PART III

DIPLOMATICS AND DIPLOMACY AMONG BYZANTIUM, ISLAM AND THE WEST
The first Ottoman conquest of Macedonia was accomplished between 1383, the date of the capture of Serres, and 1387, the date of Thessaloniki’s surrender. It lasted until 1403, when, as a consequence of the battle of Ankara in the previous year, Thessaloniki along with Chalkidiki and the western Strymon valley was recuperated by the Byzantines, in accordance with the treaties the latter concluded with the Ottomans.1

The land ownership regime and the legal and institutional order that prevailed during the approximately twenty years of the first Ottoman rule in Macedonia are still little known.2 Many crucial questions remain essentially unanswered. To what extent did the conquerors respect the rights of the landowners in the region? Was the principle of private ownership put into question? With regard to monasteries in particular,