

The History of Education in Ottoman Macedonia in the Early 20th Century: The Case of Kavala

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Abstract: The purpose of this presentation is to highlight the History of Education in Macedonia and specifically in the city of Kavala in the early 20th century. Primary historical material from the archive of the General Archives of the State of Kavala, as well as relevant bibliography, was used for the research. The survey highlights the difficulties faced by the Greek community of Kavala in educating its new members. These difficulties were varied, both in the shortage of teaching staff and in financial difficulties. Adding to these difficulties may be the competition to attract students to schools in other religious communities in the city, which were more financially feasible and where foreign languages were taught, in which the Greek schools were lagging behind. The Operational Regulations of the Kavala Greek Orthodox Community highlight the efforts of local community members to promote education in the city. There is a record of the efforts of the townspeople for the financial support of the schools managed by the Greek Orthodox Community of Kavala. The financial support came both from the wealthy residents of the city and from the contributions of ordinary Kavala workers who gave a share of their salaries to support Greek schools.

Key words: history of education, Kavala, 20th Century

1. Introduction: The Administration of Education in Kavala at the Beginning of the 20th Century

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Greek Orthodox Community of Kavala was responsible for organizing and operating the education of Greeks in Kavala. According to the rules of operation of the Kavala Greek Orthodox Community, a five-member School Board was responsible for the operation of the community's schools (Chapter F., Article 20)¹. The term of office of the Ephorate was two years. Its president was appointed by the metropolitan of Xanthi² or his bishopric hierarchical commissioner (Article 21)³. The Ephorate must "take care of everything in the best interest and condition of the Community School" (Article 23)⁴. The Ephorate of the Schools met regularly every fortnight and extraordinary whenever necessary.

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¹ Regulation of the Hellenic Orthodox Community in Kavala (1900). AB: 100, COLLI: 41b.

² The city of Kavala was ecclesiastically subject to the metropolis of Xanthi and Periphery from 1721 until 1924, when the metropolis of Kavala was founded. Later, in 1953, Thassos was included in the new metropolis, now renamed Philippe, Neapolis and Thassos.

³ Regulation of the Hellenic Orthodox Community in Kavala (1900). AB: 100, COLLI: 41b.

⁴ Regulation of the Hellenic Orthodox Community in Kavala (1900). AB: 100, COLLI: 41b.

Remarkable is the way in which the members of the Ephorate are taught the courses and the teachers themselves. Members of the Board of Education were required to visit Community schools at least once a week at the time of deliveries, in order to keep them informed of their teaching and functioning (Article 23). There was therefore a constant scrutiny of how the lessons were taught and the work of the teachers as a whole. The members of the Board decided to renew the Community cooperation contract with the teachers immediately after the end of the promotional examinations (Article 25)⁵. The Ephorate was, however, not entitled to dismiss a teacher in the middle of the school year, except for a reasonable cause, when that teacher proved incapacitated or neglected his duties or exhibited a “fallacy” to the teaching profession (Article 25). In these exceptional cases, the Ephorate could terminate the supervised teacher without paying him compensation.

On the other hand, however, there were provisions that protected the teacher from interfering with community members or students’ parents. None of the parents had the right to insult or offend any teacher for inappropriate behavior towards their child. The only way to complain to parents was to submit complaints in writing to the Ephorate through the President⁶.

The timetable, as well as the syllabus of the courses, being drafted by the respective teachers, was submitted for approval by the Ephorate to the Metropolis of Xanthi (Article 26).

2. The Revenue of the School Board for the Operation of the Schools

One of the biggest problems faced by the Community regarding the operation of its schools was funding. The Kavala Greek Orthodox Community Regulations of 1900 set out various sources of funding for the School Board: 1) the income from student exam tickets fees 2) the sum of 300 Ottoman pounds from the three community churches⁷ 3) receipts from the discs circulated on the day of the Epiphany and the Three Hierarchs 4) voluntary contributions by members and foreigners 5) the issuance of a lottery 6) the benefit dance or theatrical performances by the Community 7) the optional 8) the income from the fund of the Metropolis of Xanthi, which in accordance with the Regulation is intended for the operation of the School Board and its schools (Article 28)⁸.

From 1900 to 1909, where financial data is available, the revenue of the School Board increases constantly, gradually and steadily each year. From 600 Ottoman pounds in the 1899–1900 school year to 1,635 pounds in 1909, they almost tripled⁹.

3. The Regulation of the Greek Orthodox Community of 1908

In December 1907, the new Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Community of Kavala were adopted by the Assembly of Representatives¹⁰. There were no changes in the operation of the School Board. The School Board’s list of revenues included financial facilities for the social strata that made it difficult to pay their child registration fees to school teachers in the Community. Thus, citizens were classified into social classes according to their

⁵ Regulation of the Hellenic Orthodox Community in Kavala (1900). AB: 100, COLLI: 41b.

⁶ Regulation of the Hellenic Orthodox Community in Kavala (1900). AB: 100, COLLI: 41b.

