



UTS
ePRESS

Cosmopolitan
Civil Societies: An
Interdisciplinary
Journal

Vol. 13, No. 3
2021



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Citation: Barka, P. 2021. Voskopoja and Ioannina, Two Advanced Centers of the European Enlightenment in the Ottoman West. *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 13:3, 68–80. <https://doi.org/10.5130/ccs.v13.i3.7899>

ISSN 1837-5391 | Published by UTS ePRESS | <https://epress.lib.uts.edu.au/journals/index.php/mcs>

ARTICLE (REFEREED)

Voskopoja and Ioannina, Two Advanced Centers of the European Enlightenment in the Ottoman West

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5130/ccs.v13.i3.7899>

Article History: Received 16/09/2021; Revised 20/12/2021; Accepted 11/02/2022; Published 23/03/2022

Abstract

This paper considers the impact of Enlightenment ideals before and during the Movement of the New Greek National Ideology during the 17th to 19th centuries. It is about Ioannina and Voskopoja, located today respectively in northwestern Greece and in southeastern Albania. In both centers, education was central to the spread of Western Enlightenment values, and attempts to communicate across the languages of the region were the main key. Voskopoja is a typical case of the flourishing of Enlightenment values in the service of economic and cultural development. With its defining basis of Hellenic culture, and its emphasis on secular knowledge, the purpose of education was 'enlightening' the hearts and minds of the Balkan peoples, seen as the only way to overthrow the Ottoman Empire. The ideological platform promoted in Ioannina, and on behalf of Greek nationalism, served as the basis for the platform of the Albanian national ideology.

Keywords

Enlightenment; Ottoman West; National Ideology; Greece; Albania

Introduction

The objective of the article focuses on tracing the origin, cultivation, nature and role of the Enlightenment in the 17th to 19th centuries in two peripheral centers in the Ottoman Empire, known today as Voskopoja and Ioannina and located respectively in Albania and Greece. The interest is related to the fact that despite their peripheral position, their Enlightenment ideas, although spontaneous, precede the European Enlightenment developments of the 18th century, particularly in Ioannina. Consequently, they played a direct role in the inspiring ideological developments of the Greek revolution of 1821, which marked the beginning of the end of the Ottoman Empire in its European part and paved the way for the formation of nation-states in this part of Europe. Geographically, they do not have a great distance between them, but in the Enlightenment ideological developments, in addition to the common aspects, they have essential distinguishing features. These distinguishing features are determined by internal developments and the relations that each center establishes with the Enlightenment movement at the national level, with the peoples in the region and with the Enlightenment ideas in Europe.

The Enlightenment is known to be one of the most important ideological, spiritual, cultural and political movements in European and world history, which reached its systematic maturity in the 18th century. It was identified as the weapon of the new social order against the system of medieval absolutism led by the clergy and the feudal aristocracy. During the Enlightenment, freedom and the universal rights of the individual were placed on a pedestal, changing the individual's relationship with the homeland; the individual assumed direct responsibilities to the homeland, as well as anticipating the need to fulfill rights. The ideologues of this movement found the model for this revolutionary affirmative construct of the European society of the time in the realities of the civilization of Ancient Greece. The Enlightenment movement in Europe operated in a society, under the pressure of medieval obscurantism, but not under occupier rule as was the case for the peoples of the Balkans.

From this perspective, the Enlightenment of Western Europe in the Balkans was significantly affected by the need to cultivate a national ideology capable of leading liberation movements and the creation of nation-states. Its basic principle was the inspiration of the sense of liberation that arose from the acknowledgement of being confronted by the invader, that is, the Ottoman Empire. In order to achieve the supremacy of the 'we' over the 'foreigner-invader', the awakening of national consciousness, which presupposed the enlightenment of the mind and reason, according to Enlightenment principles, was necessary. Depending on this necessity, but more complementarily, there was a need for better self-knowledge, in terms of history and in relation to other peoples, especially the West. In the function of national selfishness, there was a need to find an origin and ethnogenesis as ancient and enlightened as possible, demonstrating that the peoples of the time were its worthy descendants. Thus, a romantic approach to history was needed, treated in the real-humanist plan and detached from the biblical past. This means that the ideology of the national movements in these places, each according to the concrete conditions, had to intertwine in a single line, the Enlightenment with the Romanticism, two completely opposing and exclusionary currents. Greece manifested a primary role in the well-prepared terrain in Ioannina and Voskopoja. These two centers, especially Ioannina, demonstrated the value and the particular form that the Enlightenment took in these contexts.

The values of the ideas and the Enlightenment movement in these two centers take on greater importance as their apparent flourishing took place under the roof of the Ottoman Empire, even though they were inspired and supported by homogeneous factors in other European countries. There was widespread support for the ideas in the wider civic environment. This was due to the popular tradition of embracing everything new and progressive that in fact ensured that the spirit of ancient Greek culture was kept alive. But it was also due to the active support of Enlightenment ideas provided by the Orthodox clergy in the province of Epirus, to which, at the time, both towns belonged.

At the same time, together with practical contributions for the birth of the Greek national state, the Enlightenment ideology in these two centers would be later adopted by the ideologists for the Albanian national renaissance. This happened despite the fact that Albanian nationalism would see its affirmation not so much in the confrontation with the occupier, as other Balkan countries, but with its Christian neighbors, under the claim of inheriting the territories of the Ottoman Empire in these regions.

Epirus, Ioannina and Voskopoja

The Enlightenment as an idea and as an ideology can be traced to Epirus in two ways: in that approach to uninterrupted communication with the ancient Greek civilization, which constitutes one of the pillars of the European Enlightenment, and in that approach to connections with European Enlightenment ideas. It is understood that both of these ways must be seen in interaction and unity.

Epirus preserved, until the last period of the Ottoman Empire, the tradition of communicating with the culture of ancient Greece. Even when this communication was not ascertained as an active consciousness, it naturally and spontaneously constituted a norm of survival. This entitles proponents of the idea that Ioannina had its own Enlightenment leading lights when Greece came into contact with the Western Enlightenment, to substantiate their claim. For example, Dhaskallopullu and Vernikos state: 'We do not believe that European intelligence was the one that gave impetus to the new Greek ideology, as it is said today' (1999, p. 27).

Communication with Greek antiquity in Ioannina is evident in the spiritual and conceptual reality of the Christian religious faith. In the frescoes of the two monasteries of the 12th and 13th centuries on the island of Lake Ioannina, among the Christian saints, are found philosophers and scholars of ancient Greece presented as equals. According to this practice, found in Epirus until the 14th and 15th centuries, important figures of civil life naturally have a place in the community of Orthodox saints.

This link with the ideas of ancient Greece was greatly influenced by the fact that Ioannina, and Epirus more broadly, occasionally offered shelter to the most intellectual people of Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire (and present-day Istanbul). In the mid-14th century, supporters of the idea that the Byzantine Empire could emerge from its deep crisis through the re-actualization of the democratic model of ancient Greece lost to the supporters of crisis resolution through state militarization and tax increases. The first representatives of Hellenic centrism were expelled from the capital. Many of them found refuge in Ioannina. Others, meanwhile, settled in the West, and they were, in a broader sense, known as the forerunners of the early European Renaissance and Enlightenment (Karabellas 2007, pp. 303-318)

The programs of study, since the 13th century, and especially those of the secular schools of the 17th and 18th centuries in Ioannina and Voskopoja drew on the culture and learning of ancient Greece and lent support to the power of the clergy (Barka 2016, v.II, page 39). The printing of non-religious books by commercial printing houses and by charities in Epirus, starting from the 16th century, began to increase the number of books of a philological character, linking to the thoughts and knowledge of ancient Greek culture.

Some thinkers and scholars were particularly influential. The work of Meletios Mitros (Μελέτιος Μήτρος) served as the basis for the romantic dimension of the New (Enlightenment) Greek Ideology, setting out the glorious ethnogenesis of the Greeks of the time. In the second half of the 17th century, Mitros (Μήτρος) a scholar and cleric who had studied medicine in Padua, became the first systematic geographer participating in European research related to the reports of history, geography and physical sciences. He distanced himself from the traditional concept that identified the space of geography with its place and raised the need for its knowledge related to human life. He was the first to undertake a scientific argumentation of the continuity of the Greeks of the time from the ancient Greeks and paved the way for local knowledge in relation to place and time. His methodology was later significant as the basis for

researching the genealogies of different peoples as an important aspect for presenting an argument for their national history.

In the early 18th century and certainly before the French Revolution, anonymous chroniclers from the province of Dropull Gjirokastra, also located in Epirus, wrote the genealogical chronology of their province, tracing their origins to the mythological tribes of ancient Athens. Meanwhile, to characterize itself, it regains the ethnonym 'Hellenic', which in the Byzantine period was replaced by the term 'Romios'. The abandonment of the name 'Hellenic' by the Greeks in the Orthodox Christian Empire occurred because the ancient name had acquired a negative connotation. It was identified as concrete ethnos in a multinational and pagan empire in a Christian-based empire. By identifying its genealogy with the ancient Greeks of Athens, the 'Chronicle' becomes the leading argument for the New Greek Enlightenment Ideology, especially when this argument becomes dominant in the Enlightenment ideological discourse in Greece almost six decades later. In the spirit of carrying the traditions of ancient Greece into the development of the new Greek Ideology, associated with the formation of the Greek nation-state, the people of Epirus, led by the philanthropic Vangjel Zhapa (Ευάγγελος Ζάππας) revived the ancient Olympic Games in 1859. Further, the wealthy people of Epirus undertook the creation of the new Greek state with neoclassical-style buildings and institutions, reviving the grandeur of ancient Hellenic culture.

The preservation of continuity, as a norm of survival, in concert with the Greek civilization of antiquity, preserved in Epirus its most characteristic dimension: - that of the alternation of Hellenocentrism with Hellenic ecumenism. This provided the people of Epirus, the Epirotes, with a constant interplay between their focus on the civilization of ancient Greece and the evolution of Greek thought across the peoples and languages of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. Being at the crossroads of peoples travelling between East and West, the point of contact and division of imperial and ecumenical civilizations, helped this reality. In this geopolitical and multicultural context, the Epirotes naturally inherited and cultivated elements of humanism and the future European Enlightenment and given the peripheral nature of Epirus within the multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire, they had the ability to integrate with other peoples, especially with Central and Eastern Europe.

This tradition of people coming to Epirus from the major centers of the Ottoman Empire and the contemporary reality gave Ioannina the opportunity to create strong commercial and cultural links acting at two levels: - in the context of Epirus and in the context of Europe, which had taken the form of a microcosm of Hellenic communities. From the 15th century to the 19th century, the trading world of the people of Ioannina and Epirus, as well as the large number of its philanthropists, constituted a powerful network of Hellenic nationality in Europe, manifesting superiority in the arts and science, culture, and national awakening. In the 17th century, as a result of the economic contributions of its merchants and philanthropists, Ioannina became an important center of monetary exchanges (circulating all the priority currencies of Europe), which brought it closer to the East and the West ([Vakalopoulos 2003](#), p. 51). The city also became a focus for knowledge.

Voskopoja started its development as a city around the 14th to 15th centuries and the beginning of its decline is thought to be the end of the 18th century, according to [Mihallopoulos \(2011\)](#), pp. 8-10) the city during the 18th century had surpassed Ioannina, moving the center of Epirote Hellenism to the northeast of Epirus. The inhabitants of Voskopoja quickly became powerful and influential traders in Eastern and Western Europe. The town can be seen as a comet that had its own splendor.

The administrative independence of the city from Sultana Valide, provided the advantage of purity from the Ottoman element. This, in turn, created the possibility that in the period of mass Muslimization of the Orthodox population of Epirus in the 17th century, Voskopoja became a haven for the protection of Christians who did not accept conversion. As a result, at that time, there was an extraordinary increase in the population. Various researchers estimate the population of Voskopoja in this period at 40-60 thousand

inhabitants, or several times more than Ioannina. The fact of creating a multicultural and multi-ethnic community with religious homogeneity should be underlined here. Greek, Albanian, Vlach, Romanian and Bulgarian were spoken. There was a rapid development of economy and culture at the same time.

Unlike Epirus in general, in whose territory five languages were spoken for centuries and as many different cultures, religions and ethnicities coexisted, Voskopoja experienced the multicultural reality in the autonomy of a single city and for a relatively short period of time. As stated, its inhabitants belonged only to the Christian religion.

Voskopoja became the first city in the European part of the Ottoman Empire with a printing press in 1731. With the 'New Academy', it became the first city in the Hellenic world with such an esteemed level of education, such that it successfully competed with the schools of Vienna and Padua. The Voskopoja Library brought an unrivaled wealth of knowledge from antiquity to modern times. The city was rightly considered by scholars as the Paris of the Balkans. The city was administered by a democratic system of its own, governed by a statute voted on by all the inhabitants of the city in 1713 and consisted of 22 articles. Based on it, 12 elected representatives of the people governed for a certain period the whole life of the city.

Ioannina and the Influence of Epirote Merchant-Philanthropists

Epirus, led by its two centers, was united by the fact that they formed for almost four centuries a whole constellation of very economically powerful people. They were characterized by the fact that they saw their economic success closely linked, on the one hand, to the establishment and expansion of the Hellenic communities wherever they lived and operated. On the other hand, they saw this mission as inseparable from the economic, cultural and social development and emancipation of their homeland, according to European models.

Venice, Rome, Livorno, Padua, Vienna, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Nizna Constantinople, Alexandria, make up a small part of the endless map of the Epirote communities in Europe. Everywhere these communities manifested the special characteristics of Hellenism. They were equipped with beautiful places of worship, schools in their mother tongue, important cultural and charitable institutions and had the financial strength of the Epirote philanthropists and merchants. They also did not spare contributions to local communities. They thus created the reality of a modern model of integration, cooperation, tolerance, coexistence, multiculturalism, a model that better served the promotion of Hellenic identity and the creation of a productive Enlightenment ground.

To support their ideal of a homeland, these Epirotes opened schools, with entirely Enlightenment programs, including knowledge of ancient Greek civilization and contemporary European achievements. For the support and advancement of the infrastructure of what they saw as patriotic knowledge, they funded education in the best western universities for key people. They established printing and publishing houses, while scholars translated and published books, and established their distribution networks in what they saw as their homeland, in territory occupied by the Ottoman Empire. Further, they funded movements and structures for national liberation.

