

5.5 Agricultural export trade, land tenure and town-country relations: south-east Europe, the Black Sea and the Aegean (1840s–1930s)

Room 203

Convener and chair: Socrates Petmezas

The expansion of urban and/or ‘foreign (extra-regional/international)’ demand for agricultural and non-agricultural goods produced in the countryside is pivotal in understanding how monetisation and specialisation penetrates the countryside and leads to output and labour productivity growth. This usually happens during periods of demographic expansion, both in the cities and the countryside. Of course *in relative terms*, the population of the countryside is diminishing; otherwise latent underemployment increases and/or labour productivity stagnates (or even regresses). If the urban (and/or rural non-agricultural sector) can absorb the superfluous rural labour (and generated income to be invested) in the secondary and tertiary sectors, then there are usually positive economic effects (income and output growth).

Of course, this positive process is by no way automatic. Urban or ‘foreign’ demand may simply lead to higher prices not higher output, while fluctuations of this demand may affect negatively capital reinvestment in the rural sector and the concomitant rise of land and labour productivity. On the other hand, the released (unemployed) rural population may be locked in the countryside, or migrate to distant areas, without affecting the regional urban economy. Income generated in the booming agricultural export sector may not be reinvested locally or in the neighbouring urban economy, and thus the expected multiplying phenomena (leading to higher output, labour productivity and expanding urban employment) may be aborted.

In South-Eastern Europe the so-called first globalisation (from 1850 to 1912-29) generated increasing demand for certain agricultural products (cereals, silk, olive oil, wine, currants, etc.) and had positive effects for the modernised commercial economy of the cities, predominantly the ports, but also of mainland cities with a rich rural hinterland. Population and income growth is observed in these thriving urban centres. And yet the final outcome of the period of export boom is debatable. Overseas emigration and agricultural involution is observed at least in Greece. But commercialisation has made its presence felt. In this session we may discuss the details of the Greek, Ottoman and Bulgarian experience and even attempt a global evaluation for the whole area concerned. More detailed questions may also be discussed in this session, such as: how has this expanding international demand influenced the local rural economy and how have the relations between countryside and the ports cities been transformed? Did we observe positive effects on the rural (and general) labour productivity or not?

Socrates D. Petmezas is associate professor, Dept. of History and Archaeology, University of Crete. He received his PhD (‘Recherches sur l’Economie et les Finances des villages du Pélion, région d’industries rurales, c.1750–1850’) in History from the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris. He has taught at the University of Crete since 1990 and he is also a researcher in the Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FoRTh. He was a visiting Professor at the EHESS and a member of the management comity of the international research network ‘Programme de Recherches sur les Sociétés Rurales Européennes’ (2005–09).

5.51 Alp Yücel Kaya – Export-oriented agriculture and labour organisation in Çiftlik in the hinterland of Izmir and Salonica (1840–1912)

By the middle of the eighteenth century, Izmir had emerged as the most important port in the Ottoman Empire’s trade with the West and retained this position throughout the nineteenth century by carrying more than 50 per cent of the Empire’s exports. The volume of trade increased four-fold, exports three-fold and imports six-fold between 1840s and 1870s. Even more spectacular results apply to Salonica. Within the same time span, Salonica’s export experienced a tenfold

increase in the volume of trade, exports and imports. In this context of trade expansion, these two important port cities of the Eastern Mediterranean were mostly supplied by their rich hinterland where big farms, *çiftlik*s, dominated rural economy. This paper will discuss in a comparative framework how labour is organised in the hinterland of each of two expanding port cities, with a focus on the *çiftlik*s. If sharecropping is the most common form of labour organisation, what are the dynamics of sharecropping systems practised in each of these two hinterlands? Are there any changes during the nineteenth century in the form of labour organisation, from sharecropping to wage-labour or to rent system, vice versa, etc? Does any relationship between labour organisation and productivity growth exist? What are the determinants of production growth in terms of labour organisation? The paper will discuss these questions on the basis of the quantitative and qualitative data on the labour organisation existing in the income registers (*temettuat defterleri*) of 1845 and other archival materials for the second half of the nineteenth century about the *çiftlik*s existing in the hinterland of Izmir and Salonica.

