peliorite merchant and community notable, in partnership with a Scottish merchant, founded the only concentrated mechanized silk-reeling industry in Pelion, using a young female labour-force under the supervision of older women and a monk.[41]

8. The wool industries.

In the case of wool industries the decline was less abrupt, as M. R. Palairet [1982, 1983] has already shown in the case of the Bulgarian woollen cloth (*aba*) industries. The only case of relatively rapid decline is that of Zagora group in Eastern Pelion. In the 1850s the exporting activities suddenly ceased "*because the producers could not make a profit*".[42] The production of coarse woollen stuffs exclusively for domestic and local consumption by women was not stop. The reasons for abandoning their industrial activities are obscure, but we can nevertheless speculate

[39] URQUHART, D. [1836, t.2B, p. 117 sq].
[40] AMAE CCC 23 Salonique 12 July 1847. AMAE CCC 24 Salonique 24 Dec. 1850.
[41] PHILADELPHEUS, A. [1897, pp. 10-11].
[42] HOURMOUZIADIS, N. 1982, p. 223).

that it was not the lack of demand or European competition that were to blame. In the same period the Bulgarian cottage industries reached their time of splendour in the ever-expanding Constantinopolitan, Aegean and North-western Anatolian markets. The village of Litochoro in the Lower Olympus, formerly connected to the Vlacholeivado woollen stuffs locality, had grown to be a small town by the late 1850s, exporting coarse woollen cloaks to the Greek Archipelago with its own boats.[43] The reasons for Zagora's sudden decline lie in the supply side. The opening of the woollen markets may have increased wool prices, but I believe that the most important factor was a reorientation of the Zagoriote merchants and financiers interests' controlling the credit system of itinerant tailoring and trade. All the important Zagoriote merchants and financiers seem to have been active in the import-export trade with Europe in the 1840s, many of them moving from Constantinople towards Alexandria, Syros or Smyrna. The bitter political struggles characterizing, for the first time, communal politics in Zagora in the 1840s (Zagora and the other eastern villages had been a model of "aristocratic communal government" before the 1830s) are probably linked to this reorientation of the communal mercantile and political elite. After the decline of the woollen stuffs industries, the major source of complementary income for the Zagoriote families was the remittances sent by the members of the family who emigrated to those who stayed behind. The destination of those poor emigrants was the same as that of the wealthy Zagoriote merchants. It is clear that specialized circuits of emigration existed, directing the demographic surplus to the new places of employment. The merchants themselves returned to their village of origin to spend their old age there as community notables. By 1860 this new equilibrium was well established and the eastern villages of Pelion had almost totally turned their backs on continental Thessaly.

[43] Nikolaidy, B.[1859, t.2, p. 345].

In continental Thessaly things were different. The rigid land tenure system remained intact until early in the XXth century and was the main element of the so-called "agrarian question" in independent Greece. Nevertheless, improving sanitary conditions, and possibly the improving social climate as well, led to a strong demographic growth in the plains. The symbiosis of semi-nomadic pastoralism and agriculture became more difficult. The annexation of Thessaly to Greece in 1880 had cut off the semi-nomadic pastoralists living in the Epirotan, and thus still Ottoman, mountains from their winter pasturelands in the Thessalian plains. It was only after 1924, and the agrarian reform, that the new land tenure system struck fatal blow at this symbiosis of the continental mountains and the Thessalian plains. Until that time woollen stuffs woven by women and tailored by itinerant tailors or sold by Valachian merchants in the regional fairs, were still present in the Thessalian hinterland.[44]

9. The "Gentle" De-industrialization.

In the case of Eastern Thessaly mechanisms of regulation were active in the fifty-year period of decline, and permitted a much more gradual response to the income-crisis of the peasant families. In the Pelion region, for instance, a clear intensification of commercialized agricultural production is observed with the rapid extension of olive groves and orchards, the introduction and rapid diffusion of new plants such as potatoes (after 1853), the grafting of wild chestnut and the commericalization of their now edible fruit to Salonica's markets. The rise of the nearby port-city of New Volos is inextricably linked to the decline of cottage industries in Pelion. Most of the merchants residing there since 1840 were temporarily established Peliorites. The demographic surplus was now emigrating towards the new rising commercial centres of the Levant: Constantinople, Smyrna, Sa-

[44] WACE, A. and THOMPSON, M.S. [1914, pp. 78-88].

Ionica, Syros, Alexandria, etc. Another group was permanently established in independent Greece, and entered either the newly born bureaucracy, or the numerous liberal professions, because since the period of their industrial expansion, the Eastern Thessalian communities enjoyed a fairly modern — by Levantine standards — educational system. New strategies of temporary emigration were now adopted by the peasant families, sending their members through the "emigration circuits" controlled by merchants originating from the region and already active in the place of destination, to be employed by their successful fellow citizens. It is thus possible to speak of a "gentle deindustrialization" for a large part of Eastern Thessaly. After the annexation of Thessaly to Greece, Volos, whose economic, social and political life was dominated by Peliorite merchants and notables, rose to be a dynamic industrial centre. A certain industrial and cultural legacy remained intact in the Pelion region, and to a certain degree in other small districts of Eastern Thessaly.

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