With their activity, the merchant-philanthropists raised to a higher level the triptych that had characterized Epirus for centuries, power deriving from education and knowledge, from money and from weapons. Starting from this role which culminated shortly before the Greek revolution and continued after it with extraordinary contributions to the civilization and modernization of the new Greek state according to European models, these people, including names such as Glikis (Γλυκύς), Gioumas (Γκιούμας), Sinas (Σίνας), Kazantzis (Καζαντζής), Kiopekas (Κιοπέκας), Kapllanis (Καπλλάνης), Zosimas (Ζωσιμάδης), Marucis (Μαρούτσης), Zapas (Ζάππας), Pangas (Πάγκας), Zografos (Ζωγράφος) and so on, are acknowledged today as national philanthropists from Epirus, who made outstanding contributions to

both Greece and Europe. Among their key contributions were the establishment of printing and publishing houses, the establishment of libraries and the fundings of schools. Each of these will be described below.

PRINTING HOUSES

The establishment of printing houses was a significant contribution in various parts of Europe. The publication of books in the Greek language and the role of printing presses in this regard constituted a valuable contribution to the spiritual re-dimensioning and national awakening of the Greek people and a strong basis in favor of structuring the new Greek ideology. This Enlightenment mission, in the West and East, was largely taken over by Epirote merchant-philanthropists. Their influence was evident in many centers, including Venice, Vienna, Bucharest, Moldova's Jassy, Wallachia, and so on. In Venice alone, there were four printing presses with owners from Ioannina and Epirus. The first printing press in Venice was founded by the Janiot merchant N. Glykis (Ν. Γλυκύς) in 1670. It lasted for 184 years and managed to publish 1007 books. The second Hellenic printing house in Venice was founded by N. Saros (Ν. Σάρος) in 1685. The printing house of Dhimitri (Δημήτρη) and Panos (Πάνο) Theodhosiu (Θεοδοσίου) belongs to the same period. The fourth to establish a printing press in Venice in the second half of the XVII century was the Janiot philologist Andreas Julianos (Ανδρέας Ιουλιανός).

The printing house of Voskopoja is an important event in this tradition. It was founded by the clergyman Gavrili Konstantinidhi (Γαβριήλ Κωνσταντινίδη) in 1731. It was the second printing house in the geography of the Ottoman Empire and the first in its European part ([Adhami 1989](#), p. 66). The printing house in Voskopoja is mostly related to the need to create a bibliographic basis for education in the mother tongues of residents with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds of Voskopoja.

The emphasis on secular publications was characteristic of the materials published. These included books from the time of the philosophers of ancient Greece, books of a scholastic character and other creations of Greek authors related to education, philosophy, mathematics, metaphysics. These publications showed their effort to participate in the development of thought in Europe, a trend which was evidenced by translations of contemporary authors with their scientific and philosophical achievements, such as Newton, Leibnitz, Locke, Descartes, Hobbes, Wolf and Voltaire.

As publishing activity in general increased, outside the Hellenic lands, ways of transmitting the book to the reader became essential and the Epirote printers from Venice led the way here too, making it possible to set up the first book trade center for all of Greece around 1800.

LIBRARIES

For the scholars and philanthropists of Epirus, libraries constituted another magical force for the cultivation and spread of the Enlightenment among the Greeks. There was no Greek community in Europe without a library. Every school founded and supported by them was equipped with a library. The outstanding Voskopoja Library was created by the rich people of the city led by Jeorjion Sina (Γεώργιος Σίνας), Antoni Kazantzi (Αντώνης Καζαντής) and Mihali Kiopeka (Μιχάλης Κιοπέκας), but also by the students and teachers of the New Academy, linguists, theologians, writers and poets who worked in educational institutions in Greek language throughout the Balkans. This library contained books by the authors of ancient Greece, theological books, rare editions from various times in Europe, and editions expressing contemporary thought. In the third and final great fire experienced by the city in the early 20th century, the library still held 1700 volumes.

Several key philanthropists were influential in establishing fine libraries and three can be singled out for mention. The Zosima (Ζωσιμάδες) brothers established a rich library in the Zosimea school in Ioannina, and were patrons of Adhamantios Korais, a well-known figure in the Hellenic Enlightenment movement, who published the 'Hellenic Library' in which he summarized all the treasures of Greek

culture. Zoi Kapllani (Ζώη Καπλάνη) in addition to equipping his school in Ioannina with a very rich library, also financed the National Library and the Jenadhjon Library in Athens. Finally, three enviable libraries were founded by another Epirote philanthropist Kristakis Zografos (Χρηστάκης ωγράφος). Two in Constantinople and one in his hometown in support of the pedagogical college funded by him there.

