

ASPECTS CONCERNING THE ROMANIAN SCHOOLS IN THE BALKANS AFTER WORLD WAR I

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ABSTRACT

The post-World War I period represented a setback for the Aromanian communities in the Balkans in terms of educational projects started in the area with the support of the Romanian state. Against the backdrop of an elite hemorrhage, the refuge of numerous Aromanian intellectuals and the closure of schools since the time of the Balkan Wars, an increasingly accentuated vulnerability of this community is occurring in this area. This study aims to analyze the evolution of schools in the Aromanian communities in the Balkans during the interwar period using statistics and archival documents relevant to this topic.

Keywords: Balkans, Aromanians, Romania, schools, interwar period.

1. CONTEXT

For the Aromanian communities, the outbreak of the First World War also had the most unfavorable repercussions on the educational process, most of the schools being closed since the Balkan conflicts. The period during which the schools stopped their activities caused many teachers to take refuge in Romania, leading to a hemorrhage of Aromanian leaders in the territory with dramatic consequences for the morale of the remaining population¹⁴.

The conduct of the war, but especially the fact that the front line passed through areas with an Aromanian population¹⁵, had a major impact on the life of

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¹⁴ Even the schoolteacher Nuși Tulliu, a symbol of the struggle for the school emancipation of the Aromanians, took refuge in Romania, in Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bucharest (further A.M.F.A.B.), Athens Fund, Vol. 253, f. 141.

¹⁵ More about the history of this community and its current evolution in:

these communities, the frequent changes of authority (Serbian, Bulgarian, French, Greek) marked by the crossing of the front invariably led to a positioning of the local elite eager to protect their community from the rigors of war.

In the inter-war period, due to various obstacles, only some of the pre-war schools were able to reopen. Thus, in Greece, only 29 schools were still operating under the most difficult conditions; in the Serbo-Croat-Slovenian Kingdom none; in Albania three schools; and in Bulgaria, both the Sofia secondary school and the school in Upper Djumaia remained open. These represented a total of 31 primary schools with 62 teachers and 4 secondary schools with 42 teachers attended by some 1577 pupils¹⁶.

In 1919, the Greek offensive on the Aromanian schools intensified, the governor of Macedonia himself being in charge of spreading propaganda literature in the Aromanian areas and of convincing the parents of the pupils of the Romanian schools to give up this educational formula, spreading the rumor that these institutions would soon be closed¹⁷.

As a result of these measures, the school in Vlaho-Clisura/Kleisoura¹⁸ was attended by 75 children in the school year 1918–1919, but in 1919–1920 only 18 children were enrolled, of whom 4 had withdrawn by December 1919¹⁹.

1. Gheorghe Caragiani, *Studii Aromâne [Aromanian Studies]*, Bucharest, The Romanian Culturale Foundation Publishing House, 1994;

2. Anca Tanașoca and Nicolae Șerban Tanașoca, *Unitate romanică și diversitate balcanică. Contribuții la istoria romanității balcanice [Romanesque unity and Balkan diversity. Contributions to the history of Balkan Romanity]*, Bucharest, Pro Fundation Publishing House, 2004;

3. Radu Baltasiu, Aurica Bojescu, Călin Câmpean and Dan Dungaciu, *România și românii din jurul ei [Romania and the Romanians around it]*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Institute of Political Sciences and International Relations, 2006.

¹⁶ A.M.F.A.B., Fund Problem 15, f. 87 and the following pages.

¹⁷ A.M.F.A.B., Fund Athens, Vol. 235, f. 354.

¹⁸ In this study, the names of the localities appear first in Aromanian and then in the official language of the current states.

¹⁹ A.M.F.A.B. Fund Athens, Vol. 235, f. 434.

**2. STATISTICAL TABLE WITH THE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
AND PUPILS ENROLLED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR 1918–1919. DISTRICT OF
THESSALONIKI AND CORIȚA²⁰**

Place	No. schools	School type	Boys	Girls	Total	Beginners	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V	No. of teaching staff
1. Belcamen/ Drosopigi (Gr.)	1	Mixt	25	22	47	21	3	13	–	8	2	2
2. Căndrova/ Kedrona (Gr.)	1	-//-	38	19	57	32	16	3	4	–	2	2
3. Doliani	2	b./g.	53	41	94	50	9	12	6	14	3	5
4. Hrupiște/ Argos Orestiko (Gr.)	2	b./g.	24	25	49	21	5	2	4	10	8	3
5. Nevesca/ Nymfeo (Gr.)	2	b./g.	21	7	28	9	8	4	1	3	3	2
6. Paticina (disappeared)	1	mixt	21	25	46	30	4	2	4	3	3	2
7. Thessaloniki	1	-//-	19	12	31	7	5	8	2	5	4	3
8. Veria-Selia/ Ano Vermio (Gr.)	2	b./g.	70	36	106	47	15	14	13	9	7	9
9. Veria-Xirulivad/ Xirulivado												
10. Vlaho- Clisura/Klei-soura		mixt	28	13	41	16	7	4	8	2	4	3
Total	13	–	299	200	499	233	72	62	42	54	36	31

²⁰ *Ibidem*, f. 310.

The schools in the villages of Poroi/Ano Poroia, Lipos and Păpadia (Thessaloniki district) and Meglenia district were not functioning, the school in Vodena was evacuated by the army, and the school in Gramaticova was not functioning, the premises were badly damaged.

Place ²¹	School type	Pre-primary class	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V	Total
1. Corița/Korçë (Alb.)	Boys	24	15	12	7	6	0	64
2. --/--	Girls	50	12	9		3	0	77
3. Pleasa/Plasë (Alb.)	Boys	42	13	10	8	8	0	81
4. --/--	Girls	37	6	8	4	13	4	72
Total		153	46	39	22	30	4	294

The localities in Greece where schools still operated after 1919 were: Thessaloniki, Veria, Doliani, Vodena/Edessa, Vlaho-Clisura/Kleisoura, Nevesca/Nymfaio, Belcamen/Drosopigi, Gramaticova, Fetița, Paticina (disappeared nowadays), Păpadia, Hrupiște/Argos Orestikos, Livezi/Megala Livadia, Cupa/Koupa, Poroi/Ano Poroia, Grebena/Grebvena, Pretori/Praitori, Avdela/Avdella, Samarina, Perivole, Băiasa/Vovousa, Turia/Kranea, Breaza/Distrato, Turia/Kranea, Breaza/Distrato, Damași, Vlahoiani, Vlahoiani, Ianina/Ioannina. There were 27 primary schools and 5 secondary schools in these localities: in Grebena/Grevena a highschool, a gymnasium, a normal school and a girls vocational school in Ianina/Ioannina, and in Thessaloniki the higher trade school²².

On December 19, 1924, the Governor General of Macedonia, Canavos, ordered the Greek authorities in Grebena to close the Romanian gymnasium and to dismantle the boarding school. The director of the Gymnasium, Samarineanu, indignantly confessed that before the order was issued, the governor had assured him

“of his feelings for the Romanians and especially for Romania, with which Greece has the most cordial relations”²³.

When the above-named headmaster protested against the decision to close the school, Governor Canavos asked for a written request from the Romanian population of Grebena containing

“the wish to establish a secondary school with the Romanian language²⁴ of mother-tongue teaching”²⁵

²¹ *Ibidem*, f. 309.

²² Simion Țovaru, *Problema școalei românești din Balcani [The Romanian school problem in the Balkans]*, Bucharest, Cultura Publishing House, 1934, p. 106.

²³ „de sentimentele sale pentru români și mai ales pentru România cu care Grecia este în cele mai cordiale relații”, in A.M.F.A.B., Fund Athens, Vol. 134, f. 33.

to be sent to the ministry in Athens. Director Samarineanu asked the Romanian minister in Athens, Langa Rășcanu, to mediate the situation, accusing the Greek authorities of wanting to “delay the matter as long as possible”²⁶.

In 1925, when the question of disbanding the gymnasium in Ianina was raised, only the interventions of the Minister of Public Instruction and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bucharest succeeded in canceling the plan. The victory of Romanian diplomacy in this school case has mobilized the community of Băiasa/Vovousa, Ianina/Ioannina:

“The opponents who want to extinguish our ancestral language are working in vain, we have the government of the country and the school that will not let us Romanians from the villages of Epirus perish”²⁷.

However, in order for the victory not to be complete, the Greek authorities set certain constraints for the continued operation of the gymnasium in Ianina/Ioannina. Thus, the Greek Inspector General communicated to the director of the Romanian gymnasium the following conditions required by Greek law for the school’s continued operation: 1. At least one hour of Greek language per day, *i.e.*, a total of 6 per week, was to be taught in each class. 2. The Gymnasium was to be called from that moment on Aromanian Gymnasium and not Romanian as before. 3. By the end of June 1925 a petition was to be drawn up in which the community was to ask the Ministry in Athens to establish a gymnasium for the instruction of children in their mother tongue, the number of pupils, the names of each one, the commune and the class in which they were to be enrolled, the direction of the gymnasium, the names of the teachers who would teach, with the express mention that they were all Greek citizens, the sums of money to be allocated for the maintenance of the gymnasium, the persons who would be in charge of its management. 4. It was required that the language of instruction was to be in the Macedo-Romanian dialect only, and that the textbooks in the dialect were to be approved by Athens²⁸.

The authorities declared that in accordance with Law No. 3179 of August 5, 1924, concerning schools in Thrace and Macedonia, those which had been in operation in these territories before May 9, 1913, could continue to operate after that date with the provisions added later²⁹.

²⁴ On the issues related to the use of literary language/dialect in Romanian schools in the Balkans, see the study of Emanuil Ineoan, „Interogații privind strategia educațională pentru aromâni urmărită de România în Balcanii secolelor XIX–XX” [“Some questions on the educational strategy for the Aromanians pursued by Romania in the Balkans in the 19th–20th centuries”], in Nicolae Saramandu, Manuela Nevaci, Irina Floarea and Ioan-Mircea Farcaș (eds.), *Ex Oriente lux. In honorem Alessandria*, Edizioni dell’Orso, 2021, pp. 603–614.

²⁵ „dorința înființării unui gimnaziu cu limba de predare maternă”, in A.M.F.A.B., Fund Athens, Vol. 134, f. 33.

²⁶ „să trăgăneze cât mai mult chestiunea”, in *Ibidem*.

²⁷ „Adversarii care vor să stingă limba noastră strămoșească lucrează în zadar, avem guvernul țării și școala care nu ne va lăsa să pierim noi românii din comunele din Epir”, in *Ibidem*, f. 21.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, f. 41 and the following pages.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, f. 107.

The declaration demanded by the authorities whereby the schools would be staffed only with Greek citizens, lessons would be taught only in the Macedo-Romanian dialect, and Greek officials would have the right of control was categorically refused by the Aromanian notables who saw in these interferences the power of arbitrary disposition at the pleasure of the Greek authorities to close the schools whenever they wish. The directors of the Romanian secondary schools declared that

“the entire Romanian population of Pind area has decided not to bind itself to the Greek authorities with such a request, and if authorization is to be obtained, the only hope remains the intervention of the representatives of the Romanian country on the basis of the two peace treaties of Bucharest and Sevres”³⁰.

In June 1925, Greece adopted a new law concerning the establishment and functioning of schools for minorities in Macedonia, its promulgation coming on the eve of the Geneva Conference to fill a gap in Greek legislation in this regard, stipulated in the Treaty of Laussane and the Minorities Convention. The Romanian Legation in Athens was told in September that the new law would only cover the Slavic-speaking minorities in Greece, while Romanian schools would continue to operate on the basis of the old laws without any change in their status³¹.

In a report to the Legation in Athens on September 17, 1925, Consul Vassillake of Ianina/Ioannina transmitted a series of information on how the Greek authorities saw the educational process in the Aromanian-inhabited area of Epirus. At a congress of Greek teachers in the Epirus region, the school inspector Zumbu, referring to the work of Greek teachers in the Aromanian municipalities, described the important role of the teachers in the following terms:

“The teacher, whose task in the villages inhabited by xenophones is of the greatest importance, will do her utmost to instill in the little children an unfailing love of the Greek language and gradually to subdue the souls of the mothers, the foundation of the family. He will take every opportunity to introduce himself into the families of the xenophones, whose de-nationalization he will pursue by every means and with all the apostle’s enthusiasm. He will establish close ties with the women whom he will guide, with all perseverance in learning and knowing the language and all that concerns our culture, always working to make them abandon the language, customs, mores and in general everything that makes up the specific character of these xenophones. To achieve this goal of fundamental importance requires much toil and even greater patience. But, for this very word, I have repeatedly and with all perseverance submitted to those in the right that the posts in the schools of the xenophonous communes should be considered as posts of honor and of first-rate combat, and that the teachers chosen from among the most distinguished should enjoy special material advantages, and in addition to their other rights should be

³⁰ „întreaga suflare românească a Pindului a luat hotărârea de a nu se lega cu autoritățile grecești cu o asemenea cerere, și dacă trebuie obținută autorizația rămâne în ființă singura speranță intervențiile reprezentanților țării românești pe baza celor două tratate de pace de la București și de la Sevres”, in *Ibidem*, f. 199. October 24, 1925.

³¹ *Ibidem*, f. 141.

granted a reward for outstanding national activity, giving due attention to the urgent and systematic implementation of all the measures indicated for the complete assimilation of the Xenophon population of Epirus as a language and a nation”³².

The Inspector General of Schools of Epirus assured the audience that the above directives would be published in a booklet for internal use sent to all teachers in his district, and promising his superiors that he would personally see to it

“that the higher authority would know how to appreciate and reward teachers who have shown zeal and zeal in the work of supreme national and state importance of assimilating xenophones”³³.

The Romanian Consul pointed out that for this purpose, the Greek authorities had employed the entire state apparatus: education, public order, judiciary, etc., substantial material aid in kind or in money, both to Romanian children (Aromanians who perceived themselves as Romanians from Macedonia and were accepted as such) and to Greek families (Aromanians in fact, but with a Hellenophile self-perception, recognized as Hellenovlachs and considered as Greeks by the authorities in Athens), business support for Greeks in competition with nationalist Romanians, the granting of scholarships without distinction of material status or merit in the numerous boarding schools and orphanages set up by the Greek state at substantial expense in the interests of successful propaganda.

The Consul requested a prompt response from the Romanian Ministry to counterbalance the Greek assimilationist pressure, pointing out that in many areas of Epirus, but also in the south of Albania, immediate cultural protection was needed because of

“their very large number and the special value of this Aromanian element, which must not be left without books and light, and we have received countless requests from them in this regard”³⁴.

³² „Învățătoarea, a cărei misiune în localitățile locuite de xenofoni, este din cele mai mari, se va sili din răspuțeri să însușească micuțelor copile o nețărmuită dragoste pentru limba elenă și să subjuge treptat și sufletul mamelor, temelia familiei. Se va folosi de orice prilej spre a se introduce în familiile xenofonilor [n.n.vorbitorilor de limbi străine] a căror deznaționalizare o va urmări prin toate mijloacele și cu tot entuziasmul apostolului. Va stabili legături strânse cu femeile care le va îndruma, cu toată stăruința în învățarea și cunoașterea limbii și a tot ce privește cultura noastră, lucrând întotdeauna în sensul ca să le facă să se lepede de graiul, de datinile, de moravurile și în general de tot ce alcătuiește caracterul specific al acestor xenofoni. Pentru atingerea acestui țel de însemnătate fundamentală se cere multă osteneală și răbdare încă și mai mare. Dar, tocmai pentru acest cuvânt, am înaintat de repetate ori și cu toată stăruința pe lângă cei în drept ca posturile de la școlile din comunele cu xenofoni să fie considerate ca posturi de onoare și de luptă de primă ordine, iar învățătorii aleși dintre cei mai distinși, să se bucure de avantaje materiale speciale, acordându-li-se pe lângă celelalte drepturi o recompensă de activitate națională deosebită, dând interesul cuvenit chestiunii aplicării urgente și sistematice a tuturor măsurilor indicate pentru completa asimilare ca limbă și națiune a populației xenofone din cuprinsul Epirului”, in *Ibidem*, f. 148.

