

Methodological issues and Problems of Sources

Indeed, this project has some similarities including two similar projects known by the international scientific field: a) "The Victoria History of the Counties of England (VCH)", under the auspices of the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, which began in 1899 and are still running and b) "Paroisses et Communes de France: Dictionnaire d' Histoire Administrative et Demographique" under the auspices of the Laboratoire de Demographie Historique of the école des Hautes études en Sciences Sociales in Paris, which began in 1970.

However, despite some similarities with the above projects, ours has to face many problems more difficult than the above. Indeed, while in Western and Central Europe, the official population data are available in most cases from the 17th century and continue almost uninterrupted to this day. In our case the first official data on about half of Greece is dating only from the middle 19th century and, in Northern Greece and the islands, from the beginning of 20th century. A diverse and heterogeneous material of unequal validity (including Venetian and Ottoman registers, ecclesiastical manuscripts, travelers' accounts, diplomatic memoirs etc.) is collected and deciphered, in order to extract the geographic, administrative and demographic information they contain. Then are being organized, compared and evaluated in order to create a coherent ensemble of scientifically useful data.

This pre-statistic material creates many evident problems (name variants, double nominations and thousands of name changes), which create a serious barrier not only for the foreigners but even for the Greek scholars. Thus, the concentration on a national level of organized and scientifically tested material concerning these topics, is not only of great value for the specialists in these fields but also an indispensable source for students of every aspect of human studies. An important task on the scientific use of the existing sources has been the transcription of the Codex of the Transformation Monastery at Zavorda by the colleagues Maria Christina Chatziioannou and Evdokia Olympitou, also the study of Dimitris Dimitropoulos for the population of the Aegean islands (15th - beginning of 19th c.), which were prepared and published as part of our project. In addition to this the publication of the Venetian cadastral register of Vostitsa by Constantinos Ntokos, with the encouragement and active contribution of Vassilis Panayotopoulos.

Issues of administrative history

The study of administrative history of Greece is in progress, with emphasis on identifying and defining the boundaries of administrative units from the late Middle Ages, during the Ottoman conquest until today.

Indeed, in this area there are serious problems to solve, as we do not often know the exact number of Ottoman kazas, even sanjak and their confines in each

period. Even in rare cases where historical research brings to light numbers, for example the population of sanjak, we are not often able to accurately associate these numbers with a specific, clearly defined geographical unit.

Residential setting

The issues of organization and development of residential space, although it was an integral part of the discussion developed within the project, has not received systematic research yet. However, the results so far are rather sparse and occasionally. The next research project "Aegean: A Historical Study of Settlements and the Architecture of the Habitat", that conducted in collaboration with the National Technical University of Athens, attempted searching, collecting and classifying historical and architectural information on the islands of the Aegean sea. This process had as a result the creation of a document collection (architectural plans, historical and architectural bibliography, maps and aerial photos).

In the framework of the project "Athens: A Historical Register of Buildings" scientific coordinators Leonidas F. Kallivretakis and Christina Agriantoni directed a systematic archival and bibliographical research, while designed an exemplary electronic application, as summary report of the thematic databases. Recently the coordinators decided to research systematically the residential and administrative constitution of settlements and municipalities in the region of Piraeus from 1922 until the 1970's. The aim is to collect documentary material that will illuminate the process of creating and providing the identity of each settlement (population, election results, business activity etc.).

Ethnocultural Phenomenon

An introductory approach to the Greek cultural groups and also in wider Balkan area is being attempted. This approach will display ethnocultural peculiarities in specific environments, as well as the installation and movement through the historical periods from the 15th century until present day.

Financial Activities

The study of traditional local economic activities, both basic (agriculture, livestock, etc.) and additional (craft, handicraft, etc.) was an integral part of the project considered as a prerequisite for understanding the relationship between people and space. Also a systematic collection of information on any local and regional economic activities is taking place, and generally on traditional technical culture. Especially the recent years, our attention turned to the study of these topics in the islands of the Aegean, Dimitris Dimitropoulos made the start with his theses on Mykonos, which was prepared and published in our project. This project has great interest on fishing activities in Greek sea.