SCHOOLS IN IOANNINA

The Enlightenment, as a movement, believed in the power of progress and emphasized the importance of education. In the schools in Epirus, there is evidence of best practice in educational techniques and the development of theory. The curricula of some schools included subjects pertaining to the culture of philosophical thought of ancient Greece, subjects in the scientific and philosophical approach and the learning of foreign languages.

Unlike any other part of Greece or Europe, schools developed continuously, giving priority to education as 'the main focus of national awakening of its inhabitants' (Vakalopoulos 2003, p. 207). Meanwhile, the high clergyman Ioannis Apokafkos (Ιωάννης Απόκαυκος), a student of the folklore scholar Psellos (Ψελλός) of the XII-XIII centuries, spoke in Ioannina about the Greek national consciousness (Margari 1991, p. 20).

After the closing of the existing Greek schools in Ioannina by the Turks in 1642, in 1647 the powerful merchant from Ioannina living in Venice, Eriphanus Igoumenos (Επιφάνειος Ηγούμενος), opened the first school, which he named 'Eriphanus' (Επιφάνειος). Works of Greek classics, poetics, rhetoric, philosophy, mathematics were included in the school curricula, which also included European content with scientific subjects of the time. School leaders had studied in the West and had great influence in the intellectual thought of Ioannina and all Greece. The first leader was the scholar Spiridhon Triandafilos (Σπυρίδων Τριαντάφυλλος) He was succeeded by Leontaris Glikis, (Λεοντάρης Γλυκός) the pioneer of the family that founded the first Greek-language printing press in Venice, and other influential thinkers, including the author of 'Old and New Geography' Meletios Mitros, (Μελέτιος Μήτρος), the folklore scholar Parthenios Katzoulis (Παρθένιος Κατζιούλης) and Ballanos Vasilopoulos (Μπαλάνος Βασιλόπουλος), known in Greece as the Teacher of Nation (Mertzios 1936, p. 11).

This laid the foundation for other schools, with the next being the Gioumios School, founded by the powerful merchant of Ioannina in Venice, Emanouil Giouma (Εμμανουήλ Γιούμα) The school was called the 'spiritual ark of the neo-Hellenic world in the Balkans' and was known for its library which collected many valuable books and manuscripts of Greek and foreign authors. It was functional until after the Greek revolution of 1821. The first school leader was the scholar and cleric Visarion Makris (Βησσαρίων Μακρής) a student of Alexander Mavrokordhatos, a doctor, diplomat and politician. Makris was distinguished for his support for the freedom of movement of ideas, of the cultivation of national ideals and its resilience to God and homeland. His contribution to Greek national education was related to the compilation of a grammar that for almost half a century served as the basis of Greek education. His path was followed by the clergyman and thoughtful teacher Georgios Sougdouris Γεώργιος Σουγδουρής) from Ioannina, who had studied in Padua and Venice, near the family responsible for the 'Glikis' printing press. He was interested in the sustainability of innovative methods in education in all directions and in the enrichment of the content of the subjects in the language of philosophy, theology, physics and mathematics. His educational activity is considered as a factor that brought the modernization of education and the level of culture in Ioannina.

After 1710 the school was led by his student Methodios Anthrakitis (Μεθόδιος Ανθρακίτης), described as the coryphaeus of the Greek scholars of the time, finding a place of honor in the early Greek Enlightenment movement. He replaced the ancient Greek language in education with the popular language of the time. He was the first in Greece to apply the teaching of mathematics as a separate subject. He contributed to the awakening of national consciousness and the rehabilitation of a Greek identity. In his philosophical beliefs he was a follower of Descartes and Malebranche, whose works were translated in the

Greek language by him. The Patriarchate of Constantinople could not accept the innovative European spirit of Anthrakitis and in 1723 condemned him in absence with the abolition of all his clerical functions.

Nearly a century later, in 1742, Simon Maroutsis, with his family's heritage, gave the Epiphanius Skoli a new face, by giving it his family name, 'Maroutsios'. The school operated until 1798, the year when Bonaparte ended the Republic of Venice, an act that brought consequences for the wealth of the Maroutsis family. 'Maroutsios skoli' (Μαρούτσιος Σχολή), applying innovative teaching methods, was characterized by the spirit of liberalism in its content. Latin, philosophy and science were included in the curriculum and as a result it became famous all over Greece. To accomplish all his purposes, Maroutsis invited the prominent teacher of the Greek nation, Evgenios Voulgaris (Ε. Βούλγαρης) (1716-1806), to lead the school. Voulgaris (Βούλγαρης) had studied under the care of the Maroutsis family in Padua for advanced mathematics and returned to Ioannina from Venice. He introduced the physics and mathematics of Newton and Leibnitz, Locke's empiricism and the philosophy of Hobbs, Wolf, Descartes and Voltaire among others. He himself was a follower of Leibnitz.

