PROVINCIAL ELITES
IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

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ABBREVIATIONS

BOA:	Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi
ActOrHung:	*Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*
ArchOtt:	*Archivum Ottomanicum*
BSOAS:	*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*
ÉB:	*Études Balkaniques*
IJMES:	*International Journal of Middle East Studies*
IJTS:	*International Journal of Turkish Studies*
JAOS:	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JESHO:	*Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*
JTS:	*Journal of Turkish Studies*
OA:	*Osmanlı Araştırmaları*
RMMM:	*Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée*
ROMM:	*Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée*
SF:	*Südost-Forschungen*
TD:	*Tarih Dergisi*
TED:	*Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*
VD:	*Vakıflar Dergisi*
WZKM:	*Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*
EI^2:	*The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition (Leiden 1960-2002)
İA:	*İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul 1940-1979)

Note 1: A simple system of transliteration from the Arabic into the Latin alphabet has been adopted, and most diacritical marks have been omitted; *ayan* and *hamza* have been maintained in papers reffering to Arabic-speaking provinces of the Ottoman Empire only when they appear in the middle of a word.

Note 2: No final -s- is added to collective nouns, such as *ayan*, *ulema*, and *reaya*, when they appear in the plural.

THE *ÇİFTLİK SAHİBLERİ* OF MANASTIR AS A LOCAL ELITE, LATE SEVENTEENTH TO EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

Michael URSINUS

Among the notables of Manastır, headquarters of the *vali*s of Rumeli in the western half of the *paşa sancağı*,[1] one particular socio-economic group appears to have attained prominence earlier and on a wider scale than in most other districts of the Ottoman Balkans: the 'landed gentry' of the local *çiftlik sahibleri* (*çiftlik* owners).[2] Not only would their rise to the status of a local elite seem to have come in good time to serve them well (in terms of their own proprietary and rent-collecting standards), but also, their conspicuous involvement in the affairs of the locality, especially their prominent role in the district's tax allocation system (by means of *tevzi* or 'distribution' [of the tax load])[3] during meetings of the local 'town assembly' (*meclis-i memleket*) at the *kadı*'s court, resulted in a documentary fall-out in the court records or *kadı sicilleri* of Manastır which appears to be exceptional.[4] As far as I can see, the series of *çiftlik* survey registers (a kind of *çiftlik yoklama defteri*

1. For much of the period under investigation Manastır (today Bitola in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) shared with Sofia (also situated within the central *sancak* of the *eyalet* 'where the pasha or governor resides', hence *paşa sancağı*) its role as the seat of the provincial government of Rumeli. See M. Ursinus, *EI*^{2}, s.v. 'Manastır'.
2. On *çiftlik* formation and the emergence of a 'landed gentry', see, out of a growing corpus of literature, G. Veinstein, 'Āyān de la région d'Izmir et le commerce du Levant (deuxième moitié du XVIII^e siècle)', *ROMM*, 20 (1975), 131-47; H. İnalcık, 'The Emergence of Big Farms, *Çiftlik*s: State, Landlords and Tenants', in J.-L. Bacqué-Grammont and P. Dumont (eds), *Contributions à l'histoire économique et sociale de l'Empire ottoman* (Leuven 1983), 105-26; Y. Nagata, *Some Documents on the Big Farms (*Çiftlik*s) of the Notables in Western Anatolia* (Tokyo 1976) and idem, *Tarihte Âyânlar: Karaosmanoğulları Üzerinde Bir İnceleme* (Ankara 1997). More specifically on the situation in and around Manastır: B. McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade and the Struggle for Land, 1600-1800* (Cambridge and Paris 1981), 73-79, 121-70.
3. The 'classic' account of *tevzi* is to be found in H. İnalcık, 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700', *ArchOtt*, 6 (1980), 283-337, esp. 335-37.
4. But see, for instance, H. Gandev, 'L'apparition des rapports capitalistes dans l'économie rurale de la Bulgarie du Nord-Ouest au cours du XVIII^e siècle', *Études Historiques* (Sofia 1960), 207-20, who, in another 'classic' study, was able to trace more than 120 'estates' through the *sicil*s of Vidin.