Alp Yücel Kaya studied from 1998 to 2005 at EHESS, Paris and gained a PhD with ‘Politique de l’enregistrement de la richesse économique: les enquêtes fiscales et agricoles de l’Empire ottoman et de la France au milieu du XIXe siècle,’ in 2005. Since 2006, Alp has been Assistant Professor at Istanbul Technical University, Humanities and Social Sciences Department. Publications include ‘Les commissions cantonales de statistique sous le Second Empire’, *Le Canton – Un territoire du quotidien dans la France contemporaine (1790–2006)*, (éd. Y. Lagadec, J. Lebihan and J.-F. Tanguy), 2009 and ‘In the Hinterland of Izmir: Mid-nineteenth century traders facing a new type of fiscal practice’ in *Merchants in the Ottoman Empire* (ed. by S. Faroqhi and G. Veinstein) 2008.

5.52 Andreas Lyberatos – Grain production in north-eastern Bulgaria and the grain market of Varna (late nineteenth-early twentieth centuries)

The opening of the Ottoman market to the world economy and the increase of international demand in cereals, led from the 1840s onwards to a boom of cereal cultivation in the territories now belonging to Bulgaria (then part of the Ottoman Empire). Nevertheless, the expansion of export-oriented cultivation, a determining feature of the country’s agriculture, both before and after its autonomy (1878), was not accompanied by agricultural modernisation. By the end of the nineteenth century, Bulgaria’s agriculture was characterised by technical backwardness and low levels of land and labour productivity, phenomena accompanied at the social and political level by rural destitution and unrest. Political autonomy and the concomitant changes in land tenure and the fluctuation of international demand and prices have been put forward as factors generally explaining this ‘modernisation failure’. The proposed paper will shift attention to the local level and focus on the relationship between the city-port of Varna, one of the most important hubs and export outlets of Bulgarian grain, and its fertile grain producing hinterland (southern Dobrudzha). Based on local sources, the paper will try to explore the regulation and functioning of the local grain market and inquire into the ways the urban-organised processes and networks of financing, extraction and realisation of the rural produce affected economic and social conditions and developments in the countryside.

Andreas K. Lyberatos is Associate Researcher, Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FORTH. He received his B.A. in Philosophy from the University of Athens and his M.A. in Modern European History from the Victoria University of Manchester (1995). He specialised in Modern Balkan History at the University of London (School of Slavonic and East European Studies, 1996–7) and at the Institute for Balkan Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (1997–8). He received his Ph.D. from the Department of History and Archaeology at the University of Crete (2005), topic: ‘Economy, Politics and National Ideology. The Formation of National Parties in nineteenth c. Plovdiv’, a revised form of which was published in 2009 in Greek (Crete U.P.). During the academic year 2006–7 he held a post-doctoral research fellowship in the Program in Hellenic Studies at Princeton University (U.S.A.). His publications and research interests focus on the social and economic history of the Balkans (nineteenth–twentieth centuries), the emergence of Balkan nationalism, the socioeconomic transformation of the countryside in nineteenth c. Balkans and the social history of the Balkan and Eastern Mediterranean cities during the transition to the modern era. From September 2007 he works

at the Institute for Mediterranean Studies/F.O.R.T.H. (Rethymno, Greece) as a member of the ‘History of the Eastern Mediterranean and Balkan Cities, eighteenth-twentieth centuries’ research group.

5.53 Yücel Terzibasoglu – Olive oil production and networks of trade, finance, and ownership in western Anatolia in the nineteenth century

This paper will explore the context and consequences of the expanding olive cultivation and related industrial production (olive oil and soap) and exports in western Anatolia in the second half of the nineteenth century. The historical context of the olive economy in the region involves the rise in the production of olives and olive oil especially in the coastal regions, accompanied by a changing legal framework governing landed property, facilitating the establishment of a land market, and the establishment of a number of overlapping networks in land ownership, and in circuits of merchant and financial capital in the eastern Mediterranean area and beyond. This involves a web of relationships extending from the eastern Mediterranean to the Black Sea and to western Europe that linked the producing regions to Istanbul’s bureaucrats and financiers, the region’s producers to merchants and landlords in a multiplicity of ways. The paper will investigate first, how the rising export trade in olives and olive oil helped in the construction of these networks or changed them, and second, how the political economy of olive transformed production processes (the land tenure system, land ownership patterns, as well as the organisation of production and labour relations) in the olive producing areas of western Anatolia in the course of the nineteenth century.

Yücel Terzibasoglu studied economics and economic history at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara and at Birkbeck College, University of London, and received his PhD in 2003 from Birkbeck College with a thesis titled ‘Landlords, Nomads and Refugees: Struggles over Land and Population Movements in North-Western Anatolia, 1877–1914’. Since 2003 he has been teaching at the Department of History in Bogazici University, Istanbul. He teaches courses on the economic history of the Ottoman Empire (Anatolia, Middle East and the Balkans) and Europe. His research covers landed and urban property, law and legal institutions in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire.