

LITERARY AND CULTURAL
CROSSROADS
IN THE LATE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Edited by
Evangelia Balta

 **BOYUT**

A 19th-century Comedy written in Armenian using the Greek Alphabet

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The following study presents the little-known, if not wholly unknown, comedy by the musicologist Georgios Pachtikos (1869, Ortaköy – 1916, Constantinople). I was informed of the existence of the edition *Φωνή λαού, οργή Θεού, ήτοι το τέλος μίας εφορείας* [Voice of the people, wrath of God, or the end of a Council of Elders] released in 1892, by a librarian at the Library of the Hellenic Parliament who, believing it to be a mixed Greek-Karamanlidika edition (in which the Turkish language is written using the Greek alphabet) and verifying that its title was not included in the Karamanlidika Bibliography, hastened to notify me.¹

On leafing through the book in situ in the Library, I discovered that the text of the comedy by the musicologist Georgios Pachtikos was a mixture of Greek interspersed with Turkish expressions. Still, the largest part of the text was written in another language with Greek characters, just like the parts of the text in the Turkish language. While studying the copy of the book given to me by the Library, I noticed that in his prologue Pachtikos stated that he wrote his comedy in a Greek-Turkish-Armenian dialect.

Therefore, a person had to be found who could combine his knowledge of the Armenian language and the Greek alphabet so as to decipher the content of the comedy, which was extremely interesting, as revealed by the brief description provided by Pachtikos in his Greek prologue. The comedy focuses on the issue of the delay in education in Asia Minor communities due to community leaders' ignorance and mismanagement.

I have met Turkish Armenians, but they only read the Armenian alphabet and, therefore, could read Armenian and Armeno-Turkish, namely Turkish texts written in the Armenian alphabet. I turned to Mike Tsiligrian, the editor of the Greek magazine *Armenika* in Athens, who suggested I speak to the Doctor of Theology Gevorg Kazaryan because, as he told me, very few Armenians in Athens, descendants of those who arrived following the Population Exchange, still spoke the language of their forefathers. The knowledge of those who did was limited to some elementary everyday expressions. I was delighted when Dr. Gevorg Kazaryan finally decided to participate in the joint study of the comedy despite his reservations about the dialectological Armenian language in the comedy, which at certain points uses

¹ I must take this opportunity to note that the revised edition of the Karamanlidika Bibliography owes its thanks for the support of librarians in Greece and abroad who are quick to inform me of unknown editions they discover on their library shelves. In the same way *sahafs* in Istanbul inform me about unknown Karamanlidika editions that come into their possession to be sold, as do also some collectors.

words and phrases unknown in the West-Armenian language. However, they were not crucial to understanding the plot of the comedy.

The text of the following study is a product of our collaboration that aims to present a literary attempt by the brilliant musicologist Georgios Pachtikos, who, with his pen, described the situation in education in his hometown, Ortaköy. His comedy entitled *Φωνή λαού, οργή Θεού. Το τέλος μιας εφορείας* [Voice of the people, wrath of God, or the end of a Council of Elders] is comparable to the novel “Διατί η μηλιά δεν έγινε μηλέα” [Why the name of the apple-tree in spoken Greek *μηλιά* did not become *μηλέα* (the purist Greek form of apple-tree)]² by the Thracian Georgios Vizyinos (1849-1896). Vizyinos, plume-name of Georgios Mihail Sirmas or Mihailidis, in his autobiographical novel, also presented images of the educational reality of Hellenism outside the borders of the Hellenic Kingdom, using the example of his hometown Vizye (Vize). These literary texts, as well as articles in newspapers, are sources of information on how education was dealt with by Hellenism outside Greece, education that otherwise would have been considered the most critical mechanism for the integration of Rums in the Ottoman Empire into the Greek national corpus.

E. B.

Georgios Pachtikos

Georgios Pachtikos³ is well-known as an ethnomusicologist and composer of many musical works. He recorded and published folk songs from Greece and Asia Minor.⁴ He was the editor of the periodical *Μουσική (Mousiki)*, a pioneering magazine dedicated to music released from 1912-1915. Apart from

² Recently this story was translated in French under the title *Le Pomme de discorde*, trans. by Gilles Decorved and August Queux de Saint-Hilaire, Aiora Publications 2015.

³ The surname Pachtikos originates from the Armenian ‘Pakhtik’ which is the diminutive form of the name ‘Pakhtasar’ (in Classical Armenian: Baghtasar). In the written Armenian sources, the name ‘Baghtasar’ was widely used from the 15th century onwards, probably connected with the biblical apocrypha that was the name of the third magus. As the diminutive form ‘Pakhtik’ (in Eastern Armenian: Baghtik), it is first seen in the year 1786 (Ζ. Υάωηηιυί, *ζωηηη υιάύιυιπύιύιηρη ριππυηριυιά* [H. Acharyan, *Dictionary of Armenian Personal Names*]. V.1, Yerevan, 1942: 375-377). It is worth noting that according to Ch. Chatzigeorgiou, an inhabitant of Ortaköy who survived the massacres, in the village the surnames ended in the suffix ‘ents’ (Christos Chatzigeorgiou, *Τὸ Ὁρτάκιοι Βιθυνίας. Αἱ σφαγαὶ καὶ ξεθεμελίωσις αὐτῶν* [Ortaköy of Bithynia, Massacres and Demolition of the village], Athens, 1965: 13, which is the traditional ending of the Armenian surnames, (nowadays transformed into ‘yan’). Therefore, the original surname of our author was Pakhtikents/Pakhtikyan, from which he kept the name ‘Pakhtik’ and instead of ‘ents’ added the Greek suffix ‘os’.

⁴ Georgios Pachtikos, *260 δημώδη ἄσματα ἀπὸ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ ἐλληνικοῦ λαοῦ τῆς Μικρᾶς Ἀσίας, Μακεδονίας, Ἠπειροῦ καὶ Ἀλβανίας, Ἑλλάδος, Κρήτης, Νησῶν τοῦ Αἰγαίου, Κύπρου καὶ τῶν παραλίων τῆς Προποντίδος συλλεγένητα καὶ παρασημανθέντα, 1888-1904* [260 popular songs from the lips of the Greek people of Asia Minor, Macedonia, Epirus and Albania, Greece, Crete, Aegean islands, Cyprus and the coasts of Propontis, collected and marked], t. I, Athens, Maraslis Library, 1905.

being the director and editor-in-chief of the magazine, he was, in fact, the author of its material, if not all of it, then at least the more significant part. Each issue contains mostly songs set to music from various regions of Greece and Asia Minor, his compositions for chorales in ancient tragedies, and poems he set to music himself.⁵ Neither is there a shortage of scores of works by great European composers (*Tosca* by Giacomo Puccini, *Barcarolle* by Jacques Offenbach, etc.). Alongside the timeless songs of the patriarchs appear hymns to the sultan, next to Greek folk songs, songs in the foreign languages of Macedonia and other, as he notes explicitly, ‘neighbouring peoples’ (Turks, Arabs, Armenians, Bulgarians, Albanians, etc.). The pages he dedicates to his tours remain significant material for researchers, and he calls them “Impressions from the tour of Asia Minor to collect folk songs”, in which he vividly provides a wealth of information on the places he visits, the people he meets there, and valuable material about their musical tradition.⁶



Georgios Pachtikos

In the bibliography, however, he also appears as the writer of a comedy entitled *Φωνή λαού, οργή θεού, ήτοι το τέλος μιας εφορείας* [Voice of the People, wrath of the God, or the end of a *demogerontia* (*ihtiyar meclisi*)] (1892). The comedy is about the discontent prevailing in the education of the Asia Minor communities at the end of the 19th century. Yet the most interesting element of the comedy is the language in which it is written. The comedy was written in a Greek-Turkish-Armenian idiom –as Pachtikos describes it– and printed in Greek characters. Despite the definition given by the author, the language is Armenian, more precisely a dialect of the region Akn (Western branch of the Armenian language).

⁵ See for example Georgios Pachtikos, *Η μελοποιία των χορικών και των κομμών Ιφιγενείας της εν Ταύροις του Ευριπίδου* βραβευθείσα κατά τον διεθνή μουσικόν αγώνα της εν Αθήναις προς διδασκαλίαν των αρχαίων δραμάτων Εταιρείας [The musical setting of the chorales and laments for Euripides’ tragedy “Iphigenia in Taurus,” awarded at the international musical competition of the Society for the Teaching of Ancient Drama in Athens], Athens, Ath. Deligiannis Printing House, 1901.

⁶ The musical material itself is divided into two parts, the ‘*musikologikon*’ and the ‘*asmatologikon*’. The first records the first verses of the songs set to music and the second part the entire song with information regarding its place of origin, its composer and details of his music.

Colloquial Armenian, just as Greek, during the period of Turkish rule, appropriated several Turkish words (which were ‘Armenianised’), as well as entire expressions.⁷

The comedy was published in 1892 after Pachtikos graduated from the University of Athens and the Greek Conservatory. He describes the state of education in the non Greek-speaking Asia Minor communities, where the reaction of uneducated elders created severe obstacles in the education of the young, plunging them into ignorance and hindering their progress. Not recognizing their inadequacy and not caring about improving the educational level of the young generation, they are presented in the comedy as insisting on the closure of the Greek school, as they consider the teacher’s wages an unnecessary expense. However, the village’s inhabitants do not accept their decision and provoke their anger, forcing the uneducated *kodjabashis* to withdraw and the school to continue to operate.

Georgios Paschalidis also provides information on the poor state of education in Ortaköy,⁸ referring to the terrible state of schools even though the village was financially prosperous.⁹ The wrong choice of teaching staff in the high school for boys (*Astiki Scholi*) and the Girls’ school, as he claimed, seriously impacted the students’ progress. He exemplifies this by saying that the uneducated superintendents imposed their ideas on the school’s operation regarding the educational system. Pachtikos presents this situation in his comedy, declaring in his preface that the reason he wrote it was various events that took place in his native town, Ortaköy in İzmit, which he wished to make known, stating that

ἔγραψα τὴν παροῦσαν κωμωδίαν οὐχὶ πρὸς ἐμπαιγμὸν τῶν ἐν τῇ Σκηνῇ παρουσιαζομένων πλαστῶν καὶ εἰκονικῶν προσώπων ἀλλὰ πρὸς καταπολέμησιν τῶν ἐνίστε πραττομένων ὑπ’ αὐτῶν ἀναμύστων πράξεων καί, εἰ δυνατόν τὴν διόρθωσιν αὐτῶν.

[I wrote this comedy not to mock the false and fictitious persons appearing on the stage but to make a stand against the improper acts occasionally committed by them and, if possible, to rectify them].

⁷ A typical example is the work by the eminent ecclesiastical man and first bishop of the Armenians of Raidestos (Tekirdağ) Grigor Kamakhetsi (1576-1643). The work, written in Armenian, contains so many Turkish words that the publisher was forced to add a Turkish-Armenian dictionary at the end. See *Չաւանաւսույազրոյթիւն Գրիգոր վարդապետի Կանախետցոյ կամ Դարանաւետցոյ, հրատ. Մեսրոպ վրդ Նշանեան, Երուսաղէմ, 1915* [The Chronicle of Archimandrite Grigor from Kamakh or Daranagh, (ed.) Archim, Mesrop Nshanyan, Jerusalem, 1915].

⁸ Georgios Paschalidis, “Ανακοίνωσις περί πόλεων τινών της Βιθυνίας [Announcement regarding cities of Bithynia]”, *Xenophanes* 1 (1896-97): 281-284; on Ortaköy, see p. 282.

⁹ For information on the occupations of inhabitants and the financial state of Ortaköy, see G. Pachtikos, *Όλυμπιακοὶ Αγῶνες ἐν Βιθυνίᾳ. Πραγματεία ἀναγνωσθεῖσα ἐντῶ ἐν Ἀθήναις Συλλόγῳ τῶν Μικρασιατῶν “Η ΑΝΑΤΟΛΗ”* [Olympic Games in Bithynia. Treatise read in Athens at the Association of Asia Minor inhabitants ‘ANATOLI’], Athens 1893: 8, in which the main occupation of the inhabitants is given as sericulture and silk processing. See also Paschalidis, “Ανακοίνωσις περί πόλεων τινών της Βιθυνίας”: 282.



Ortaköy

5,000 Orthodox Armenian-speaking Rums (Hay-Horom) inhabited Ortaköy at the end of the 19th century. Greek historiography considers them Armenian-speaking Greeks and Armenian historiography Orthodox Armenians.¹⁰ 2,500 Armenians also inhabited Ortaköy but we have to not that the statistical data on its inhabitants and surrounding villages differ.¹¹ Most of the testimonies from village refugees after 1922 accumulated in the Archive of Oral History at the Centre for Asia Minor Studies (CAMS) refer to the language of Ortaköy as Armeno-Turkish.

Η γλώσσα μας ήταν αρμενική, γράφαμε όμως караμανλίδικα, δηλαδή τούρκικα με ελληνικά γράμματα. Τούρκικα όλοι ξέραμε. Στα σχολεία μάθαιναν τα παιδιά ελληνικά, και στα τελευταία [χρόνια] μάθαιναν καλά ελληνικά. Τρία σχολεία είχαμε και έρχονταν δάσκαλοι από τους Επιβάτες

¹⁰ See Georgios Pachtikos, “Ορτάκιοϊ της Βιθυνίας”, *Estia* 6 (7th year): 98 and Georgios K. Skalieris, *Λαοί και φυλαί της Μικράς Ασίας* [People and tribes of Asia Minor], Athens 1922: 251, 340-342, and G. I. Anastasiadis, “Χαϊ-Χουρούμ (Αρμενόγλωσσοι Έλληνες) [Haihouroum (Armenian-speaking Greeks)]”, *Mikrasiatika Chronika* 4 (1948): 37-48. For the confusion about the ethnic and confessional identity of the Hay-Horoms, analytically see Գևորգ Դազարյան, «Հայ հոռոմների ազգային ինքնության խնդրի շուրջ», Լևոն Խաչիկյան. Հարյուրամյակ: Նյութեր ակադեմիկոս Լևոն Խաչիկյանի ծննդյան հարյուրամյակին նվիրված հայագիտական միջազգային գիտաժողովի (28-29 հունիսի 2018 թ.) [Gevorg Kazaryan. “The Ethnic Identity of Hay-Horoms”, *Levon Khachikian. Centenary. Proceedings of the International Armenological Conference, Dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of Academician Levon Khachikian’s Birth (28-30 June, 2018)*], Yerevan, Matenadaran, 2019: 180-204).