Alongside his teacher, Anthrakitis, Voulgaris seemed to be the greatest innovator of education in Greece. According to his biographer, Fanis Mihallopoulos, 'If Voulgaris were to live in a different environment and write in a foreign language, he would surely be proclaimed one of the earlier scholars of his time' ([Mihallopoulos 2020](#), p. 38). With his secularism, Voulgaris brought to Greek education the basic notion of the European Enlightenment: religious tolerance. He wrote on many topics, including science, history, theology, language, astronomy, mathematics, archeology, music, secularism, euthanasia, tides and politics. He wrote poems, speeches, appeals about the liberation of Greece and had correspondence with dozens of European scholars of the time. He edited valuable works of Byzantine and ancient authors. He translated many works from Latin into French and from there into Greek. He was the first to include in the Greek bibliography Voltaire from whom he translated six works. But his work with great influence on education and the life of papers, which gave him his name in the philosophical and cultural circles of Europe, was the book 'Logic'. It was written in Ioannina and published in Leipzig in 1766. It is a philosophy set by the principles of the Enlightenment: Freedom of thought, rationalism and belief in the new sciences (Kitromilides 1999, pp. 53-65).

In 1741 Voulgaris was influential in the Greek school in Vlora of today's Albania. In this context it is important to note that his students were the future personalities of the Enlightenment and the new Greek culture. We can mention: Iasipos Misioldhaks one of the initiators of the systematic neo-Hellenic Enlightenment and the main supporter of the adoption of the vernacular as literary language, Thomas Mandhakasis, Prominent Person of the Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment Movement, Saint Cosmas of Etolislë, the Enlightenment clergyman who destroyed churches and built schools instead, Kavaliotis, the author of the trilingual dictionary in Voskopoja.

In 1742-1744, Voulgaris (Βούλγαρης) created in Ioannina a secret organization with 30 prominent clergymen. Its purpose was not simply related to the opening of schools but also organizing activities for the awakening of national consciousness. The organization was described as the forerunner of the 'Filiki Etairias' (Φιλική Εταιρία) that led the Greek Revolution of 1821.

The prominent Enlightenment tradition of education in Ioannina was continued by 'Kaplanios Skoli' (1797-1820). It was created with the contribution of the rich inhabitant of Ioannina in Russia, Zoi Kapllani (Ζώη Καπλάνη). It was about the most prominent and modern school of Ioannina in the first two decades of the 19th century. It was equipped with a very rich library and physical laboratories. Throughout its existence, the school was run by Athansios Psalidas (1767-1829), a member of a significant family of traders from Ioannina. Psalidas took a place of honor in the pantheon of Greek personalities who led the neo-Hellenic Enlightenment movement. He also holds the title 'Teacher of the Nation'. He studied in Ioannina, Russia and Vienna (for medicine).

For Psalidas, the enlightenment of the nation was the main premise for achieving freedom and independence from the Ottoman occupier. The acceleration of ethnic processes, national awakening and the uprising of compatriots is strongly highlighted in the work 'Good Beginnings'. He is distinguished for his Helleno-centrism, for his efforts to cultivate a national feeling among the oppressed Greeks, for his urgent need to use the living popular language as a literary norm, for his belief in ideals, admiration of ancient culture, and so on.

In the field of education, he followed two paths. Firstly, he supported the use of the living vernacular, cultivating the belief in the continuity of modern popular Greek from ancient Greek. Even in the long debate over the language issue in Greece between proponents of the vernacular as a literary norm and proponents of ancient Greek or katharevuses, he strongly aligned himself with the proponents of the vernacular. Another second aspect of his educational path is related to the fact that he included in the school curriculum the teaching of natural sciences, cultivated free thought, educated the philosophical systems of the time, used active teaching methods away from scholasticism and barren dogmatism, educated souls and prepared free people (Vakalopoulos 2003, p. 238).

He belonged to the high circles of Greek society of his time along with the greatest poets and scholars, with the most important politicians, with the close collaborators of R. Feraïout. He was an interlocutor of European personalities in Epirus, diplomats, traveling poets. He founded the Ionian academy which is considered the first Greek university. He is also widely considered to be a possible candidate in terms of authorship of the anonymous work, *Hellenic Nomarchy: a Discourse on Freedom* which is considered the first authentic work of the Western Enlightenment in Greece, 1806. The leitmotif of the work is 'Think and suffice' which is paralleled with the well-known saying of Riga Feraïout 'Whoever thinks free, thinks right', but also with the famous Enlightenment novelty of Kant 'Dare to know'. This work belongs to the political satire of the time. As the first work of the Greek political theory of the Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment, it seeks to urge compatriots to commit themselves to national and social freedom and to choose as a governing system the rule of law, a system of true freedom opposed to monarchy and its extreme form, tyranny. This is how the title of the work should be understood, where the term 'nomarhia' is used with the meaning of the rule of law as a contradiction of the term 'Monarchy', the rule of the individual, the monarch.