⁷ At that time in Kavala the following three temples were in operation: the Dormition of the Theotokos in the old town (castle), the Holy Baptist and St. Athanasius (outside the walls). The Christian inhabitants of Kavala were allowed, at their request, by the issuance of a Sultanate in 1864 to build houses outside the walls of the old city (castle).

⁸ Regulation of the Hellenic Orthodox Community in Kavala (1900). AB: 100, COLLI: 41b.

⁹ Prokopios Metropolitan of Philippi, Neapolis and Thassos, Education in Kavala and the construction of a Girls’ School, 1890–1915, (1980). Contribution to: 1st Local Symposium, Kavala and its Region, Kavala (18–20 April 1977), Practically, Blood Peninsula Research Foundation, Thessaloniki, p. 79 where and a relative table of the income of the Board of all school years from 1899 to 1909.

¹⁰ Regulation of the Hellenic Orthodox Community in Kavala (1900). AB: 100, COLLI: 41b.

financial capacity (Article 36)¹¹. The temples operating in the city were also added by the Apostle Paul, whose income was exempted from contributions to the Ephorate, as they were earmarked for the erection of the temple¹². The contributions of the Metropolis of Xanthi were deducted from the list of revenues of the School Board. In almost all other matters concerning the education of members of the Greek community of Kavala, the provisions of the 1907 Regulations remained similar to those of the 1900 Regulations.

4. The Operating Schools of the Greek Community in Kavala

Information about the schools operating in the city of Kavala is provided by the documents of the Greek community of Kavala. These schools were as follows:

4.1 The Men's School

The Academy initially functioned as a seven-grade school, but on the recommendation of the director Aristotle Stanis turned into an eight-grade school (Chionis K., 1990, p. 73). The 1903-1904 school year was transformed into nine grades. As male students gradually increased, some classes were divided into departments¹³. During the school's operation, depending on the number of students, other departments were increasing and others were being phased out.

4.2 The Girls' School

In 1899 the Central Girls' School operated as a six-grade school. The school year 1905–1906 was added to the school and seventh grade. The seventh grade was abolished, unknown what school year, but was rebuilt in 1911.

4.3 The Central Kindergarten

The Central Kindergarten functioned as part of the Girls' School. It was even housed in the building of the Girls' School. In 1906 it ceased to function because it was decided to completely abolish kindergartens.

4.4 The School of Mahala (Panagia Castle District)

It was operating inside the castle, near the church of the Assumption of Mary. It included a Kindergarten and an Urban School. This bourgeois school had three classes. The Kindergarten was abolished along with the rest of the Community in 1906.

4.5 The School or Branch of St. John

This school was operating in the district of Agios Ioannis (outside the walls)¹⁴. It was founded in 1905 by the School Board. It was established as an annex to the Boys school¹⁵. In 1906 it operated three ranks of the Men's

¹¹ Regulation of the Hellenic Orthodox Community in Kavala (1900). AB: 100, COLLI: 41b.

¹² The church of Apostle Paul was completed in 1925–1926 after great financial expenses of the Greek community. It was inaugurated by the Metropolitan of Kavala Chrysostomos Chatzistavrou, later Archbishop of Athens (1962–1967). Today it is the cathedral of the Metropolis of Philip, Neapolis and Thassos.

¹³ Prokopios Metropolitan of Philippi, Neapolis and Thassos, Education in Kavala and the construction of a Girls' School, 1890-1915, (1980). Contribution to: 1st Local Symposium, Kavala and its Region, Kavala (18–20 April 1977), Practically, Blood Peninsula Research Foundation, Thessaloniki, p. 73.

¹⁴ There used to be a neighborhood dedicated to the birth of the Holy Producer. The church was founded in 1865 and was inaugurated in 1867. It functions today as a metropolitan.

¹⁵ Prokopios Metropolitan of Philippi, Neapolis and Thassos, Education in Kavala and the construction of a Girls' School, 1890–1915, (1980). Contribution to: 1st Local Symposium, Kavala and its Region, Kavala (18–20 April 1977), Practically, Blood Peninsula Research Foundation, Thessaloniki, p. 45.

Academy as an annex to the district of Agios Ioannis, as it was called. In 1905 the School was housed in cells next to the church. In 1906 it was decided to build an independent building that would house the School. Probably from 1908–1909 the School was housed in a new building¹⁶.

4.6 Kara Ormanio School

The district of Agios Athanasios was located far from the central district (castle, district of Panagia). In 1905, it was decided to establish a branch in the area to serve the pupils. In 1906 the Ephorate approved the operation of the Kara Ormanio School. Three branches of the central school operated as an annex. The school was housed next to the church of Agios Athanasios. In 1908, due to the increase in the number of pupils, it was decided to move the School to a building next to the Telegraph, which then operated in the district of Agios Athanasios.

4.7 The Branch of the Apostle Paul District

In the school year 1910-1911 there is information that a branch of the Central Academy was operating in the district of Apostle Paul. The annex was originally housed in the building of the Temple of the Apostle Paul.