¹¹ For the comparative data table, according to different authors and years, see Gevorg Kazaryan, “The Hay Horoms of Izmit Region”, *Foreign Language Sources on Armenian Communities*, issue 2, Papers of the International Conference, dedicated to the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Calcutta Armenian College and Philanthropic Academy. National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, Institute of History, Yerevan, 2022: 175-176, 177-180.

κι από την Πόλη. Στην εκκλησία όλα ελληνικά τα έμελναν και τα διάβαζαν. αλλά το Ευαγγέλιο το εξηγούσε στα τούρκικα ο παπάς.¹²

[Our language was Armenian, but we wrote in Karamanlidika, which is Turkish with Greek letters. We all knew Turkish. In schools, children learnt Greek, and in the final years they learnt Greek well. We had three schools and teachers used to come from Epivates and Istanbul. In church everything was chanted and read in Greek, but the priest explained the Gospel in Turkish].¹³

Refugee Themistocles Ioannidis explains that “pure Armenian was very different to ours.”¹³

Village inhabitants were traditionally said to have come – unknown when – from Armenian-speaking Egin (present-day Kemaliye). The city of Akn (Egin is a corruption of the Armenian name, which in Armenian means ‘spring’, ‘well’) was located in Western Armenia, on the banks of the Euphrates River.¹⁴ According to a reliable historical source from the year 1466, the first waves of refugees from Armenia to historical Bithynia took place in 1400 and 1409, related to Tamerlane’s bloody campaigns.¹⁵ Another huge wave followed in the early 17th century. And they also explained that all the villages in Geyve, where Ortaköy administratively belonged, were Armenian-speaking.¹⁶ Pachtikos notes the same in his preface: other communities in the area also spoke this ‘mixed’ language. He points out that the idiom would eventually die out in twenty-thirty years. The Greek language would replace it, as Greek

¹² Ortaköy file (region of Geyve), interview between Iordanis Akkasoglou, a refugee settled in Volos, and the CAMS associate Babis Nikiphoridis (11-12.5.1964). On the use of the Turkish language in the Church in Ortaköy and the other villages of Geyve, see the Archive of Paschalis Paschalidis published by Magda Kitromilidou, “Πασχάλης Πασχαλίδης, ο ιεροδοδάσκαλος του Χουδιού. Πληροφορίες για την εκπαιδευτική και πνευματική κίνηση των ορθοδόξων Αρμενόφωνων πληθυσμών της Βιθυνίας στα χρόνια 1903-1909” [Paschalis Paschalidis, the teacher of Houdi. Information on the education and the cultural life of the Armenian-speaking Orthodox populations in Bithynia in the years 1903-1906], *Mikrasiatika Chronika* 18 (1988): 251.

¹³ Ortaköy file, interview given by Themistocles Ioannidis to Babis Nikiforidis (10.3.1958).

¹⁴ On the history of Akn, see Թ. Հակոբյան, *Պատմական Հայաստանի քաղաքները*, Եր. «Հայաստան», 1987 [T. Hakobyan, *The Cities of Historical Armenia*, Yerevan] 1987: 31-35. A basic Greek language bibliography on the Orthodox Armenians at Akn (Egin) is provided by Ioannis Hassiotis, *Αδελφά έθνη εν μέσω θύελλης. Αρμένιοι και Έλληνες στις μεγάλες κρίσεις του Ανατολικού Ζητήματος (1856-1914)* [Sister Nations in the midst of the Storm. Armenians and Greeks in the great crises of the Eastern Question (1856-1914)], University Studio Press 2015: 114, note 14. See also Gevorg Kazaryan, “The Orthodox Armenians (Armenian Horoms) of Akn”, *Vardzk* 12 (2016):19-26.

¹⁵ See Gevorg Kazaryan, “The Hay Horoms of Izmit Region”, *Foreign Language Sources on Armenian Communities*, issue 2, Papers of the International Conference, dedicated to the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Calcutta Armenian College and Philanthropic Academy. National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, Institute of History, Yerevan, 2022: 172-174; idem, “The Hay-Horom communities (Orthodox Armenians) in the 19th– early 20th Centuries”, *Christianity in the Middle East*, vol. 7, no. 2 (2023): 87.

¹⁶ Ortaköy file (CAMS) interview given by Ilias Papadopoulos, a refugee settled in Ptolemaida, to A. Ioakeimidis (23.7.1957).

education had been introduced in schools, and the children learnt Greek from Preschool onwards.¹⁷

Detailed information about the language of Ortaköy is provided by the refugee Ioannis Melas, who had methodically studied the village dialect.¹⁸

Η γλώσσα ήταν ιδίωμα τουρκο-αρμενο-ελληνικό. Το 60% του γλωσσαρίου ήταν τουρκικό. Λέξεις που αφορούσαν το σχολείο και την εκκλησία ήταν συνήθως ελληνικές. Οι περισσότερες απ' αυτές κατέβαζαν τον τόνο στη λήγουσα, αν αρχικά ήταν παροξύτονες ή προπαροξύτονες. Μ' αυτόν τον τρόπο πλησίαζαν περισσότερο στην αρμενική η τουρκική προφορά. Επίσης ελληνικές λέξεις ή ρίζες ελληνικών λέξεων δέχονταν προθεματικά ή καταλήξεις αρμενικές και τουρκικές και εξομοιώνονταν κατά κάποιον τρόπο εξωτερικά με τις γλώσσες αυτές... Η νέα γενιά όμως είχε μάθει πιά τα ελληνικά και οι περισσότερες οικογένειες, προπάντων της άρχουσας τάξης μιλούσαν και έγραφαν ελληνικά. Πολλοί είχαν σπουδάσει στην Πόλη ή στην Αθήνα... Οι γέροι, πριν από αυτήν την γενιά, edιάβαζαν τα θρησκευτικά βιβλία στην караμανλίδικη. Όλες οι οικογένειες είχαν Αγία Γραφή караμανλίδικη. Διάβαζαν και το Ευαγγέλιο караμανλίδικα στην εκκλησία.¹⁹

[The language was a Turkish-Armenian-Greek idiom. 60% of the glossary was Turkish. Words referring to school and the church were usually Greek. Most of them were stressed on the last syllable, if they were initially accented on the penult or on the antepenult. In this way they came closer to the Armenian or Turkish pronunciation. In addition Greek words or the roots of Greek words took Armenian and Turkish prefixes or endings and externally simulated these languages, so to speak... The new generation however had already learnt Greek and most families, especially those in the ruling class, spoke and wrote Greek. Many had studied in Istanbul or Athens... Old people, before



Pachtikos records a song by an elderly inhabitant of Bursa (1914)

¹⁷ Information about the Armenian spoken by Rum inhabitants in the region of Bithynia is given by Georgios Pachtikos in his speech to the Hellenic Philological Society of Constantinople (28 July 1903) which was published under the title “Εντυπώσεις εκ της ανά την Θράκην και την Μικράν Ασίαν προς περισυλλογήν δημοτικών ασμάτων μουσικής περιοδείας [Impressions from a musical tour throughout Thrace and Asia Minor to collect vernacular songs]”, *Xenophanis* 3 (1905-06):134-141, 150-163 and 212-225.