The highest level of the schools of Ioannina was reached with the 'Zosimeaskoli' which began in 1828, at the peak of the Greek revolution of Independence. Like others, this school also bears the name of its donors who were the wealthy Janiot merchants, the Zosimadhes brothers. It is ranked among the three best schools of the Greek nation, after the great School of the Nation in Constantinople and that of Ismir. The main characteristic of the Enlightenment role of this school is that not only did it raise the Enlightenment educational heritage in Ioannina, but also that it was the first multicultural school in Ioannina, where the most prominent Albanian scholars studied, and who, under the example of the Hellenic Enlightenment and Western influence, engaged in the cultivation of Albanian national ideology. The most significant outcome of this influence remains the political and ideological treatise of Naim Frasheri written in 1886 in Greek (katharevusa) and entitled 'O alithispathos ton skipetaron', (The Real wish of the Albanians).

The idea of Hellenism was the main impetus of the Albanian national movement and formed the basis of the idea that lasted almost a century for a dual Greek-Albanian state (Clayer 2007, pp.215, 261). This is because most of the propagators of the Albanian national ideology were from Epirus and belonged to the Greek culture. Many of them had studied at Zosimea College, Ioannina. This was valuable not only for Christians, but also for Muslims, such as: Eqrem Bey Vlora who in 1912 raised the flag of Independence of the Albanian state from Turkey, and the three Frasheri brothers, Naimi, Abdylî and Samiu, who played an irreplaceable role in the Albanian national movement (Clayer 2007, pp. 24, 215). The Zosimea School is also the foundation on which Greek education developed in Epirus, at a time when the province had not yet been liberated from Ottoman occupation.

Education in this period in Epirus became a massive and effective means of enlightening the minds and souls of people of Epirus. By the time of the Berlin convention in Epirus there were 530 Greek-language schools with 20,000 students and more than 800 teachers by the time the Congress of Berlin was held in 1878.

The ideological principle of the role of the school in that period in Epirus belonged to Saint Kosma of Aetolia, who said that a school opens many churches.

The nature of the Enlightenment in Voskopoja

Voskopoja took on a valuable complementary role in the Enlightenment movement in the city of Ioannina. Undoubtedly the city can be classified among the precious cultural centers not only of Epirus, but of all Greece and the Balkans. Its brilliance could be found in the abilities of the Epirote world to show its cultural strength through the creative appropriation of the achievements of the world around it and putting them in the service of the homeland.

In contrast to Ioannina, which aimed at the nationalization of Hellenic ecumenism, Voskopoja sought to keep the fire of Balkan ecumenism of Hellenic culture burning by operationalizing Riga Feraiu's (Ρήγας Φεραίος) idea of the interaction of the Balkan peoples led by Hellenism against Ottoman occupation. In this climate, the factor that sealed the prestige of Voskopoja and gave a new impetus to the educational and cultural influence of the city was its printing press, which was brought from Vienna in 1731 by the clergyman Grigorio Konstandinidhi (Γρηγόριος Κωνσταντινίδης)

MULTILINGUAL DICTIONARIES

Prominent people of Voskopoja looked at the coexistence of cultural and ethnic differences of the Balkan peoples that converged in its geography, the possibility of progress and development. Thus, the embodiment of Enlightenment ideas in Voskopoja consisted in the effectiveness of the promotion, through Hellenism, of the cultural and ethnic identities of the Balkan peoples. Their coexistence and shared aim of the collective 'enlightenment' of the mind and reason of the Balkan peoples was seen as the only possibility for the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire. All this centuries-old investment crystallized and took active form in the time of Riga Feraiu's principles ([Kordatos 2007](#), pp. 39-53).

At a time when nationalist tendencies among the peoples of the Balkans were still underdeveloped, the intellectuals in Voskopoja did not see the danger of promoting nationalism, but were concerned with the practical interest in tracing and studying the languages spoken in and around Voskopoja, including Vlach, Albanian, Bulgarian, Aromanian, Greek and so on. By compiling and publishing dictionaries of reciprocal languages they aimed to strengthen Hellenic education and culture among the Christian populations who spoke other languages. In the introduction to the four-language dictionary, Greek, Vlach, Bulgarian and Albanian, compiled by Dhanaiil Moskopoliti (Δανυήλ Μοσχολίτης) and originally published in 1794, this aim is made clear in the verse: 'Albanians, Vlachs, Bulgarians / speak another language, rejoice / and be prepared to be all Hellenic. /'. This dictionary had been preceded by the trilingual one, Greek, Vlach and Albanian, of 1770 words, entitled 'Protopiria' (avant-garde), compiled by Theodoros Anastasiou Kavaliotis (Θεόδωρος Αναστασίου Καβαλιώτης) and published in Vienna in 1770. The publication of these dictionaries, on the other hand, was a commendable effort to highlight the ethnological and linguistic differences of the peoples of the Balkans, to record and study their linguistic idioms and dialects, which until then had no written form. Theodoros Kavaliotis (Θεόδωρος Αναστασίου Καβαλιώτης) (1718 - 1789) is noted in the bibliography of Voskopoja as one of the most prominent educators in the city schools and the undisputed personality of the Hellenic papers of the 18th century.