composed for *tevzi* purposes) of the kind first utilised by Bruce McGowan for his study on the emergence of landed estates in the district of Manastır have no direct parallel elsewhere.[5] McGowan suggested twenty years ago that the *çiftlik* survey registers in the Manastır series must initially have been composed in the face of considerable resistance by the *çiftlik sahibleri*,[6] before being institutionalised as a means of ensuring an equitable allocation (if not to say distribution to at least some of the *çiftlik sahibleri*'s personal advantage) of the district's fiscal burden. By this time – the early eighteenth century – they were regularly entered into the record books at the local *kadı*s' court as a unique and distinctly local data base.[7] Its character is distinctly local in the double sense of having originated within the locality (the *kaza* under the jurisdiction of the *kadı*) and through consultation with a local body (the district's *çiftlik sahibleri*), and secondly because such surveys for local *tevzi* purposes by their nature and origin are hardly ever to be found in the Empire's central archives. As the result of a negotiating process (between the *kadı* on the one hand and the locally influential landholders on the other) which only under certain conditions (which happened to be fulfilled at Manastır) found expression in a whole series of a kind of *çiftlik yoklama defterleri* recorded in the *mahkeme*, they are unique. If the historian's aim is to trace the history of a local elite such as the *çiftlik sahibleri* in its local context, utilising data generated by its own involvement in the administrative process, then the evidence is to be tapped primarily from local sources. It is the purpose of this contribution to demonstrate to what extent local sources such as the *kadı sicilleri* can, on occasion, even include evidence from administrative processes which commonly go unrecorded because (it would appear) they are of an 'informal' nature: From the point of view of the *kadı* and the central authorities in Istanbul, districts (*kaza*, *nahiye*), towns (*nefs-i şehir*), villages (*karye*), quarters (*mahalle*) or 'privileged' units (such as villagers performing the special duty of *derbendci*, *doğancı* or *çeltükçi*) and confessional groups like the *cemaat-ı Yahudiyan* (to mention only the most typical) all constituted accepted entities in the administrative process and were recognised in the centrally administered *avarız* tax allocation system from of old, either as entities subject to, or exempt from, the *avarız* tax.[8] Not so the *çiftlik sahibleri*. Long regarded (by the Ottoman land laws and the Ottoman *kadı*) as the principal usurper of the old

5. See below, Appendix. Translations (into Macedonian) of some of the documents can be found in A. Matkovski (ed.), *Turski izvori za ajdutstvoto i aramistvoto vo Makedonija* [Turkish Sources for Brigandage and Banditry in Macedonia], III: 1700-1725 (Skopje 1973), IV: 1725-1775 (Skopje 1979), and V: 1775-1810 (Skopje 1980).
6. McGowan, *Economic Life*, 161f., quoting *fermans* dating from 1694 and 1695.
7. Ibid., 162-64. The *tevzi* list in Manastır *kadı sicili* (henceforth abbreviated as Sic. Man.) 65, f. 3b-5b appears to be unique in that it not only gives the identity of each *çiftlik* holder, but also the identity of each cultivator under their respective *çiftlik sahibi*. See ibid., 218 n. 160.
8. Ö. L. Barkan, *İA*, s.v. 'Avârız', II: 13-19; more recently L. T. Darling, *Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy: Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560-1660* (Leiden-New York-Cologne 1996), 81-118 (Chapter 3). For a synopsis of the tax allocation system at Manastır see McGowan, *Economic Life*, 157-61.

order,[9] the *çiftlik*-holding 'landed gentry' only gradually came to be tolerated as a fact of life, provoking various attempts at incorporation into the fiscal regime from the turn of the eighteenth century (if not earlier), but was never officially recognised prior to 1858.[10] As a result, negotiating with the *çiftlik sahibleri* about their share of the overall tax burden to be collected from the district's adult male population went beyond the established and recognised pattern of levying taxes on the basis of the traditional fiscal entities associated with the *avarız* system. Consequently, such negotiations must largely have lacked official recognition, remaining 'informal' instead, and (according to the general evidence of the *kadı sicilleri* from across the Balkans) more often than not appear to have passed without being recorded in the *sicil*s.[11] Yet in certain places, and as part of the locally administered *tevzi* allocation – not the centrally assessed *avarız* system – the details of what had been agreed upon were copied into the pages of the court record book – for everyone to see and check if need be – by which act the negotiated outcome of the assessment (which *çiftlik*s to tax fully, which to tax partly and which to spare altogether),[12] if not the negotiation as a whole, must have attained a quasi-official status.