¹⁸ The CAMS associate Babis Nikiphoridis also recorded along with I. Melas' testimony pages from his linguistic study on the idiom of Ortaköy (29.1.1958).

¹⁹ “In the churches they read Karamanlidika books”, stated Ilias Papadopoulos in his interview. See above, note 10.

this generation, read religious books in Karamanlidika. Every family had a Karamanlidika Bible. The Gospel was read in church in Karamanlidika].

The characters in the comedy and their names

Naming in Ortaköy

There are fourteen characters in the comedy, former and current community leaders: Ilias, the president of the Community committee; Pavlos, the vice president; Vasilakis, the secretary; Photis and Symeon, both members of the Committee and Avraam, its cashier. The four Greek teachers of the school also appear in the comedy: Alexandros, Nestor, Kleon, and Sotirakis. There are also another three persons: Aristovoulos,²⁰ the ex-president of the Community committee; Asklipiadis and Nikephoros, both *ex-village elders*, and lastly, Petros, a church servant.

The names borne by the characters in the comedy reflect precisely what the refugee Themistocles Ioannidis said about naming Ortaköy to the CAMS associate Babis Nikiphoridis:

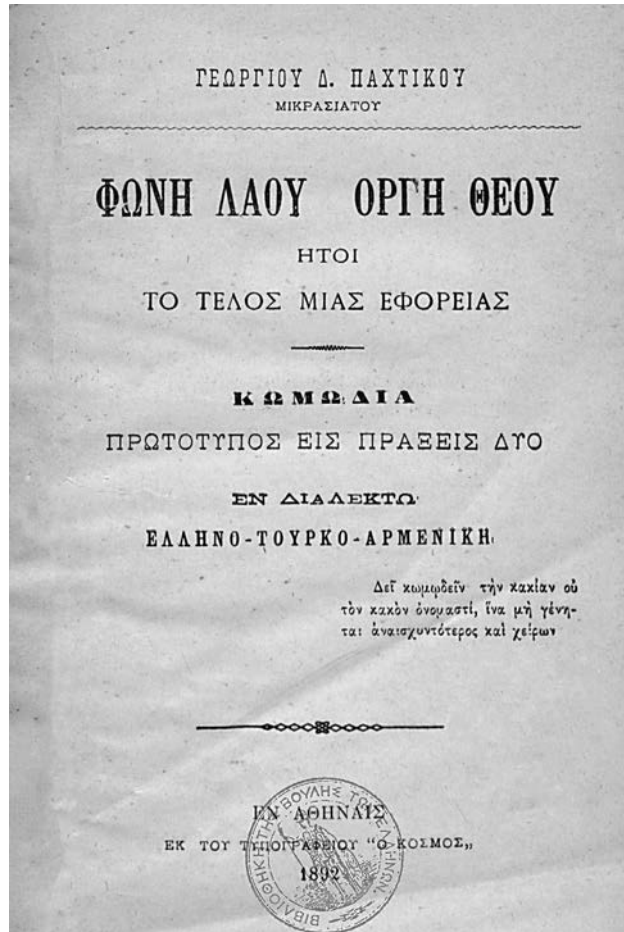
Τα βαπτιστικά ονόματα των κατοίκων ήταν συνηθισμένα: Γιάννης, Γιώργος αλλά τα τελευταία χρόνια τους έπιασε μανία με τα αρχαία [ονόματα]. Έτσι είχαμε Μιλτιάδης, Αναξαγόρας, Αριστοκλής, Αριστομένης, όπως και γυναικεία Ισμήνη, Αντιγόνη, Ανδρομάχη ...²¹

[The baptismal names of the inhabitants were usually Giannis, Giorgos, but in more recent years they became obsessed with ancient names. So we had Miltiadis, Anaxagoras, Aristocles, Aristomenis, as well as female names, Ismini, Antigoni, Andromachi...]

As regards the name ‘Asklipiadis’, which means “from the generation of Asklipios,” we suppose that it refers to doctor Pantelis Iatropoulos, to whom Pachtikos dedicates his work. It cannot be ruled out that Iatropoulos sponsored the publication of the comedy.

²⁰ He is called Aristovouros instead of Aristovoulos by the elders, changing the liquid consonants in the name. Not knowing the name Asklipiadis either, he pronounces it Ats-kipeadis.

²¹ Ortaköy, Bithynia file, Archive of Oral History at the (CAMS), recorded testimony (10.3.1958). It is a common phenomenon in the majority of settlements in Anatolia that following the introduction of Greek education in schools their inhabitants took ancient Greek names. See also Ioanna Petropoulou, “Ο εξελληνισμός – εξαρχαϊσμός των ονομάτων στην Καππαδοκία τον 19ο αιώνα [The Hellenization – archaization of names in 19th-century Cappadocia]”, *Deltio Kentrou Mikrasiatikon Spoudon* 7 (1988-1989): 141-200.



The plot of the comedy

The first act takes place in the Office of the Community.²² On the table is a safe covered with a thick layer of dust and the well-worn community register. Ilias and Pavlos, with their worry beads and tobacco pipes, are sitting on the sofa. Pavlos opens the safe and, as he finds it empty, declares that the “enemies of the community” –the three ex-members of the Community committee, as the author mentioned in a note²³ had not even left five paras inside the box. Then, he closes the box angrily and adds that they

²² The comedy consists of two acts, the first of which consists of four scenes, whereas the second consists of eight.

²³ In the final pages of the comedy Pachtikos provided some clarifying notes in Greek as well as information on the history of Ortaköy.

had given forty liras to the male teacher and another thirty-six and thirty liras, respectively, to the two women teachers of the Greek language. Pavlos believes all this is unacceptable and useless expenses incurred by educated ex-curators. In his opinion, such luxury and expensive education was only necessary for somebody who was to be a priest.²⁴ He also adds that the decision taken by the previous *demogerontia* to send 300 girls to the Girls' School was not at all right! Elias tries to calm Pavlos down, reminding him that they are now community leaders who can settle matters as they think best. Then, he calls Petros, the church servant, ordering him to notify committee members to gather in the Community Office.²⁵

In the play's Second Scene, Pavlos and Ilias are seen continuing their conversation. When he visited his grandson's school, Pavlos recounts that he was surprised to see boys and girls exercising instead of reading books. When he asked the teacher why she was not teaching the children reading and writing but occupying them with gymnastics, the teacher replied that she was following the new education system. Enraged, he says he reprimanded her but found that the same thing was happening in the Preschool. Pavlos then tells Ilias how he went to the home of the former village headman Aristovoulos to explain what had happened, and he found him reading the newspaper "Nerologos".²⁶ In anger, he berated him for ignoring, along with the previous *demogerontia*'s other representatives, the school's situation where boys and girls together were doing gymnastics. But Aristovoulos gave him the same answer as the teacher. These were new methods introduced into the education system. Pavlos was very upset and sought help from Asklipiadis²⁷ and Nikephoros, who also declared that they favored implementing new educational programmes. Pavlos brings his story to a close, telling Ilias that he was very angry with them as they all supported innovations that had infiltrated the village school. The discussion between the president and vice-president of the *Council of elders* was still underway when Petros entered the Office and informed them that all the Community committee members and Avraam had come from the coffeehouse to the community office.

