ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΜΕΙΖΟΝΟΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΜΟΥ

Authoring : *Salvanou Aimilia* , *Spiropoulou Vaso*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*

For citation : *Salvanou Aimilia , Spiropoulou Vaso , "Academy of Cydoniae, Ayvalık", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=7136>

Summary :

One of the foremost educational centres of the Greek-Orthodox of Asia Minor, an intellectual beacon whose radiance surpassed its strict geographical confines. Some of the most eminent scholars of the time, promoters of the intellectual movement of the Modern Greek Enlightenment, taught there.

Date

1800-1821, 1856-1922

Geographical Location

Cydoniae (Ayvalık)

---

1. Introduction

The Academy of Cydoniae in Ayvalık (Cydoniae) was one of the most significant educational centres of the Greek-speaking areas in Asia Minor. Shortly after its foundation in 1800 its fame started spreading to all the nearby communities and it became a centre of learning for the youth of the surrounding areas, even attracting students from places in Greece. Renowned intellectuals of the time taught in the school, among which Veniamin Lesvios, Theophilos Kairis, Neophytos Symaios, Frantzeskos, Efstratios Petrou, Neophytos Phasoularis a.o., while among its students were Samuil Kyprios, Grigorios Roidis, Theoklitos Pharmakidis, Grigorios Gennadios, Panagis Rodios and Typaldos.

The academy's pioneering outlook derived from the teaching of the ideas of the Greek Enlightenment by important exponents of the movement like Veniamin Lesvios and Theophilos Kairis, but also from the introduction of other novelties like the monitorial system and the establishment of the Greek printing press. It was precisely its ground-breaking nature that often caused intensely hostile reactions by the representatives of the counter-Enlightenment, who disturbed the regular operation of the school. Indicative of the school's importance was the multiplicity of the names by which it was referred to. The names Academy (Akadimia) and School of Cydoniae have been preserved, as well as Gymnasion, Ellinomouseion and Veniamin's School.

2. Foundation of the Academy

The Academy was founded in 1800 following an initiative of Veniamin Lesvios [1] who had returned from Western Europe where he had been studying under a scholarship awarded by the community of Ayvalık. The decision for its establishment had been taken two years earlier, in 1798, when the intra-communal disputes that had broken out between the "aristocratic" and the bourgeois and mercantile social strata of the city had abated, following the death of Ioannis Oikonomos. The election of two progressive commissioners in the precinct of the "aristocrats", of K. Chatzi Diamantis, uncle of Grigorios Saraphis, and of Chatzi Paraskevas Saltellis, allowed the normalization of community affairs and gave impetus for the satisfaction of the community's educational needs. The Academy was established with the aim of providing educated teachers for the primary schools of the Ayvalık community.

Immediately after the decision to create this school was taken, efforts were made to find a plot for the construction of a suitable building. The plot was donated by Chatzi Athanasios Chatzigeorgiou and Chatzi Athanasios Chatzikambouris; this was situated on the coastal part of the city, in the Ano Synoikia (Upper Quarter), in the parish of Agios Dimitrios. The responsibility for the completion of this undertaking was assumed by Chatzi Paraskevas Saltellis and Chatzi Athanasios Chatzigeorgiou; they secured the necessary resources using money collected through the regular taxation, the port dues, donations and grants.[2] The construction of the new building lasted three years. When completed, the building was a two-storey oblong square structure, measuring 140x90 ft, at the middle of which lay a garden surrounded by a portico. The ground floor contained chambers, the kitchen and storage rooms and the first floor featured the students' quarters, the classrooms, the library and the natural sciences laboratory.

3. The manifestation of Enlightenment in the Academy of Cydoniae: Veniamin Lesvios

Authoring : *Salvanou Aimilia* , *Spiropoulou Vaso*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
For citation : *Salvanou Aimilia , Spiropoulou Vaso , "Academy of Cydoniae, Ayvalık", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=7136>

In the Academy, Veniamin Lesvios taught physics, mathematics, metaphysics and ethics, while Grigorios Saraphis taught Greek. The fame of the school had already spread to nearby communities.