In passing, I have repeatedly referred to the *çiftlik sahibleri* of Manastır as a local elite. Without even attempting to propose a general definition of local elites, common sense seems to suggest that the *çiftlik sahibleri* of Manastır constitute an obvious case in point since they were by definition locally rooted, had a vested interest in local affairs (not least for their own good), and tended to assume the role of intermediaries between what they regarded as their locus of (financial or fiscal) interest on the one side and officialdom on the other (unless they had been promoted to officialdom themselves). Predominantly Muslim, they include not only members of the military, the learned institution, religious personnel, administrative staff and artisans, but also, more occasionally, dervish *şeyh*s, women and even

9. Ibid., 135-52, especially 141.
10. One of the principles of the Ottoman Land Law of 1858 was to allow proper legal tenure of (former) *miri* lands in order to subject landholders to full tax liability. Yet the state largely failed to reduce the power of the large landholders, since many of them now had proper legal tenure of *miri* land which they were able to effectively treat as freehold (*mülk*). For a brief contextualisation of the Land Code of 1858 and references to the relevant texts, see R. H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876* (New York 1973), 99ff.
11. Exceptions are rare. A special case in point is the unusually detailed early nineteenth-century recording of the *çiftlik*s in the district of Çelebi Pazar (Rogatica) from the *sicil*s of Saray Bosna (Sarajevo); see A. Sućeska, 'Popis čifluka u Rogatičkom kadiluku iz 1835. godine' [Register of *Çiftlik*s in the District of Rogatica of the Year 1835], *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju*, 14-15 (1969), 189-271.
12. The mechanisms of (temporary) reductions (*tenzil*) for *tevzi* purposes are discussed in my 'Natural Disasters and *Tevzi*: Local Tax Systems of the Post-Classical Era in Response to Flooding, Hail and Thunder', in E. Zachariadou (ed.), *Natural Disasters in the Ottoman Empire (Halcyon Days in Crete III. A Symposium Held in Rethymnon 10-12 January 1997)* (Rethymnon 1999), 265-72.

non-Muslims.[13] Yet however many diverse elements of society and members of different social strata they may include, they are united in the fact that they are in possession of one or more former peasant holdings worked by farm labourers for which they are fiscally responsible. But does this already constitute membership of an elite? There is, *inter alia*, a problem of delineation: A *çiftlik sahibi* in possession of just one or two former peasant holdings (which, perhaps surprisingly, constitutes the majority of cases) is in a completely different order of magnitude from a big landholder with several hundred labourer households under his control. While the latter would immediately be recognised as a member of the local elite, the former, by virtue of his registered possession alone, hardly qualifies at all (unless he held possessions elsewhere) – were it not for the fact that many *çiftlik sahibleri*, at least in Manastır, also held certain fiscal rights over plots of land other than their own *çiftlik*s. El-Hac Mehmed Ağa for example, who, in 1724, is recorded with just two taxable households on his *çiftlik* in the village of Srpci, controlled no fewer than 9.2% of all taxable households across the *kaza* of Manastır. On top of being a *çiftlik sahibi*, el-Hac Mehmed Ağa, like many of his fellow landowners, operated as a *deruhdeci* or fiscal intermediary for the equivalent of no fewer than 232 taxable households in the district of Manastır alone.[14]

But more about this later. Let me first give a brief outline of the local context in which the 'landed gentry' of Manastır evolved from being a landholding elite to one also holding far-reaching fiscal rights over the remaining 'free' peasant households during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The fertile plain of the Crna river to the north and east of Manastır (known from medieval times as the lowlands of Pelagonija) lent itself to the cultivation of grain, primarily wheat. For centuries the area forwarded substantial wheat surpluses to the region's main commercial centres such as Siroz and Selânik, over and above supplying the local markets with the necessary foodstuffs. Consequently, the lowland districts near Manastır are among the first in Ottoman Rumelia to have witnessed the emergence, out of the ruins of the increasingly obsolete *timar* system, yet partly in co-existence with it, of a *çiftlik* economy. While the vast majority of the *sipahi*s appears to have lived in the town by 1635, with "their interest in their villages slipping since they frequently leased out their right to collect their incomes

13. For a certain Şeyh İsmail as a *çiftlik sahibi* with two cultivators in 1711 see Matkovski (ed.), *Turski izvori*, III: 77 (no. 85). Yakov Yahudi is mentioned in the same *defter* as a *çiftlik sahibi* in the village of Oleveni with two cultivators: ibid., 78. A document of 1713 lists a certain Fatma Hatun in her capacity as a *çiftlik sahibi* with four cultivators in the village of Mogila as well as the mother of a certain Halilbeyzade with three cultivators in the village of Çayırlı (all district of Manastır): ibid., 102f. (no. 108). Other references to the above are mentioned below, n. 22.