²⁴ In the comedy the expression "Why are you sending him to study, are going to make him a priest?" The same expression is also found in Greek. It was also used in the neighbouring village of Khoudi, in the same vilayet of İzmit, see G. A. Paschalidis, "Ἀρμενόφωνοι Ἕλληνες ἐν Χουδίῳ τῆς Μικρασίας" [The Armenian-Speaking Greeks in Khoudi of Asia Minor], *Ἐβδομάς* [Evdomas], 20 Dec. 1891: 3.

²⁵ The second act of the comedy starts here.

²⁶ Pachtikos discovers the trick of changing the name of the Greek newspaper *Neologos* issued by Stavros Voutiras. He has the Armenian-speaking *kodjabashi* Pavlos call it *Nerologos*, indicating even more vividly the ignorance and illiteracy of community leaders, those who ultimately made decisions about the village children's education. Throughout the comedy Pachtikos will reveal at different opportunities the community leaders' ignorance of the Greek language. He presents them as making mistakes in the use of genders, confusing the meaning of homophones, causing comical situations.

²⁷ In the text of the comedy, he is referred to as Ats-kipeadis as that is how the Armenian-speaking Pavlos addressed him.

At this point, the play's Third Scene begins with the entrance of Photis, Symeon, and Vasilakis. The latter asks President Ilias why they have been summoned. Elias answers that they have to discuss the cost of running the school, which has increased since they hired female teachers, while in the past, only one male teacher worked at the school. And he reminds them that 40-50 years ago, the teacher was at the same time the candlelighter in the church,²⁸ while in present times, teachers outnumber the children. He also believes that running the Girls' School is an unnecessary expense as girls only need education to write love letters to their lovers.

The already tense atmosphere becomes even more electrified when the elders from the previous term express the opinion that the Greek would soon replace the Armenian language, and the running of Preschool and educating village girls would contribute to this. They claim that by attending the Girls' School, the village girls would become Greek speakers, and when they had a family, they would teach their children Greek.²⁹ They, therefore, insist that the Girls' School continues to operate. Elias is immersed in thought and concerned at this prospect, insisting that 40 liras are too much just for ten or twelve children to learn Greek. Such an amount would be reasonable if there were at least forty to fifty students. Vasilakis adds that the new teaching methods implemented by the so-called "Astika" schools are unsuitable for educating village children. He mentions that in his time, he read ecclesiastical liturgical books and the "Grammar" of Gennadios, which was more than enough.³⁰ But nowadays, completely new things are being introduced, adding that even the rods, used to punish the unruly, have been done away with and thrown aside.

Photis joins the conversation to add that in present-day schools, there are no blackboards, neither rods, nor other corporal punishments,³¹ and he wonders how children can learn without blackboards and

²⁸ And here yet again Pachtikos refers to a real event from the community's history, which was recorded in the community codex of Ortaköy. On 23rd April 1807 a schoolmaster named Tzoutzek Iordanis had been appointed, serving also as candlelighter in the village church, the one dedicated to Agios Georgios.

²⁹ Minas Gasapian, who visited Ortaköy in 1910, in his article which he published under the pseudonym "Farhat", mentioned that that was a monetary penalty for the people who spoke not only in public places, but also in the School, in Armenian (Ֆարխատ, «Հայ-հոռոմները կամ յունադասան Հայերը» (ուսուսանարարներու փորձ)), [Farhat, "The Hay-Horoms or Orthodox Armenians. One preliminary Investigation], *Ազատամարտ* 257 (1910): 2. Furthermore, the Greek teachers also used psychological violence: as we are informed by one of the descendents of Hay Horoms, they persuaded the children that unless they spoke the Greek language, they could not enter Paradise!

³⁰ Vasilakis referred to the work of G. Gennadios, *Γραμματική τῆς ἑλληνικῆς γλώσσης* [The Grammar of the Greek Language], Athens, 1836.

³¹ Using harsh punitive measures as a pedagogical method in classrooms was common practice. Looking back on his school years, Georgios Vizyinos describes being savagely beaten by his teacher in his novel "Διατί η μηλιά δεν έγινε μηλέα [Why the apple-tree did not become the apple-bearing tree]" and Adamantios Korais in his autobiography comments: "τα σχολεία τότε έδιδον διδασκαλία πολλά πτωχών, συνοδευομένη με ραβδισμόν πλουσιοπάροχον [the schools at that time taught many poor people, accompanied by severe beatings]". The common phenomenon was resulted in the institution of school being discredited by the students due to the harsh punishments inflicted by the teacher as a pedagogical process.

spankings. And due to all these ‘bastards’, he concludes, they do even stand up when they see someone older, nor do they greet him. He mentions that when he asked a child to carry home the cherries he had bought at the market, the child refused, saying he couldn’t do it without the teacher’s permission. The same happened with a student from the Girls’ School. As complaints continue about the decline of young people, he declared, it was a shame that the village budget had to pay out so much money for teachers’ wages.³² Pavlos, Vasilakis, and Photis agree with him. And the latter adds that all things considered, those who want their children to learn the Greek language can send them to Istanbul.

However, Symeon interrupts them by saying that the Community has a reserve of about 500 liras and is, therefore, in a position to pay out a hundred liras for wages. Thus, the school can keep running. Besides, he adds, 72 years ago, their grandfathers brought in a Greek-language teacher with a salary of 80 liras.³³ And finally, as Symeon mentions, what could they answer if their “Gerondas” (the Metropolitan) were to one day visit the village and ask why they were closing the school?³⁴ Pavlos, who persists in his belief that the school should be closed, argues that they will tell the bishop that they were forced to close it as only a few pupils attended.

The discussion continues when Petros enters the room with a letter in his hands. It is a letter from Alexandros, the Greek language teacher, to President Ilias, who opens the envelope. Still, seeing that it

³² See what Paschalis Paschalidis writes about the recruitment of teaching staff and their salaries in villages in the area of Geyve, See Kitromilidou, “Ο ιεροδιδάσκαλος του Χουδίου”: 241-274. The problems in the payment of wages faced by teachers in Asia Minor communities, even some extremely wealthy ones, like Nevşehir, are referred to indicatively in the study by Stefo Benlisoy, *Education in the Orthodox Community of Nevşehir during the Nineteenth Century*, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul 2002 [Dissertation submitted to the Institute of Social Sciences].

³³ In the 8th note Pachtikos verified that it is true information, based on the old Register of the community, according to which a teacher named Serafim came on 23 April of 1820 from Kayseri to Ortaköy. He taught only two years. Pachtikos also refers to this information in his study *Όλυμπιακοὶ Αγῶνες ἐν Βιθυνία*: 10.