Following the erection of its new building, the Academy of Cydoniae attracted students from all the nearby areas, especially Smyrna and Chios. The groundbreaking teachings of Veniamin Lesvios, who also took over the running of the Academy, proved decisive for the fame of the school. His prestige was strengthened by the successive invitations he received to teach in various schools of the Aegean (in Chios, Patmos and elsewhere), invitations which he had to turn down motivated by a deep feeling of indebtedness towards the Ayvalık community that had sponsored his studies; in the case of Chios, in particular, he was discouraged by the removal of his friend Dorotheos Proios from the School of Chios, on account of the innovative nature of this teaching.

Having embraced the ideas of the Enlightenment after his studies in Europe and being a close friend of Adamantios Korais he taught using experiments, he introduced the monitorial teaching system and the employing of teaching aids -instruments and maps-, and for the first time he gave pride of place to natural philosophy (physics and mathematics) in the Academy's curriculum, thereby ousting the traditional scholasticism. Thanks to his persistent efforts a rich library was put together, the richest of Asia Minor; it contained books from donations and volumes ordered from abroad as well as books given by the Didot publishing house of France. The creation and operation of the school's physical sciences laboratory was also an accomplishment of the tenacious Veniamin: it was equipped with prisms, reflectors, telescopes, instruments and maps.

As a result of all the above, Veniamin was highly esteemed as a teacher and director of the school and his students showed him the outmost respect. There is extensive documentary evidence testifying to the fact that he was viewed as an authority by his students, many of which were inspired by him, taking him as an example to live by.

The influence of the Enlightenment ideas Veniamin introduced in the school lingered long after he had stopped teaching there. His teaching was continued by his worthy successor, Theophilos Kairis, a former student of his, so that the ideas of the Enlightenment continued to find fertile ground in the school even after his resignation in 1812.

4. Connection with the ancient Greek past, theatrical performances, creation of the printing press

In 1816, the school's students decided to stop conversing in modern Greek and chose to communicate in the ancient Greek language, obviously wishing to create stronger bonds with the classic past and to underline the continuity of Ancient Greek civilisation.[3] This decision was accompanied by the practice of replacing the students' given names with ancient Greek ones, which was quite common in the intellectual centres of the Greek-speaking communities of Asia Minor.[4] In the same context the students were enthusiastically staging theatrical performances based on ancient Greek tragedies in the school's halls, sometimes in secret, for the Ottoman administration might consider these activities as revolutionary.

The creation of the Greek printing press in Ayvalik by Konstantinos Tombras should be seen in the same context. Tombras learnt the art of typography in the printing press of Firmin Didot in Paris and returned to Ayvalık bringing with him printing equipment, Greek typefaces and the know-how for establishing a printing press. In 1819, on the encouragement of Saraphis and the financial support of the sons of Chatzi Paraskevas Saltellis, he founded the printing press in Ayvalık attached to the Academy. At first this printing press operated as a private business, but soon it came under the control of the Academy, where it remained until its closing in 1821. The printing press of Tombras produced among else the two volumes of Saraphis' *Elliniki Grammatiki* (Greek Grammar) and the translation of J. N. Bouilly's work *Conceils à ma fille* (Advice to my Daughter; Greek title: *Symvoulai pros tin thygatera mou*).

Genereally, the school's progressive outlook was supported by the community's middle social groups, as well as by Adamantios Korais, Dorotheos Proios, the metropolitan of Ephesus Dionysios Kalliarchis, D. Mourouzis, Filippidis a.o. There were some reactions by those who opposed the innovative ideas of the Enlightenment and by some who had personal reasons to undercut the influence Veniamin's personality exerted.