14. On the *deruhdeci* institution in Manastır: M. Ursinus, 'Mütāfçı Ahmed und Seinesgleichen: Zur Bedeutung des *der'uhdecilik* in Manastır im 18. Jahrhundert', in E. Radushev, Z. Kostova and V. Stoyanov (eds), *Studia in Honorem Professoris Verae Mutafčieva* (Sofia 2001), 351-74.

to other individuals",[15] local *çiftlik* owners had already begun to leave their mark in the court records from Manastır, including a certain Mehmed Ağa (not identical with the above), who, in 1641, requested registration in the *sicil* of the fact that he employed as many as 150 *ırgat*s (farm labourers) each year at a wage of 10 *akçe*s per head, presumably on his own *çiftlik*s in the area.[16] By 1710, at the very latest, almost a third of the adult male population must already have been living on *çiftlik*s, some large (with up to 85 labourers), but most of them small (of around two to three *nefer*s), rather than in 'free' (or, to use the administrative term, *hanekeş*) villages.[17] The prominence of the *çiftlik sahibleri* in local affairs, last but not least in the local revenue collecting system known as *tevzi*, as *deruhdeci*s or tax farmers of more usual description, was to continue well into the 1830s.[18] While on their *çiftlik* holdings their word must have carried the law, their bargaining power (executed individually or collectively, as the case required) not only vis-à-vis whole 'free' or *hanekeş* village communities, but also with the state authorities, is evident from the start.

Let me quote McGowan once more:

> *The strain of the long war with the Holy League (1683-99) could scarcely have been surmounted at Manastir had it not been for the equitability introduced by the locally administered* tevzi *system. But the system was not without enemies. It was subverted even during the war by military men who sought either to protect* reaya *who already worked on their* chiftlik*s or to bring additional villagers under their control, thus cheating the tax collectors of the contributions due from them. The frustration of the central government with this situation is given voice in a* ferman *addressed to the Manastir district (and three others) in connection with the* avarız/nüzül *collections of 1694:*
>
> *"When the time had come for the collection of the* avarız *and the* bedel-i nüzül *from the districts named and our collector arrived and began to make collections as required by the decree and by the (*mevkufat*) register which had been given him, some of the notables (*ayan*) of the province and timar holders appeared as middlemen (*deruhdeji*), and in order to mediate (*deruhte eylemek*) on behalf of various villages did not permit a* tevzi *register to be given on time, and because of the hindrance and delay of the* timar *holders they have caused difficulty for the imperial kitchen accounts (...)".*[19]

15. A general outline of the setting of Manastır in the demographic and economic developments of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is given in McGowan, *Economic Life*, Chapter 5 ('*Chiftlik* Agriculture and Fiscal Practice in Western Macedonia, 1620-1830'), 121-70. Here I quote from p. 147.
16. Ibid., 136.
17. Ibid., 164.
18. Ursinus, 'Mütāfçı Ahmed', 353-57.
19. McGowan, *Economic Life*, 161-62.

In fact, the difficulties were such that they produced what has been called the 'tax base crisis of the 1690s' – not merely for the imperial kitchen, but the imperial treasury as a whole. More and more taxable *reaya* were lost to the *çiftlik sahibleri* – either as future farm labourers or as tax refugees on the private estates. To make matters worse, the *çiftlik sahibleri* of Manastır, at some point during the 1690s, succeeded in having the entire *çiftlik* holdings within the district taken out of the local *tevzi* tax apparatus, thereby turning their possessions into *de facto* tax-exempt holdings. "Not until 1709 was the *tevzi* system at Manastir reformed to adapt to a trend that must have been obvious for a long time: the growth of *chiftlik* agriculture at the expense of the local villagers".[20] In addition, in their guise as *deruhdeci*s, the *çiftlik sahibleri* of Manastır also succeeded in tightening their (fiscal) grip over the peasant holdings. As I have shown elsewhere, by 1724 they controlled almost 93% of all *hanekeş* (i.e., 'free') households of the district (including the capital town), with nearly 42% in the hands of the five most prominent *deruhdeci*s. Less than forty years later, in 1761-62, they collectively already controlled 98%, with the five biggest *deruhdeci*s holding, or, to use McGowan's term, "mediating (*deruhte eylemek*)" more than 64% of all 'free' taxable households. This was to rise further, to an overall (fiscal) control over the so-called 'free' villages of nearly 100% by 1823, when the five most powerful *deruhdeci*s (who were also among the most wealthy *çiftlik sahibleri*) shared a total of little less than 80%.[21] Thus, after having taken possession of a large share of the former peasant holdings, probably in the course of the 1690s, the *çiftlik sahibleri* of Manastır, throughout the eighteenth and the first decades of the nineteenth century, were 'mediating' the remaining local peasantry at the rate of over 90%. It seems that the assumption of *deruhdeci* powers, in addition to the exploitation of *çiftlik* holdings, constituted merely another, albeit lucrative, form of private control over the (primarily) agrarian resources of the country from which the *çiftlik sahibleri* of Manastır must have derived much of their income and power.