³⁴ The question “and what will we tell the bishop when he visits us?” put by Symeon to prevent the closure of the school, sought by the other members of the *demogerontia*, brings to mind a story published by Pachtikos in his journal *Mousiki*. During his tour of Bithynia, he met at the village of Peltos or Peldohton an old man, Symeon Valavanidis, a former schoolmaster in the village of Pamboutzak Derbend in Nicaea. Old Symeon told him how he managed to finally persuade the reluctant villagers to send their children to school. When a high-ranking cleric once visited the village and began to speak to the Turkish-speaking inhabitants gathered there, Symeon the schoolmaster was summoned to translate his speech. However instead of translating what the bishop told his flock about observing their religious duties, he presented him as urging parents to send their children to school and as promoting the benefits of education. The bishop’s falsified speech persuaded the villagers to send their children to school to the great satisfaction of the schoolmaster Symeon, who according to Pachtikos’ account, chanted in church in his youth and for 50 years was a subscriber to Evangelinos Misailidis’ Karamanlidika newspaper *Anatoli*. See Georgios Pachtikos, “Ἐντυπώσεις ἐκ τῆς ἀνά τὴν Μ. Ἀσίαν πρὸς περισυλλογὴν δημοτικῶν ἀσμάτων περιοδείας [Impressions from a tour throughout Asia Minor to collect vernacular songs]”, *Mousiki* (an illustrated music and philological periodical), 2nd year, issues 21-22 (Sep. – Oct. 1913): 196-198.

is written in Greek, he gives it to Vasilakis to read and translate it for them.

In his letter, Alexandros reminds the elders that when he was appointed as director of a local boys' school for two years, he agreed to take only forty Ottoman liras the first year, but on one *condition*: that in the following year, the amount would be supplemented by fifteen liras. So, by way of his letter, Alexandros was asking for this wage increase. Otherwise, he would be forced to resign. He ended the letter by saying that he considered it “necessary to notify them of his decision”.

Vasilakis starts translating Alexandros's letter into the Armenian language and creates a series of comic scenes due to his mistakes. First, wishing to hide his ignorance of Greek, he says that Alexandros used “very deep”, sophisticated Greek. He wants to read more another time because he couldn't understand why Alexandros had written the word *ἀναγκαῖον* (necessary), as he announces to the people present. And when Ilias asks him the meaning of the word *αναγκαῖον*, an embarrassed Vasilakis replies, “toilet.”³⁵ Ilias, who cannot understand why the letter refers to a ‘toilet’, wakes up the others who had fallen asleep so they can all think about it together and give an explanation.

Pavlos declares that the word *anagkaion* (*αναγκαῖον*) does indeed appear in the teacher Alexandros's letter. Speaking on behalf of them all, Symeon asks Vasilakis to tell them what the letter says finally, but Vasilakis cannot confess that he does not understand the text. He tries to solve this problematic situation with frequent coughing. Understanding the situation, Symeon mentions to Pavlos that it's essential to know the Greek language. Fotis proposes that the candlelighter take the letter to a teacher or to the educated elders previously in the Office so they can translate it. Vasilakis becomes irate that they want to replace him, and Symeon asks him again to tell them what Alexandros has written, and Vasilakis begins to translate as best he can.

First, he confuses the meaning of the word *ὄρος* (= condition) with its homophone *ὄρος* (= mountain). Alexandros uses the word *ὄρο* (=condition) to say that he agreed to be paid 40 liras for one year, but on the condition that the second year he would receive an increase of fifteen liras.

Secondly, he equates the ancient Greek word *ἐκὼν ἄκων* (willy-nilly) with the Armenian *ելլաւ ւելլաւ* [yekan-yekan= they came] and creates the alarming phrase “*The teacher Alexandros came to the village to teach for two years, and the kodjabashis went to the mountain*”.³⁶

And the incoherent rendering of the teacher's letter continues when Vasilakis translates the word *συνφδὰ* (= according to something) as *Σύνοδος* (= Holy Synod), and adds to his previous meaningless translation that “the Holy Synod was aware of this.”

Finally, ignoring the first meaning of the word *αναγκαῖον* (= necessary), he translates it as the *toilet*. Therefore, according to the illiterate Vasilakis' translation, the teacher Alexandros appears to say

³⁵ In the *Greek-Turkish Dictionary* by A. T. Phardis and K. I. Photiadis (1860), the word *αναγκαῖον* is given as meaning ‘toilet’ (*memşa, abdesthane, kenef*). The Asia Minor refugees also used the word *χρεία* for toilet.

³⁶ Here the Greek proverb “*Ἀπό την πόλη έρχομαι και στην κορφή κανέλα* [I got my lines crossed]” would be suitable as it is used colloquially when we want to say that something doesn't make sense.

the following absurdly: “*If he leaves the village, it will be hard to find another teacher because the school’s toilet isn’t attractive to people*”. To ensure what the letter says, Pavlos asks Vasilakis to repeat the translation and is quite satisfied as at least the letter is understood to refer to Alexandros’s resignation. Drinking coffee and smoking hookahs, the group begins to discuss the answer that should be given to the letter they have received.

In the Fourth Scene, the teacher Alexandros appears before the *demogerontia*, and the discussion takes place in Turkish.³⁷ The Greek teacher asks them to give him an answer. But nobody replies. All that can be heard is an occasional cough, the well-known cough of embarrassment. Alexandros repeats that he is waiting for a reply to what he set out in his letter. The members of the *demogerontia* withdraw to each decide privately about Alexandros’s request. The latter, remaining in the room, takes a dim view of the teaching profession that forces him to put up with such humiliating situations. On their return to the room, the elders announce that they are unwilling to pay the amount requested for the second year of his term, and Alexandros hands in his resignation.

Pavlos is overjoyed with the outcome of the matter. President Ilias asks Secretary Vasilakis to record Alexandros’s resignation in the community notebook. And Symeon insists that some learned men also be summoned to give their opinion on the question of education, stating that otherwise, he is not willing to sign the Minutes of their meeting. Insulted by Symeon’s words, Pavlos informs him that just because they don’t know how to read and write, it doesn’t mean to say they are stupid!³⁸ The situation has got out of hand, and Symeon decides to leave.

To ease the situation, Vasilakis proposes that the teachers be invited and asked the number of pupils in the Greek class. If they come to the conclusion that a teacher is explicitly needed for the Greek lesson, then they would write to Mustafa, who was *odabaşı* at the Paşa Han in Istanbul, asking him to send a teacher who would agree to come to the village with a wage of 15-20 liras.³⁹

Ilias agrees and sends Petros to call the teachers immediately to the Office. But in the meantime, the teachers have left the village. Pavlos accuses Symeon of being responsible for the turn things had taken, vilifying him with foul language, and to clear the air, they decide to take a break. Meanwhile, Pavlos goes to find Kleon, an old teacher from the village, to discuss the situation. Here, the first act of the play comes to an end.

³⁷ Pachtikos mentioned that the conversations between the Greek teachers and curators were always conducted in Turkish. The reason is obvious: the Greeks didn’t know Armenian.

³⁸ In the text of the comedy the Armenian expression “heads of a donkey” is used. The well-known derogatory Turkish expression *eşek kafalı*, also used in the Armenian language, to describe somebody stupid.

³⁹ As Pachtikos explains further in the note, it was the usual way to get a teacher: the community leaders would write to an acquaintance or fellow villager who worked in Istanbul asking them to find them a teacher. Pachtikos believes that the Church’s complete indifference to educational matters was responsible for the unacceptable manner of selecting teachers for Asia Minor schools.