Authoring : *Salvanou Aimilia* , *Spiropoulou Vaso*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*

For citation : *Salvanou Aimilia , Spiropoulou Vaso , "Academy of Cydoniae, Ayvalık", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=7136>

5. Attempts to check the movement of Enlightenment and reactions against Veniamin Lesvios

The smooth operation of the school was obstructed by the strengthened movement of counter-Enlightenment which was incited by the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Kollyvades; their main adherent in this area was Athanasios Parios, a conservative monk and teacher in Chios. These reactions targeted Veniamin Lesvios and his innovative teachings.[5] In this context, Athanasios Parios printed in 1802 a pamphlet entitled *Response to the irrational zeal of the philosophers returning from Europe*.

In his attempt to displace Veniamin, motivated partly by a desire to restore the School of Chios to its former glory, Parios found allies among the ‘aristocrats’ of Ayvalık, who generally contended with the mercantile groups of the city in an endeavour to preserve their privileges, and Grigorios Saraphis, who was upset due to the relegation of his classes and had power in the ephoreia thanks to his uncle, Chatzi Diamantis. Thus in 1803, the ephoria sent Theophilos Kairis in Europe for studies, so that upon his return he might replace Lesvios.

6. Lesvios' conviction and Dionysios Kalliarchis' intervention

In 1802, the ascetic Iakovos of Thera arrived in Ayvalık, a representative of the Kollyvades and agent of Parios. Having managed to secure some of Veniamin’s notebooks which contained notes for his courses, in Easter of 1803, he accused him that in his speech on love Beniamin taught carnal love. Finding no support in Ayvalık, however, he turned to Chios. Together with Parios, they formulated there the charge against Veniamin accusing him of teaching a theory concerning the movement of the earth that was incompatible with the Holy Scriptures. Then Iakovos travelled to Constantinople and registered this charge with the Patriarchate. In Constantinople it was demanded that Veniamin be excommunicated, and replaced by Saraphis; furthermore it was asked that the Academy be harmonized in terms of its orientation with the School of Chios. The Patriarchate sent Iakovos to Ayvalık again in 1803, this time equipped with a letter from the Synod that was to be read in all the churches. In this letter Veniamin was publicly chastised and called upon to denounce his teachings; he was urged to teach henceforth in accordance with the system of Parios. The letter also announced Veniamin’s replacement by Grigorios Saraphis. Veniamin found a supporter in the metropolitan of Ephesus, Dionysios Kalliarchis,[6]who decided to take matters into his hands and resolve the issue brushing the Patriarchate’s involvement aside. In October 1803, approximately a month after the decision of the Synod, he requested of Veniamin to have his notebooks sent to him. Veniamin promptly accepted, expressing at the same time his grievance for having been sentenced without having had the chance to answer to the charges.

Dionysios studied the notebooks and refuted the charges himself. The mercantile groups of Ayvalık also supported the teachings of Lesvios in the Academy, for they recognised the positive role of education, and were unwilling to submit to interventions in educational matters. Thus, they reacted to the decisions of the Synod, sending letters to Dionysios, other members of the council and to certain Phanariots. Central in this move appears to have been Chatzi Paraskevas Saltellis, ephor of the school and known for his influence and interest in the school’s affairs. However, notwithstanding the support he received, Veniamin resigned in 1812 claiming his ill health did not allow him to remain in his post, and he was replaced by Theophilos Kairis who returned from abroad where he was studying.

7. The crisis of 1818-1820

The crisis that broke out around Veniamin Lesvios was the most important in the history of the Academy. It was not to be the last. Another crisis disturbed the operation of the school in 1818-1820, when due to a dispute between the ephors and the teachers (which was more due to political quarrels inside the community) the teachers were under resignation. In this context we should consider the invitation made to Grigorios Saraphis to become the director of the Patriarchal Academy of Constantinople and become a teacher of theology. Saraphis turned down this invitation only after receiving letters from the citizens pleading him not to accept.