It is hardly surprising, then, to find *çiftlik sahibleri* cum *deruhdeciler* much in evidence within the military, judicial, religious and administrative set-up of the provincial capital. Even if titles can be no safe guide to actual functions held, it may still be worth showing the distribution of those titles by which the *çiftlik* owners were identified in the *çiftlik* survey register of 1710: there are 47 mentions of the title of *ağa*; 35 references to *sipahi*; 34 to *çelebi*; 32 to *efendi*; 18 to *kethüda*; 11 to *bey*; 8 to *beyzade*; 7 to *ağazade*; 5 to *efendizade*; 5 to *paşa*; 3 to *zaim* and *zaimzade*; 3 to *yazıcı* and 2 to *hoca.* In addition, there are two mentions each of a *vaiz efendi*, a *kapıcızade*, a certain Şeyh İsmail and a *çuhadar ağa*, one of a *bayrakdar*, a *kadızade*, a *muhtarbaşı*, a certain *bakkal* Ramazan, the *paşa*'s brother (*paşa karındaşı*), a *sarraf*, and a certain Yakov, no doubt a Jew.[22] This tallies rather

20. Ibid., 162. There is, however, an entry in Sic. Man. 30 (1115-16/1703-04), f. 13b, which suggests that at least some *çiftlik*s had already been subject to some form of taxation by that date. The question deserves further study.
21. Ursinus, 'Mūtāfçı Ahmed', 366.
22. Matkovski (ed.), *Turski izvori*, III: 63-68 (no. 75).

neatly with McGowan's distribution list of 1731, where we meet the same titles – in order of declining frequency – of *ağa*, *sipahi*, *çelebi*, *efendi* and *kethüda*.[23] Most individuals can be easily traced through time by means of the Manastır *çiftlik* survey registers, including those of lesser rank and more modest substance such as our old acquaintance *bakkal* Ramazan, who, having been fiscally responsible as *deruhdeci* for one *nefer* in the village of Mogila in 1710, is recorded as being in control of two labourers there in another *çiftlik* survey register of 1713,[24] and can still be found, in yet another such document of 1724, as 'mediating' one 'household' in the same village.[25] In the case of more prominent local *çiftlik* owners/*deruhdeci*s like el-Hac İbrahim Ağa it is possible to establish their often wide-ranging operational network built around their landholdings and fiscal responsibilities. In 1724, İbrahim Ağa held *çiftlik*s in the district of Manastır which amounted to 20 households in the villages of Podmol, Zagoric, Rahotino, Optičari and Krklino, while his interests as *deruhdeci* were looked after by various *yazıcı*s who controlled a total of 283 local 'households' in his name, the equivalent of 11.2% of all taxable households in the district![26] Whether this İbrahim Ağa is identical with the *ayan* of Manastır of the same name referred to in a document of 23 February 1709 is far from clear;[27] but it can safely be assumed that a man of the standing of our İbrahim Ağa also held positions of distinction within the military-administrative set-up of the provincial headquarters of the *Rumeli valisi*. About a hundred years later, by the early nineteenth century, similar *çiftlik* owners/*deruhdeci*s are to be found in the highest echelons of provincial officialdom. Rüstem Bey, scion of the powerful Zaimzadeler; Abdülkerim Bey of the equally influential Mustafapaşazade *hanedan*s; Selimağazade Ahmed Bey and Yahyabeyzade Mustafa Bey were big *çiftlik sahibleri* cum *deruhdeciler* who by this time regularly shared out among themselves the office of *ayanlık* in the *kaza* of Manastır, sometimes held jointly by more than one representative of the most powerful local *hanedan*s, such as between 1809 and 1816, when this arrangement appears to have been the rule.[28] Even the office of *Rumeli kaymakamı* (lieutenant-governor), the second in command after the *Rumeli valisi* himself, is by now regularly, and occasionally repeatedly, awarded to members of the 'landed gentry', among them Zaimzade Rüstem Bey (he became *kaymakam* in 1818 and again in 1823). At the time of his second appointment to the highest possible provincial posting short of the *beylerbeyilik*, Rüstem Bey was 'mediating' more than 700 of the Manastır district's nearly 4,000 'ploughs' (*çift*), the biggest individual share controlled by a local *deruhdeci*. Of these, 30 *çift*s are recorded as belonging to his own estate, in other words, they represent his personal