4.8 The Private School of Kalliopi Spyridou

There is no information on the operation of the private school of Kalliopi Spyridou. In 1906 it was discussed at the meeting of the School Board that the owner of the School should be moved to discontinue its operation.

5. The Lessons Taught in Community Schools

There is no information on the lessons taught in the schools of the Greek community of Kavala. Apparently, the curriculum of the schools in the rest of Macedonia was followed. From the Minutes of the Elderly of Kavala Community (Dimogerontia) we can only infer what specialties of teachers were hired. From the payroll list of the Men's School for the school year 1900–1901 we find the recruitment of a teacher of French, two of Greek, two of teachers, one of Turkish and one of technical courses¹⁷.

6. Report by the Inspector General of Greek Schools DM Sarro

According to a report by the inspector of the Greek schools of Sarro in 1906 in Kavala there were 11,241 Greeks, according to the latest census¹⁸. In a consular report of 1906, too, the number of Greeks in the city of Kavala was 9,500¹⁹. The inspector notes that Kavala has nice schools, like the Girls' School. Saros recorded that the school had 402 students in the 1905–1906 school year. At the Primary School there were 245 pupils at the Primary School, 65 at the Kindergarten Kindergarten 65 and the other at Annex 40.

7. Competition from Foreign Schools Operating in Kavala

In Kavala there were also Catholic monks, mainly of the Lazarist order. Their purpose was initially to serve the religious needs of the inhabitants of the Catholic doctrine. Later, however, they also began to educate young

¹⁶ Prokopios Metropolitan of Philippi, Neapolis and Thassos, *Education in Kavala and the construction of a Girls' School, 1890-1915*, (1980). Contribution to: 1st Local Symposium, Kavala and its Region, Kavala (18–20 April 1977), Practically, Blood Peninsula Research Foundation, Thessaloniki, p. 45.

¹⁷ Rudometov N. (1998) *The Greek Orthodox community of Kavala from a code of 1895-1908*, edition of the Kavala Historical and Literary Archive, Kavala, p. 95.

¹⁸ Report by D. Sarrou (1906). AB: 52, COLLISION: 28.

¹⁹ Archive of the Greek Consulate in Kavala, Archive of the Municipal Museum of Kavala, 1.10.2 / 634 (1906).

people.

A letter from the Kavala Consulate²⁰ informs us that in 1909 a School of Women was founded by the Order of St. Joseph. The report is signed by the Greek deputy consul Aninos Kavalieratos²¹. This document expresses concern about the religious propaganda practiced by the Catholic nuns, who also practiced the educational work. Members of the Greek community of Kavala expressed complaints about the work of this school. According to the report, nine-tenths of the students were Greek women. There was even a tendency for a steady increase in the school population.

In response, the School Board decided to seek financial resources for the payroll of the French language teacher. The parents of the pupils were also invited to send their daughters to schools in the Greek community, which would soon include French language lessons in their curriculum²². A request was made to the Mission Laique Française in Paris to send three French language teachers.

Kavala also had a Lazarist monk school with 38 pupils in 1912 and the Israeli community of Alliance with 95 pupils and 128 pupils²³.

8. Conclusion

The Greek community of Kavala has a very active and worthwhile project to educate young people. The difficulties she had to face were many. The main obstacle was the financial problems of financing community teachers. Later, there was also competition from the school operated by St. Joseph's Catholic nuns. However, other difficulties also arose, such as the failure of the Hungarian Israeli tobacco dealer Wix to provide the optional wage to the School Board²⁴. A year before the liberation of Kavala by the Greek army, according to a report by the Greek deputy minister Paikos, a seven-class Girls' School with 600 pupils was operating in the city and a Central Male School with three parish annexes, with 700 pupils²⁵. It is an undisputed fact that members of the Greek subjugated community still, in the first decade of the 20th century, Kavala provided both material and volunteer work to educate young people in the city. The wealthy provided donations and other classes with donations, even the day laborers, who donated each month. In conclusion, we can only express the admiration for the Greek inhabitants of Kavala, who despite being a minority in most of the first decade of the 20th century vis-à-vis most Muslims, displayed remarkable hard work and kept the national consciousness alive and well. given the level of education of the Greek youth of the city at that time.

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²⁰ Greek Consulate in Kavala has been operating since 1867. By 1835 the Consular Agency of Greece had been established in Kavala.

²¹ Archive of the Greek Consulate in Kavala, Archive of the Municipal Museum of Kavala, 2.2/1033 (03/07/1910).

²² There was even the aim of having a French school from the Greek community of Kavala, where all French lessons would be taught. This plan has not been finalized.

²³ Archive of the Greek Consulate in Kavala, Archive of the Municipal Museum of Kavala, 1.14/1118-1119 (11/01/1912).

²⁴ Archive of the Greek Consulate in Kavala, Archive of the Municipal Museum of Kavala, 1.9/458 (24/01/1900).

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