(Aimilia Salvanou)

8. The Academy in the 19th - 20th century

Authoring : *Salvanou Aimilia* , *Spiropoulou Vaso*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*

For citation : *Salvanou Aimilia , Spiropoulou Vaso , "Academy of Cydoniae, Ayvalık", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=7136>

The first and most important period of operation of the Academy concluded in 1821, after the destruction of Ayvalık by the Ottomans, in the context of the hostilities and the reprisals that followed the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence. After the return of the inhabitants to Ayvalık, the school was re-founded and operated from time to time, but it never regained its former radiance.

After two unsuccessful efforts to re-establish the Academy in its full operation, the building of the New School was constructed in the same place in 1856. The construction was financed by Dimitrios Chatziathanasios, whose family had been closely connected with the Academy in the past. Until 1908 the building was being completed with extra classrooms, in order to provide for the needs of the students, whose number was steadily rising. In the same year a weather station was established; the school comprised also a natural sciences laboratory and a library. Since a great part of the library was consisting of donations by Ambrose Didot (1885), it was named "Didoteios library", the name underlined the "traditional" bond between the well-known printing house of Paris and the main educational institution of Ayvalık. In 1905 the Gymnasion acquired a school training ground opposite the main building, as well as a botanical garden, suitable for the teaching of the agricultural subjects introduced by Georgios Sakkaris.

The administration of the schools was within the competence of the ephoreia of Ayvalık. However, the ephoreia was blamed for the unsuccesful efforts to bring the Academy back to its full operation. Therefore, in 1879 the community entrusted the Charitable Society (Agathoergos Adelfotis) of Ayvalık with the administration of the city's schools.[7] Ten years later, the Society laid back its mandate to the dimogerontia. Since then, the latter chose the members of the ephoreia. These ten years were very productive for the school; in 1884 it was recognized by the Greek state as equal in rank with the Greek secondary schools. The next years were a period of prosperity for the school in regard to its finances and to the development of its curriculum.

New subjects that were added, as "European" music (a fact that led to the foundation of two musical associations in Ayvalık, "Arion" and "Orpheus"), pedagogy (for the last classes), commercial accounting (a little after 1900, a fact connected with the construction of port facilities and the boosting of trade), hygiene, statistics (during Sakkaris' administration), and agriculture.[8]

(Vasiliki Spyropoulou)

---

1. Not all historians of the Academy accept it as granted that Veniamin was the inspiration for and founder of the school. Historians of Ayvalık and oral testimonies from the refugees of 1922 designate Grıgorios Saraphis as the founder of the school. According to Anna Panagiotarea, this insistence can only be interpreted in connection with the wish of the Ayvaliots to establish a compatriot of theirs as the inspirer of the Academy. Nor Saraphis' age, who at the time of the school's foundation would have been 20 years old, or his intellectual import (as compared to that of Veniamin of Lesvos) can support such a view, see Παναγιωταρέα, Α., *Οταν οι αστοί έγιναν πρόσφυγες* (Thessaloniki 1994) pp. 44-45.

2. According to Sakkaris, the funds were secured from: leftovers from the funds provided for the construction of port facilities, which amounted to 20,000 kuruş, b) voluntary contributions in the form of nominal bills worth 1,000 kuruş each, the debtors of which paid only the yearly interest of 10%, c) the food allowance and the tuition fees of the wealthy students and d) donations. Σακκάρης, Γ., *Ιστορία των Κυδωνιών* (Athens 1920) p. 40.

3. Firmin Didot mentions that this decision of the Academy's students was taken on his incitement, see Σολδάτος, Χ., *Η εκπαιδευτική και πνευματική κίνηση του ελληνισμού της Μ. Ασίας (1800- 1922)*, vol. 1 (Athens 1989) p. 105. Kitromilides characterizes this move as "patriotic classicism", see Κιτρομηλίδης, Π., *Νεοελληνικός Διαφωτισμός* (Athens 1999) p. 449.

4. See Πετροπούλου, Ι., "Μετονομασίες, εξαρχαϊσμός, εθνική ένταξη: Μικρά Ασία (19ος αιώνας)», *Σύγχρονα Θέματα*, 2nd period, issue 64 (Dec. 1997), pp. 93-96, and Πετροπούλου, Ι., "Μετονομασίες, εξαρχαϊσμός, εθνική ένταξη: Μικρά Ασία (19ος αιώνας)", *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών* 12 (1997-1998) pp. 169-188.