23. McGowan, *Economic Life*, 164.
24. Matkovski (ed.), *Turski izvori*, III: 102.
25. Ursinus, 'Mūtāfçı Ahmed', 371.
26. Ibid., 365.
27. Matkovski (ed.), *Turski izvori*, III: 48f.
28. M. Ursinus, *Regionale Reformen im Osmanischen Reich am Vorabend der Tanzimat. Reformen der rumelischen Provinzialgouverneure im Gerichtssprengel von Manastir (Bitola) zur Zeit der Herrschaft Sultan Mahmuds II. (1808-39)* (Berlin 1982), 193f.

çiftlik holdings.[29] In choosing Rüstem Bey for the job of being their man on the ground, the provincial government had opted for one of the most substantial local *çiftlik sahibleri* and principal *deruhdeci*s. Success breeds success. Ever since his first appointment as *kaymakam*, Rüstem Bey had been able to eclipse his fellow *deruhdeci*s by entering into more and more apparently mutually advantageous contracts with village communities – at the expense of his competitors. One such contract, duly recorded in the *sicil*, will be quoted here in full:

> *Trpče Krste, Lazar Ferka, Stanoja Stanko, Gekula Šiniko (there follow another 23 names of Christian heads of households) as well as the remaining inhabitants of Belacrkva village in the district of the town of Manastır came to the meeting of the* kadı*'s court, when one of them, in the name of all others, and as their representative, made the following statement: "We (herewith) dismiss our former* deruhdeci *Seyyid Abdülkerim Bey and appoint (in his stead as) our (future)* deruhdeci *Seyyid Rüstem Bey, with whom we enter into an agreement (*akd eylemek*), on condition that it can be revoked, according to which we empower him to advance our taxes every year, so that we can apportion and discharge them at the end of each year, and that we pay him a remuneration of one thousand piastres (per annum for his services)". Their statement was copied down in this place. On the 15th of Şevval in the year 235 (26 June 1820).*[30]

It becomes apparent how the wealth accumulated through *çiftlik* holdings and *deruhdeci* powers helped aspiring people to get into high positions, yet could also in turn be considerably furthered by holding high positions in the local apparatus.

Quite clearly, the *çiftlik* cum *deruhdecilik*-based local elite had made itself indispensable in the day-to-day running of one of the most important centres of provincial government in the Ottoman Empire, first and foremost as regards the levying of taxes, the provisioning of troops, and the recruitment of auxiliaries. The *kadı*, appointed to the locality for rarely more than a year as the representative of central government,[31] was well advised to rely on their local knowledge and their information about the actual situation on the ground as there was hardly any other to be had in the general absence of state-administered *tahrir*s. Relevant data detailing the up-to-date conditions about the ability-to-pay[32] out there in the *çiftlik*s and villages which, after all, constituted the tax-base of the realm, were available, in

29. P. Džambazovski (ed.), *Turski dokumenti za makedonskata istorija* [Turkish Documents on the History of Macedonia], IV:1818-1827 (Skopje 1957), 70.
30. Ibid., 39.
31. The terms of office of the *kadı*s and *naib*s of Manastır are detailed in Ursinus, *Regionale Reformen*, 268-73.
32. At some stage in the development of *tevzi* at Manastır, the quality of the soil appears to have been taken into account by establishing three distinct tax rates: ibid., 166-74, esp. map on p. 170.

Manastır at least, only courtesy of the *çiftlik/deruhdecilik*-based 'gentry', and, as will be shown before concluding, as the result of continued negotiations with and among this local elite.