SCHOOLS

Schools in Voskopoja had been operating since the middle of the 17th century. But after 1700 they were led by the most well-educated, prominent men of the time. They were not only Epirotes. From 1730, along with grammar and encyclopedic subjects, the teaching of philosophy according to the neo-Aristotelian method was applied. After 1744 a new cycle of studies was added to the schooling levels of Voskopoja and this was renamed the New Academy. A few years later, the most beautiful building in the city was built for it. It was the most important Hellenic educational institution in the whole empire. The New Academy was the shelter where the dualistic philosophical ideas of Descartes and Leibniz were applied supported by the orthodox clergy, inclined to orient knowledge towards the truth ([Uci 2004](#)). According to these principles, the Christian faith did not clash with scientific thought, since, according to the local clergy, the former addresses the heart and the latter the mind. The Voskopoja school cycle was the most advanced a Christian could pursue in the Balkans at the time. Young people studying in Voskopoja could transfer their studies to schools and educational institutions in Europe, in Austria-Hungary, Germany, Italy and even the Netherlands. Voskopoja was rightly given the title, 'New Athens'.

Similar but Different

The Enlightenment movement of Ioannina manifested marked differences of theoretical-ideological and practical character in comparison with the Greek Enlightenment movement in general, but also that of Voskopoja in particular. The Enlightenment movement in Ioannina took over the materialization of Enlightenment ideological achievements in the liberation political congress movement, whereas the Greek Enlightenment was merely aimed at cultivating national consciousness, and the question of practical national liberation was seen simply as an opportunity ([Hellenic Open University 2000](#), vol.II, pp. 424-425). In fact, it was the very characteristic structures of the Epirote Enlightenment that became the initiators for its establishment. The merchants from Ioannina and wealthy people became at the same time supporters of the ideals through education and important financiers of the revolution. Many of them participated directly in the war structures of the revolution. This historic moment was preceded by the active involvement of segments of the Janissary Enlightenment in the Independent Greek Movement (1768-1774). Most active in this movement was Voskopoja, which marked one of the reasons for its first destruction in 1769.

The local character of the Enlightenment movement in both Ioannina and Voskopoja is permeated by another feature that distinguishes it from the Western Enlightenment tradition. In essence, the Western Enlightenment encountered stern opposition to religion. In general, in Greece too, the clergy were lined up in conservative formations that promoted obstacles and restrictions to the ideas of the Enlightenment. However, in the centers of the Enlightenment, in Ioannina and Voskopoja, the clergy cooperated and contributed to the development and implementation of Enlightenment ideas. Most of the Enlightenment scholars with a European dimension in these two centers were clerics who had studied in Europe. They themselves allowed secularism in schools, especially in terms of curriculum content. Even when they had to defend their beliefs and ideas, they confronted the Patriarchate openly and decisively. They constantly fought for the enlightenment of the human mind with contemporary philosophical and scientific achievements, for the recognition of their enlightened ancestors.

In conclusion, it is important to reiterate an earlier argument. The patterns created by two prominent centers of the Enlightenment in this province of the western Ottoman periphery, especially that of combining Enlightenment ideas with the romantic treatment of history as two basic pillars for the national ideology of the time, were adopted several decades later by the ideology of Albanian National Renaissance, giving Clayer the evidence to identify the promoters of the Albanian national movement in these two centers ([Clayer 2007](#), p. 261).

Conclusions

Ioannina and Voskopoja are two important Enlightenment centers in the European part of the Ottoman Empire, that influenced the development of Greek nationalism in the 19th century and laid the foundation for Albanian nationalism. There are commonalities between them, but also differences.

The Enlightenment in Ioannina, without claiming a systematic framework, precedes the European Enlightenment. The reason lies in the fact that Ioannina never stopped communication with ancient Greek culture in its social organization. The Enlightenment in Ioannina had a Helleno-centric character. Its spread relied on a tradition of education and it became the leading ideology of the Greek liberation movement shown in the 1821 revolution.

The ideological basis of the Voskopoja Enlightenment drew from the achievements of the European Enlightenment. Enlightenment communication with the West was achieved through the highly developed trade of Voskopoja's people. The multiethnic and multilingual coexistence of the constituent community of Voskopoja was very influential. The Enlightenment here was seen as an opportunity to collectively 'enlighten' the hearts and minds of the Balkan peoples based on Hellenism as an opportunity for the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire. Education was very important in both places, and both had significant support from the Orthodox clergy. While Ioannina influence lasted over an extended period of time, Voskopoja's flourishing was relatively brief. Both centers played an important role in cultivating and elaborating the national ideologies of the Balkan peoples for liberation from the Ottoman Empire, but their fates in the later 19th and 20th centuries tell a different story.

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