A 19th-CENTURY COMEDY WRITTEN IN ARMENIAN USING THE GREEK ALPHABET

The First Scene of the Second Act takes place in the community office. Gathered there are Ilias, Pavlos, and Vasilakis, who, seeing Pavlos with a frown on his face, asks what is the matter with him, and he tells them that he had a strange dream when he fell asleep after his meal. Around him, he recounts, three former members of the *demogerontia* had gathered, asking why the village teacher had been dismissed and why he had not been replaced. Pavlos remembers that in anger, he swore and shouted at them. He then says he remembers



View of Ortaköy with the Church of Saint Georges
(from *Armenika* fasc. 86)

no more of the dream, and he woke up. He also tells them that his wife, who heard him shouting, fainted from fear, thinking thieves had broken into the house. His companions advised him to rest that it was only a dream, and there was no reason to search for interpretations as only God knows what it means.

At that moment, the sexton Petros enters, announcing that Avraam, absent from the previous meeting, would be arriving at the Office in a short while. He adds that Photis, who was playing backgammon in his café, made the excuse that he had a headache and would not be at the meeting and also did not find Symeon at home to invite him.

The Second Scene begins with Avraam's entrance into the community office, where three Greek teachers arrive: Nestor, Kleon, and Sotirakis. Hence, the conversation switches back to Turkish as the teachers, not locals, do not speak the Armenian language. The community elders gathered there to ask the teachers, one by one through Ilias, what they knew about Alexandros's resignation from his teaching duties and how he would be replaced. They also ask how many children attend the Greek language lessons.

Nestor, the new teacher, who had taken up his post just two weeks before, states that at the moment, there are 7-8 children in the Greek class, but he does not know what will happen in the future. Whether other children will enroll in the new school year. One of the teachers, Sotirakis, reveals how good the previous teacher, Alexandros, was and how well he treated the children, pointing out that he never resorted to the usual corporal punishment inflicted on children. At this point, Vasilakis mutters that it is now clear who removed the rods from the school.

The teachers leave apart from the teacher Kleon, Pavlos' puppet, who, like a public speaker, pompously pronounces that it is a shame that the Community should have to pay 40 liras for a teacher's salary when there are so few pupils in the Greek class and that it is excessive for the village inhabitants to bear such an expense. Referring to the days when he was a teacher in the village, he received an annual salary of 30 liras when he had 100 children in his class, and it's sinful that the teacher who resigned received 40 liras with just twelve pupils in his class. And when the elders enquire if he voiced these

opinions to the previous community leaders, Kleon replies that not only did he tell them, but he also expressed them in an article in the newspaper *Konstantinoupolis*, provoking the anger of the previous *demogerontia* who withheld his pay for fifty days. He ends by saying that, fortunately, they are now at the helm of the Community and will settle the issue of teachers' wages in the best way possible. And he departs, bowing theatrically.

Those remaining in the room continue the discussion in Armenian. Pavlos orders Abraham to examine the register to see if there is some debt owing to the "dog" Alexandros. Indeed, in the Community register, it is noted that there is an outstanding debt owed to Alexandros of 1,050 kuruş. In anger, the *tzorbatzides* of the Community declare that they will not even give four *paras* to the ungrateful 'jackass'.

Later, the teacher Alexandros appears at the community office, requesting a certificate saying that he worked in their village for one year and that he be paid the 1,050 kuruş they owe him. In anger, the administrators attack him, not only verbally but also they move to strike him, forcing the hapless teacher to flee. Pavlos and Ilias talk about the shamelessness of the teacher who dared to ask for the kuruş owed to him. And Avraam asks Vasilakis what was the 'spirtificate' that Alexandros requested, revealing with the way he pronounces 'certificate' that it was the first time he had heard the word.

Ilias orders Vasilakis to write in the community codex their meeting minutes, including the fact that Alexandros's resignation from the position of teacher at the village school had been accepted. Pavlos also adds that it must be written in the *Defter* that the Girls' School must be closed, and the people who want to educate their girls should send them to Istanbul, as the Community has no funds for this purpose.

Finally, Vasilakis reads out the Minutes, which he wrote in Turkish, dated 10th July 1891. He noted that the *kodjabashis* accepted the teacher's resignation and had decided not to give him the 1,050 kuruş they owed him. After reading the Minutes, the *kodjabashis* sign it, some with a cross, others with the imprint of their little finger. The only person to sign properly is Vasilakis. Avraam refuses to sign, infuriating Pavlos.

In the 5th Scene, Aristovoulos appears to ask Ilias, as president of the village Committee, if what he heard being said in the village café about the Greek teacher being dismissed is true. Ilias is terribly embarrassed, but Pavlos indignantly replies that it is indeed true. Ilias has no say in the matter as the Committee now makes the decisions and that in a mountain village like theirs, they have no need for a Greek teacher. The amount of his salary could well be allocated to church decoration.

Aristovoulos finds Pavlos' arguments unacceptable. And he responds with a series of arguments, such as even if they had no teachers in the village in the past, it doesn't mean they should not have any now. For instance, if twenty-thirty years ago in coffee shops there were no chairs, tables, mirrors, and marble, it doesn't mean that there can't be today. If a few years ago, they traveled with animals to Istanbul for six or seven days, nowadays, the railway exists. So, should they continue to travel to Istanbul with horses and donkeys? Besides, he adds, why did they replace their traditional costumes with new ones? Simply because the world is moving forward, they must keep up with progress. And he brings his case to a close with the Greek proverb: *Ἀνθρωπος ἀγράμματος ξύλον ἀπελέκητον* [An illiterate person is like an uncarved piece of wood].

In the 6th Scene, Asklipiadis appears at the community office and asks what is going on, angrily insisting on knowing why they attacked the poor teacher Alexandros when all he did was ask for what was owed. Undaunted, the boorish Pavlos declares that he wouldn't even give five paras to that "son of keratas (rogue)".

In the next Scene, Nikephoros, the 'exarchos' (representative of the Metropolitan), rushes into the Office and says that a large crowd with sticks in their hands came to his home and angrily announced that the elders had decided, without asking anyone, to close the school. And if today they have decided to close the Boys' school, tomorrow they will close the Girls' school. They said: "Aren't we Horoms (Greeks)?⁴⁰ Aren't we Christians? Where can our children learn Greek? In the past, we had no school; we didn't know the Greek language. So will our children remain like us?" So, they asked Nikephoros, as representative (*Vekil*) of the Metropolitan, to go and tell these illiterate *kodjabashis* that unless they handed over the administration of the Community to Nikephoros, blood would be shed, as they were determined to go to extremes.

Pavlos didn't believe the words of Nikephoros, thinking that it was all a lie made up to scare him and his colleagues. Meanwhile, Nikephoros demands their answer to pass it on to the waiting people, but seeing that no response is received, he decides to leave with Asklipiadis, saying, "Let's go. The die is cast" (Ερρήφθει ὁ κύβος).

Ilias, Avraam, and Vasilakis are afraid of the turn things have taken, but Pavlos reassures them, saying that he is going to close the Girls' school. However, before they could act, the crowd of villagers rushed in, waving sticks and rods and advancing menacingly towards the *kodjabashis*.