The documents to be discussed in a few more details here are among the most prominent features in the *sicil*s of Manastır. They typically extend over four to five or even more pages and contain up to several hundred names, including not only those of the villages, the *çiftlik sahibleri* or *deruhdeci*s, but occasionally reach down to the names of the farm labourers themselves.[33] According to what can be gleaned from their preambles, they emanate from regularly convened, usually biannual, meetings in the presence of the *kadı*, the local *ayan-ı vilâyet*, the *zaim*s, *timarlı*s, *iş erleri* and (other) inhabitants of the district.[34] Following a list of the *hanekeş* villages with their respective quota of the overall tax load, the individual *çiftlik*s are recorded one by one, under the name of their geographical location. Below each of them, the *çiftlik sahibleri* are set down individually and by name, each – as in the case of the villages – listed with their respective fiscal quota. In Manastır, this is usually (1) a sum payable in piastres, (2) a certain number of 'individuals' (*nefer*) or (3) of 'poll-tax receipts' (*varaka*), or (4) of 'ploughs' (*çift*).[35] Care is to be taken not to read the denominations without due caution: the 'poll-tax receipts' (cf. 3) employed in this context have been shown to be used in a much more restricted sense than the original meaning would suggest: even decades after the *cizye* reforms of the 1690s which made the poll-tax a liability on every non-Muslim male individual, in the first half of the eighteenth century the term '*varaka*' still denotes the poll-tax receipt of a non-Muslim head of household.[36] Here, in the detailed *çiftlik* surveys, the local magnates collectively laid open the situation in their own backyards – if 'lay open' is what they did. We must remember that during the 1690s they had apparently succeeded in keeping their estates out of the local *tevzi* apparatus altogether, but by 1709 at the latest their holdings are recorded in the *kadı*s' *sicil*s and must therefore have been subject to taxation. From then on, the *çiftlik*s appear to have been as much subject to the apportioning of various obligations as were the *hanekeş* villages. But were the *çiftlik*s truly taxed in line with the *hanekeş*? It can be demonstrated that, by the early nineteenth century, the *çiftlik*s in the *kaza* of Manastır paid at a special rate which was different from that of the *hanekeş* villages. There can be no doubt that the *çiftlik sahibleri* were able to see to their interests. But the question is this: How far would they dare go in pursuit of their own interests, and when would their movements be checked by their peers who, in consequence

33. As in Sic. Man. 65 (1202/1787-88), f. 3b-5b. The same holds true of the 1835 *çiftlik* survey register for Çelebi Pazar (Rogatica) published in Sućeska, 'Popis čifluka'.
34. See for instance Matkovski, *Turski izvori*, III: 63-68 (no. 75).
35. The practice for *tevzi* purposes of apportioning tax loads by means of the number of recorded *nefer*, *varaka* or *çift* is discussed more fully in my "Hane' in Kalkandelen, 'Rüus' in Selanik. Regionalspezifische Verwaltungspraktiken und -begriffe im Osmanischen Reich bis zum Beginn der Tanzimat', in my *Quellen zur Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches und ihre Interpretation* (Istanbul 1994), 25-47.
36. Idem, 'Mütāfçı Ahmed', 360f.

of the mechanism of collective fiscal responsibility inherent in the *tevzi* system, would have to shoulder the tax-dodger's share collectively? Noting that the overall numbers of recorded *çiftlik*s hardly changed over the 114-year period under review, McGowan raises the question of under-recording: "Possibly large *chiftlik* owners were successful in discouraging *chiftlik* censuses so that the earlier figures survive as stereotypes".[37] While this may be true for the second half of the eighteenth century, it certainly does not apply to the early period, when several detailed surveys can be shown to have been executed afresh based on such varying criteria as *nefer*, *varaka* and *çift* (see below in the Appendix). Undoubtedly, more research is needed in this area. But one thing seems obvious enough: *çiftlik* surveys and their derivatives, the corresponding *tevzi* registers, are not to be read uncritically at face value. They constitute carefully negotiated platforms of local co-operation between the central powers (or their representatives in the area, such as the *kadı*) and the locally powerful, as well as the outcome of negotiations *among* the locally powerful, i.e., the more prominent members of the local elites. With this taken into account, they will shed light on the realities of a *per se* 'unofficial' relationship between 'the state' and its representatives and some powerful players on the ground as few other sources of this period can.

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APPENDIX

LIST OF '*ÇİFTLİK* SURVEY REGISTERS' IN THE *KADI SİCİLLERİ* OF MANASTIR

(abbreviated as Sic. Man.)

