

Ottoman administration and military, or partake actively in uprisings against the latter, and often managed to amass surprisingly large landholdings and immense wealth.

The uprising of the Greeks in 1770, supported and to a certain extent initiated by two Russian officers, the Orlov brothers,⁶ aimed at dividing the sultanic forces in the on-going Russo-Ottoman war. This uprising was a major contribution to the worsening situation in the Morea. First it led to a further concentration of military personnel in the area, with about 10,000-15,000 Albanian soldiers being brought in to crush the rebellion. After the uprising was suppressed, the insurgents were punished and the Russians had retreated, the re-establishment of Ottoman rule did not work out smoothly. In fact it did not work out at all, because the Albanians went out of control. Claiming alleged payments, they started ravaging the countryside, terrorising Christian subjects as well as the Ottoman authorities, who totally lost power over their irregular forces and had to ask for help from outside the Morea to get rid of the 'Alvanokratia' (Albanian rule).⁷ It was only in 1779, when Gazi Hasan Paşa, who was appointed *Mora valisi*, while also holding the office of *kapudan paşa* (commander of the fleet), managed, in a horrible bloodbath, to crush the dominion of the marauding Albanian soldiers. In the meantime, the fortresses and fortified cities had become centres of helpless Ottoman administrators, military garrisons and refugees from the countryside.⁸

All this contributed not only to a decline in trade and agriculture in the peninsula, but also to the decline in the authority of the Ottoman state and its ability to guarantee law and order and the adherence to legal rules, to protect its subjects and to maintain control over officials in the province. These were prime conditions for the development of Mafia-like sub-structures. Combined with the general shift in power from the central government to local authorities, and the general decay of *boni mores*, by which the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were characterised in the whole of the Ottoman Empire, the situation in the Morea became explosive.

Claiming Rights and Righting Wrongs

According to Near-Eastern state philosophy, the most important task of the sovereign was to ensure that law and order were maintained, to guarantee justice to his subjects and to right wrongs.

6 The uprising is known as the Orlov Rebellion (*Orlophika* in Greek).

7 On the history of the Orlov Rebellion and the 'Alvanokratia', see Sakellariou, *Peloponnesos*, 162-206. On the Orlov Rebellion, see also Y. Nagata, *Muhsin-zâde Mehmed Paşa ve âyânlık müessesesi* [Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa and the Institution of *Ayanlık*], Tokyo 1976, 39-66; T. A. Gritsopoulos, *Ta Orlophika: he en Peloponneso Epanastasis tou 1770 kai ta epakoloutha autas* [The Orlov Rebellion: The Revolution in the Peloponnese in 1770 and its Aftermath], Athens 1967.

8 C. K. Neumann, 'Sulaika at the Inn at the Pier: Local Elites and the Port in Anaboli, 18th Century', unpublished paper which describes vividly the 'overmilitarised' situation in Anabolu.