5. The reaction of Athanasios Parios, director of the School of Chios, and his attempt to control the Academy, was largely a result of his close

Authoring : *Salvanou Aimilia* , *Spiropoulou Vaso*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*

For citation : *Salvanou Aimilia , Spiropoulou Vaso , "Academy of Cydoniae, Ayvalık", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=7136>

relations with the "Scholi tis Panagias ton Orphanon" (School of the Virgin Mary of the Orphans); most of that school's teachers had been students of his. Veniamin Lesvios had studied in that school too, before travelling abroad to receive higher education in 1790-1796.

6. Dionysios Kalliarchis was the one who moved the charges against Veniamin, having been the recipient of the allegations as the metropolitan of Ephesus, in the purview of which Cydoniae belonged. He had recently been elected to the metropolitan throne and, as he was uninformed on the person of Veniamin, he supported the charges, which he later helped refute. See Αγγέλου, Α., *Των Φώτων: Όψεις του Νεοελληνικού Διαφωτισμού* (Athens 1988) p. 268.

7. Σακκάρης, Γ., *Ιστορία των Κυδωνιών*, Athens 1920, p. 180.

8. Καραμπλιάς, Ι., *Ιστορία των Κυδωνιών. Από της ιδρύσεώς των μέχρι της αποκαταστάσεως των προσφύγων εις το ελεύθερον ελληνικόν κράτος*, vol. 2, Athens 1950, pp. 79-80.

Bibliography :

- **Καραμπλιάς Ι.**, *Ιστορία των Κυδωνιών. Από της ιδρύσεώς των μέχρι της αποκαταστάσεως των προσφύγων εις το ελεύθερον ελληνικόν κράτος, τόμ. 1*, Αθήναι 1949-1950
- **Καραμπλιάς Ι.**, *Ιστορία των Κυδωνιών Από της ιδρύσεώς των μέχρι της αποκαταστάσεως των προσφύγων εις το ελεύθερον ελληνικόν κράτος, τόμ. 2*, Αθήνα 1950
- **Σακκάρης Γ.**, *Ιστορία των Κυδωνιών*, Αθήναι 1920
- **Παναγιωταρέα Ά.**, *Όταν οι αστοί έγιναν πρόσφυγες*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1994
- **Αγγέλου Α.**, *Των Φώτων. Όψεις του Νεοελληνικού Διαφωτισμού*, Αθήνα 1988
- **Δημαράς Κ.Θ.**, *Νεοελληνικός Διαφωτισμός*, Αθήνα 1977
- **Κιτρομηλίδης Π.**, *Νεοελληνικός Διαφωτισμός. Οι πολιτικές και κοινωνικές ιδέες*, Αθήνα 1999
- **Κονδύλης Π.**, *Ο Νεοελληνικός Διαφωτισμός και οι φιλοσοφικές ιδέες*, Αθήνα 1998
- **Πετροπούλου Ι.**, "Μετονομασίες, εξαρχαϊσμός, εθνική ένταξη: Μικρά Ασία (19ος αιώνας)", *Σύγχρονα Θέματα*, 64 , Δεκ. 1997, 93-96
- **Πετροπούλου Ι.**, "Μετονομασίες, εξαρχαϊσμός, εθνική ένταξη: Μικρά Ασία (19ος αιώνας)", *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών*, 12, 1997-1998, 169-188

Glossary :

board of schools

The board of schools (ephoreia) consisted of members either elected by the community or nominated by a commission. They were authorized to supervise the proper functioning of the educational institutions.

dimogerontia

Communal authority consisting of the elected community officials, known as *archontes* (potentates), *proestoi* (notables), *epitropoi* (wardens), *dimogerontes* or simply *gerontes* (elders).