NOTE: This list does not include the relevant material from the nineteenth century, which is discussed in my *Regionale Reformen*, 163ff.

1. Sic. Man. 33 (1120-21 A.H./1708-09), f. 31b-34a (collection of *celepkeşan* in *çiftlik*s)
2. Sic. Man. 34 (1121-23 A.H./1709-11), f. 11a-12b (*tevzi* list based on '*nefer*', includes *çiftlik*s)
3. Sic. Man. 34 (1121-23 A.H./1709-11), f. 30b-32a (*tevzi* list based on '*çift*', for *çiftlik*s only [total of 960 '*çift*'])
4. Sic. Man. 34 (1121-23 A.H./1709-11), f. 41b-43a (*tevzi* list based on '*evrak*', includes *çiftlik*s [with 1,274 '*evrak*'])
5. Sic. Man. 35 (1124 A.H./1712), f. 10b-11b (*tevzi* list including *çiftlik*s which are assessed on the basis of '*evrak*' [total of 1160 '*nefer*'])

37. McGowan, *Economic Life*, 164.

6. Sic. Man. 35 (1124 A.H./1712), f. 32a-33b (*tevzi* list based on '*evrak*', includes *çiftlik*s [with 1204 '*evrak*'])
7. Sic. Man. 35 (1124 A.H./1712), f. 34a-35a (*tevzi* list for *çiftlik*s)
8. Sic. Man. 38 (1129-31 A.H./1716-19), f. 58b-60a (*tevzi* list for *çiftlik*s [946 '*çift*'])
9. Sic. Man. 38 (1129-31 A.H./1716-19), f. 73a-74b (*tevzi* list for *çiftlik*s [920 '*çift*'])
10. Sic. Man. 39 (1132-34 A.H./1719-21), f. 108a-112b (*tevzi* list based on '*evrak*' including *çiftlik*s)
11. Sic. Man. 40 (1135-38 A.H./1722-26), f. 4a-b (*tevzi* list for *çiftlik*s; incomplete)
12. Sic. Man. 40 (1135-38 A.H./1722-26), f. 8b-9a (*tevzi* list including *çiftlik*s which are taxed per '*çift*' [1,000 '*çift*'])
13. Sic. Man. 40 (1135-38 A.H./1722-26), f. 39a-b (*tevzi* list based on '*çift*' including *çiftlik*s [villages and *çiftlik*s together give a total of 4,200 '*çift*'; villages alone: 2,517])
14. Sic. Man. 42 (1141-43 A.H./1728-31), f. 92b-94b (*tevzi* list for *çiftlik*s)
15. Sic. Man. 42 (1141-43 A.H./1728-31), f. 101b-104a (*tevzi* list based on '*evrak*' including *çiftlik*s [1,317 '*evrak*'])
16. Sic. Man. 44 (1147 A.H./1734), f. 13a-15a (*tevzi* list based on '*evrak*' which includes *çiftlik*s)
17. Sic. Man. 44 (1147 A.H./1734), f. 21a-23b (*tevzi* list including *çiftlik*s which are taxed per '*çift*')
18. Sic. Man. 45 (1148-49 A.H./1735-37), f. 47b-49b (*tevzi* list based on '*çift*' including *çiftlik*s [these alone hold 1,241 '*çift*'])
19. Sic. Man. 46 (1150 A.H./1737-38), f. 50b-54b (*cizye* register listing '*evrak*' including *çiftlik*s [662 plus 90 plus 390 '*evrak*' in three sub-districts or *kol*s])
20. Sic. Man. 65 (1202 A.H./1787-88), f. 3b-5b (*tevzi* list including *çiftlik*s which are taxed per '*çift*'). In this document the names of the cultivators fiscally liable working under each *çiftlik sahibi* are given.
21. Sic. Man. 65 (1202 A.H./1787-88), f. 5b-6b (*tevzi* list including *çiftlik*s which are taxed per '*çift*')
22. Sic. Man. 66 (1202-03 A.H./1787-89), f. 9b-11a (*tevzi* list including *çiftlik*s which are taxed per '*çift*')
23. Sic. Man. 66 (1202-03 A.H./1787-89), f. 46a-47a (*tevzi* list including *çiftlik*s which are taxed per '*çift*')
24. Sic. Man. 67 (1204-05 A.H./1789-91), f. 28b-29b (*tevzi* list for *çiftlik*s based on '*çift*' [1,000])