³³ „ca autoritatea superioară va ști să aprecieze și să răsplătească cu prisosință pe dascălii ce vor fi dat dovadă de râvnă și zel în opera de supremă însemnătate națională și de stat a asimilării xenofonilor”, in *Ibidem*, f. 149.

³⁴ „numărului lor foarte mare și valorii lui deosebite a acestui element aromânesc, care nu trebuie lăsat în părăsire fără carte și lumină primind de la ei nenumărate solicitări în acest sens”, in *Ibidem*, f. 150.

The Consul recommended the strengthening of existing school institutions and the annihilation of Greek action in the area³⁵.

On October 14, 1925, the epic of the Romanian gymnasium in Grebena/ Grevena began again, with the Greek authorities asking the director to evacuate the school and the boarding school by the evening. The next morning the teaching staff asked the commander of the gendarmerie, Major Brelakis, for a written order which he refused to show, threatening the teachers with Greek citizenship (in fact most of the teachers were local Aromanian, and therefore citizens of the state of Hellen) with arrest³⁶.

On October 18, 1925, the Greek authorities forcibly evacuated the teachers and students from this secondary school³⁷. However, the Gymnasium was reopened by Prime Minister T. Pangalos under pressure from Romanian diplomacy in December 1925³⁸.

Such chicanery is to be found in almost all parts inhabited by Aromanians. In Zagor, after an extremely harsh winter in November 1928, which led to the death of most of the animals and famine, state aid was distributed only to the Greek or Grecophiles communities, while Aromanians were told by the authorities to ask for support from the Romanian state because they did not attend Greek schools but Romanian ones³⁹.

The Higher School of Commerce in Thessaloniki also requested the help of the Romanian state, sending a detailed report with the request to submit it to the Ministry of Education in Athens so that, on the basis of Article 1 of the Education Law, this institution be recognized as such by the Greek state, and the students could enjoy among other things the possibility of deferment of military service until the end of their studies, requesting the repeal of the imposition of fees to the Greek state of 150 drachmas for students of the lower course. The argument was as follows: 1. The school in question was for a minority who's right to be educated in its own language had been recognized. 2. This was a school of the Romanian state which bore all the expenses, as some pupils were too poor, so that the Romanian authorities would have to pay these fees to them as well⁴⁰.

On March 2, 1927, Leon Pupi, headmaster of the primary school in Breaza/Distrato, received a directive from the Ministry of Education in Athens, communicated by the school authority of the Ianina district, ordering him that the subjects Greek language, history and geography be taught in Greek by one of the teachers of the Greek school in the locality. Ion Vuloagă, the manager of the former School Administration, considers the above-mentioned order to be a violation of the freedom of Romanian schools to operate and calls for urgent diplomatic intervention⁴¹.

³⁵ *Ibidem*.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, f. 201–202.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, f. 170.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, f. 215.

³⁹ A.M.F.A.B., Fund Problem 18, Vol. 5, unpaginated.

⁴⁰ A.M.F.A.B., Fund Athens, Vol. 134, f. 76.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, f. 252.

Pupils from Greek schools in Aromanian localities were instructed by the teaching staff not to come into contact with pupils from Romanian schools, disciplinary corrections were applied to those pupils who dropped a few words in Aromanian. Children were also forbidden to speak in the dialect in their free time. In order to supervise compliance with this requirement, a sort of tribunal was set up every Wednesday in each school, where detailed interrogations were carried out to find out who was being unruly and who would then be subject to heavy punishments. Such situations were confirmed in April 1927 by the Greek inspector of Konitza himself, who told Leon Pupi that “we are working hard to put you down”⁴².