In the comedy's next and final Scene, the villagers thrash the elders and Pavlos in particular, throwing the *kodjabashis* out of the community office. Only the secretary Vasilakis, who has managed to hide under the table, escapes. Terrified, he only comes out when the crowd retreats and, thanking God for saving him, decides to withdraw as he does not have the required qualifications for the Office. He recalls a Greek proverb from when he was a pupil "The Voice of people – the anger of God". The sententious comedy comes to an end with a repetition of the proverb in Turkish with Greek characters (Εχαλινίν σετασή αλλαχίν ορκεσί). It acts as a moral, like in Aesop's fables.⁴¹

⁴⁰ The Armenian word 'Horom' (Հորոմ) initially means 'Roman', being the equivalent of Ρωμαῖος. Later, the 'Horom' became the equivalent of 'Byzantine' and by extension, 'Orthodox', showing the confessional identity, while for the 'Greek' the ethnonym 'Huyn' (Հյւն) was mostly used. This was one of the reasons for confusing the ethnic origin and religious identity of the Orthodox (Chalcedonian) Armenians or so-called Hay Horoms, as is shown in the comprehensive investigation of Gevorg Kazaryan, see note 10.

⁴¹ Finally, it is worth mentioning that in his preface, Georgios Pachtikos notes that he intended to also publish his comedy in Greek. However, until now, no Greek version has been found, and we must assume that he most likely didn't go ahead with his plan.

In Conclusion

In his theatrical play, characterized as comedy, Pachtikos describes, using as an example his homeland Ortaköy, the grim, the tragic reality prevailing in the Christian communities of the Ottoman Empire in the late 19th century. Firstly, the fact that, in most cases, the community leaders were uneducated people, who believed educating children to be an unnecessary luxury, is denounced. They preferred to send them to work on the land, be apprenticed to artisans, or become minions in the jobs of their compatriots or relatives who had settled in large cities in the Empire. Such community leaders preferred a return to the old-fashioned custom of children being taught to read by the village priest, who used the Psalter and the Octoechos for this purpose.

Holding such derogatory views on education, the village headmen created problems in paying the wages of teachers who came from afar to teach in schools in the Asia Minor communities and who faced survival issues. Their wages were considered an excessive expense, even in cases where community finances permitted the payment of their small salary. Usually, of course it was the expatriate countrymen who collectively or independently financially supported education in their homeland. Many of them had undertaken the rebuilding or repairing schools, making sure that books and writing materials were sent to students, and finding and paying male and female teachers.

The codices from Asia Minor communities, deposited at the General State Archives (GAK, Athens) after the Population Exchange, vividly describe how the teachers in Greek schools suffered concerning their wages.⁴² Countless protests were lodged about the delay in their wages, which are recorded in the community codices. Most of the time, like the teacher Alexandros in Pachtikos' comedy, they were forced to resign and seek work with better pay elsewhere and, above all, where they and their profession would be treated decently.

The lamentable old-fashioned conditions prevailing in education in villages of the Ottoman Empire were not only restricted to the Greek communities. Precisely the same conditions are described by Ali

⁴² For example, in 1855, the minutes of the session of the Kermira (Germir) community, held in the presence of the Metropolitan of Caesarea Paisios (1777 or 1780-1871), record the decision made by the community that the two churches in the village (Theotokos and Agioi Theodoroi) would finance the village school yearly with the amount of 5,000 kuruş (see GAK, 251, IV, 281). The same minutes state that no provision had been made for the school, which had been established in 1817. Due to the indifference of the residents, it was non-functional as the teachers, who were hired from time to time, were paid very low wages and, after a short time, left their positions. In addition children from poor families could not attend the lessons as they could not afford the fees. This decision, formalized by the issue of a *sigillum* by Paisios, improved the state of education in Kermira as, during the following years, a Preschool, a Greek school, and a Girls' School were established. It later fell into decline yet again as the emigration of village inhabitants deprived the community of revenue. At the end of the 19th century, the Greek school and the Girls' School were forced to close down, as recounted by Maria Porloglou in 1955 in her interview to the CAMS associate Hara Lioudaki (14.5.1955).

Rıza in his novel *Bir Hocanın Hatıra Defterinden*.⁴³ In this work, a young Turkish teacher faces the lack of concern of those responsible for children's education and the criminal indifference they showed to the teachers' pleas for a rudimentary repair of the dilapidated school where the students' lives were in danger. In addition, this young teacher who started teaching full of enthusiasm faces the unreasonable and humiliating demands of the village elders, who more or less asked him to make their coffee and acted as a barber, and he had to patiently endure unacceptable behaviour towards a teacher. The letter he sent to the Education Committee is memorable; on resigning, he donates his small wage to the repair of the school.

*

We believe that the introduction of Greek education into Orthodox communities outside the Greek Kingdom from the mid-19th century onwards has been examined unilaterally. The study on this subject has been restricted almost exclusively to the attempts made by the Greek state and affiliated associations to propagate the Greek language and education to Greek-speaking and non-Greek-speaking "brothers". In other words, the studies have concentrated mainly on showing that the propagation of the Greek language and education was the necessary groundwork for the ideological cohesion of the omnipresent "Unredeemed" in order to attempt the recreation of a state entity, which would constitute the homeland of all Rum Orthodox people in Mediterranean and Balkan lands. They could be Hellenized in terms of their cultural orientation. This was the irredentist vision of the Greek nationalism, the *Megali Idea* (Great Idea).

However various aspects of the issue are still to be examined, revolving around a series of key topics which are related to the acceptance of Greek education by the various communities, even by the non-Greek-speaking communities, mainly Turkish and Armenian-speaking, to restrict ourselves to the area of Asia Minor. It would be necessary to collect and study the existing local testimonies regarding, for example, the teaching of ancient Greek imposed by the programme of the Greek-speaking teacher on children who were completely unfamiliar with colloquial Greek.

In addition, the concept of Greekness had been constructed on the three-thousand-year consistent existence of Hellenism and on the prospect of extending the Greek state to the historical geographical regions of erstwhile Hellenism. Yet neither of the two axes corresponded to the way in which the Rum Orthodox experienced their identity in inland Asia Minor. For them, their identity was defined by their community and religion. Certainly, education had to be handled in a particular way in non-Greek-speaking rural communities.

⁴³ See the story "Bir Hocanın Hatıra Defterinden" from the collection *Bir Muhacir Öğretmenin Hikâyeleri* by Ali Rıza, text discovered and transcribed from Ottoman Turkish to Modern Turkish Language by Selahattin Bayram. The story "Bir Hocanın Hatıra Defterinden" was included in *Anlatıların Satır Aralarında Mübadele Tarihi/ Η Ανταλλαγή των πληθυσμών ανάμεσα από τις γραμμές των κειμένων*, (ed.) Evangelia Balta, İstanbul, Literatür, 2023: 45-49 (Bilingual edition in Greek and in Turkish).

It would also be worth looking into how the imported Greek education was financially supported in the various communities in inland Asia Minor and then categorizing the cases. And research should certainly be conducted that will reveal the results of this late attempt to enlighten *Exo Hellenism* by the Greek state, aimed at constructing identities, that is the idea of Greekness in terms of *paideia* (Greek education).

These and many other relevant issues remain as research desiderata, each individual case requiring comments. The “comedy” by Georgios Pachtikos reminded us of the still unexplored issues of an ideological-political initiative that was undertaken by the Greek State in the 19th century with the creation of Greek schools in Asia Minor communities. It revealed aspects that still remain invisible even to the lens of national historiography.

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