Kollyvades

Authoring : *Salvanou Aimilia* , *Spiropoulou Vaso*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*

For citation : *Salvanou Aimilia , Spiropoulou Vaso , "Academy of Cydoniae, Ayvalık", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=7136>

As Kollyvades are known the adherents of a movement that was spread among the monks of the Holy Mountain from the mid-18th century. Their name derives from the Greek word *kollyva*, a plate made of boiled barley wheat grains mixed with raisins, nuts and other fruits that is offered during memorial services. The Kollyvades insisted that memorial services should not be performed on Sundays and that Christians had to take Communion frequently. These beliefs, as well as the vehemence with which they were supported, provoked a bitter conflict that shook the Orthodox Church until the early 19th century. The Kollyvades, among whose leaders were important figures as Makarios Notaras, Athanasios Parios and Nikodimos Agioreitis, were against anything that could be perceived as innovation. However, they did not refrain from adopting "modern" attitudes in the propagation of their ideas, as the use of the printed word. From their ranks came the fiercest enemies of Greek Enlightenment.

monitorial system

Teaching method developed by Joseph Lancaster, under which the older students (in Greek: "protoscholoi") taught the smaller children some skill or activity.

Quotations

Resolution of the Academy's students on the use of Ancient Greek in everyday conversation

Επί καθηγεμόνων Θεοφίλου, Γρηγορίου τε και Ευστρατίου, των εν τω κατά τας Κυδωνίας Ελληνομουσείω σχολαρχούντων, Ελαφηβολιώνος ογδόη απιόντος, οι υπογεγραμμένοι είπομεν,
Επειδή την μεν πατρώαν αναλαβέσθαι φωνήν, την δε χύδην και αγοραίαν, ως πάντη ανοίκειον ημίν τοις τω Ελλήνων εκείνων απογόνοις παντί τω θυμώ απώσασθαι εφιέμεθα, δεδόχθαι πάσιν ημίν νόμον εισενεγκείν τόνδε, ωσθ' ηνίκ' αν συνώμεν ελληνιστί πάντας ημάς συνδιαλέγεσθαι καταναγκάζειν.
ΝΟΜΟΣ
Επιμελείσθαι έκαστον ημών ελληνιστί όσον οίον τε συνδιαλέγεσθαι ος δ' αν μη εθέλη τούτο, σελίδα Ομηρικήν ενώπιον ημών ιστάμενος απαγγέλλειν αποτισάτω τίμημα.
Οι ταύτα ψηφισάμενοι
Αγγελής-Αλκιβιάδης
Διδότ-Ανάχαρσις
Ιωαννίκιος-Αριστείδης
Τζάνος-Επαμεινώνδας
Δημήτριος-Θεμιστοκλής
Θεοφάνης-Κλεάνθης
Δημήτριος-Μιλτιάδης
Βασίλειος-Αγησίλαος κ.λπ.

Σάκκαρης, Γ., *Ιστορία των Κυδωνιών* (Athens 1920) pp. 66-67.

Chronological Table

1800: Foundation of the Academy of Cydoniae in Ayvalık.

1803-1812: The Academy goes through a crisis on account of the teachings of Veniamin of Lesvos.

1812: Veniamin resigns and is replaced by Theophilos Kairis.

1816: A decision is taken to use the ancient Greek language in the Academy. The school's students archaize their names.

1819: A printing press is established in Ayvalık, attached to the Academy.

1818-1820: A new crisis engulfs the Academy due to a dispute between ephors and teachers.

1821: Ayvalık is destroyed and the first phase of the Academy's operation comes to an end.

Authoring : *Salvanou Aimilia* , *Spiropoulou Vaso*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
For citation : *Salvanou Aimilia , Spiropoulou Vaso , "Academy of Cydoniae, Ayvalık", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=7136>

1856: The Academy of Cydoniae is re-established in full operation.

1879: The "Charitable Society" of Ayvalık takes over the administration of schools.

1884: The Academy is recognised as equal to the Greek secondary schools by the Greek State.