In the summer of 1927, a furious press campaign against foreign schools began in the newspapers *Neologos*, *Eleftheron Vima*, *Nea Imera* and *Ethos*. For example, the *Neologos* of June 17, 1927, considered that the 28 Romanian schools were operating

“contrary to the provisions on minorities, being run by the consulates of Ianina/Ioannina and Thessaloniki for the sole purpose of propaganda”⁴³,

calling on Romania not to provoke Greece’s discontent and saying that

“the few kutsovalahi⁴⁴ who emigrated to Dobrogea are today kicking themselves to be able to return here (...)”⁴⁵.

The local newspaper in Ianina took up the same theme calling for the closure of schools or their Greek control on June 18, 1927⁴⁶. A circular number 182/1927 sent by the General Inspector of Private Education in Greece to the Romanian Gymnasium in Ianina/Ioannina contained the following provision:

“it is not allowed to enroll again in a private [n.n. rec. Romanian] school a pupil coming from a public [i.e., Greek] school, without the approval of the Greek school inspector”⁴⁷.

On May 24, 1927, the Romanian consulate in Thessaloniki, through Ion Ciuntu, addressed a strictly confidential report to the foreign minister in Bucharest. In it he announced that a work plan was being prepared including

“the establishment of an economic organization which in principle our legation in Athens has also approved, an organization to support the Aromanian element in Greece and to shelter it from hardships whose removal would, in my opinion alone, make the Aromanians reluctant to the current of emigration which has been unleashed in recent years and would attract the graduates of the trade school here to remain in Greece by the possibility of placing them; then the building of a church and

⁴² „noi lucrăm din răputeri ca să vă astingem”, in *Ibidem*, f. 290.

⁴³ „contrarar dispozițiilor asupra minorităților fiind conduse de consulatele de la Ianina și Salonic cu scop absolut de propagandă”, in *Ibidem*, f. 358.

⁴⁴ Name used at the time to designate the Aromanian group.

⁴⁵ „câtiva de kutsovalahi care au emigrat în Dobrogea dau astăzi din mâini și din picioare pentru a putea reveni aici (...)”, in A.M.F.A.B., Fund Athens, Vol. 134, f. 358.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, f. 359.

⁴⁷ „nu este permisă înscrierea din nou la o școală particulară a unui elev provenit de la o școală publică, fără avizul revizorului școlar grecesc”, in *Ibidem*, f. 357.

an elementary school in Thessalonica, the recognition of our schools now tolerated, and the acceptance of a church head long desired”⁴⁸.

In another report sent on June 1, 1927, the consul recommended caution in the choice of the teaching staff and serious measures to protect the Romanian schools from any suspicion and mixture with other schools considered to be foreign propaganda about which the Greek authorities and public opinion were concerned. The same consul was concerned by the fact that the Director of Political Affairs of the General Governor of Macedonia, Lecos, had expressly asked him for a table of all our teachers and teachers’ assistants, indicating their place of birth and nationality, as well as the number of pupils attending each Romanian school.

The Romanian Consul repeatedly declared to the authorities that the Romanian primary schools in Macedonia belonged to the “Romanian communities”, and that the subsidy granted by the Romanian state was justified by the fact that, from the point of view of the Greek authorities, these schools were minorities, and the Greek government was unable to subsidize them, so they were to be supported by the Romanian state. However, in December 1927, the Greek authorities did not recognize the Romanian communities. The founding of new communities, schools and churches depended on the authorization of the Greek government, as well as a bilateral agreement which did not yet exist⁴⁹.

3.THE 1926–1927 SCHOOL YEAR PICTURE OF AROMANIAN PUPILS ATTENDING SCHOOLS IN MACEDONIA⁵⁰

Commercial School of Thessaloniki

1 st Grade Secondary School	49
Second Grade Secondary School	39
3 rd Grade Secondary School	28
4 th Grade Secondary School	29

Year I	29
II	18
III	11

Total: 202

⁴⁸ „întemeierea unei organizații economice pe care în principiu legația noastră din Atena a și aprobat-o, organizație care să sprijine elementul aromânesc din Grecia și să-l pună la adăpost de greutăți a căror înlăturare numai după părerea mea ar face pe aromâni refractari curentului de emigrare ce s-a dezlănțuit în ultimii ani și ar atrage rămânerea în Grecia a absolvenților școlii de comerț de aici prin posibilitatea plasării lor; apoi clădirea unei biserici și a unei școli primare în Salonic, recunoașterea școlilor noastre astăzi tolerate, precum și acceptarea unui cap bisericesc dorit de atâta timp”, in A.M.F.A.B., Fund 72, Vol. 23, unpaginated.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰ A.M.F.A.B., Fund Athens, Vol. 134, f. 421–422.

Gymnasium in Grebena/Grevena (Gr.)

Class I	28
II	23
III	16
IV	10

Total: 77

Gymnasium in Ianina/Ioannina

Class I	20
II	13
III	14
IV	10
Preparatory course	32

Total: 89

4. SITUATION OF THE ROMANIAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICTS OF THESSALONIKI, MEGLENIA AND IANINA/IOANNINA FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 1927–1928

Constituency of Thessaloniki – Meglenia

Place	School Type	Number of pupils
1. Thessaloniki	mixt school	45
2. Veria	boys school	126
3. Veria	girls school	120
4. Vodena/Edessa	mixt school	59
5. Doliani	mixt school	23
6. Căndrova/Kedrona	mixt school	34
7. Gramaticova	mixt school	80
8. Hrupișta/Argos Orestikos	mixt school	38
9. Paticina (disappeared)	mixt school	30
10. Papadia	mixt school	29
11. Poroï/Ano Poroia	mixt school	25
12. Belcamen/Drosopigi	mixt school	25
13. Nevesca/Nymfeo	mixt school	40
14. Vlaho-Clisura/Kleisoura	mixt school	15
15. Cupa/Koupa	mixt school	5
16. Livezi/Megala Livadia	mixt school	7 (winter school)

Total: 706

Constituency of Ianina/Ioannina-Grebena/Grevena

Place	Type of school	Number of pupils
17. Ianina/Ioannina	Mixt	35
18. Grebena/Grevena	Mixt	63
19. Băiasa/Vovoussa	Mixt	22
20. Breaza/Distrato	Mixt	23
21. Pretori/Praitori	Mixt	13
22. Samarina-Vlahoiani	Mixt	22
23. Turia/Kranea	Mixt	38

Total: 216

Overall Total: 922 pupils. December 23, 1927.

5. FINAL REMARKS

The cultural action supported by Romania was addressed to communities with which Romania shared linguistic affinities and the idea of common origin. Since August 1913, the Aromanian community in the Balkan Peninsula found itself in a new geopolitical situation, since the sovereignty of a multinational empire of a multi-religious nature disappeared and was replaced by monarchic regimes that pursued an exclusive nationalist policy. The Ottoman era of Aromanian history ended abruptly in 1912 with the de facto and de jure occupation in 1913, with the signing of international agreements fragmenting the Muslim caliphs' legacy into several territories that would fall to the successor states. For the Aromanian communities, the danger of assimilation was many times more dangerous in the new geopolitical context after 1913, together with the implications of the outbreak of the First World War. Against the backdrop of these transformations that geopolitically reshaped the Balkan Peninsula, it is worth noting that in spite of the numerous difficulties that marked the smooth running of the educational activity as we have observed described above, the schools supported by Romania were the only non-Greek schools of an indigenous population in Greece that were still functioning in the interwar period or rather were tolerated. Understanding the mechanisms that have influenced the normal course of the cultural-educational movement among the Aromanians could be the key for an objective researcher capable to explain the deeper implications of some of the processes underlying the identity translations that have had a major impact on the Aromanians.

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