

**ROMANIAN GYMNASIUMS, PEDAGOGICAL SCHOOLS  
AND HIGHSCHOOLS ESTABLISHED AND SUBSIDISED  
BY THE ROMANIAN GOVERNMENTS  
FOR THE AROMANIANS IN GREECE (1880-1900)\***

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**Abstract.** Between 1864 and the beginning of the ninth decade of the 19th century, the Romanian state had founded dozens of Romanian schools in Greece, at the request of the Aromanians established there. The teachers' salaries, the textbooks as well as the teaching materials were fully subsidised by the Romanian governments in Bucharest.

The independence gained by the United Principalities together with the proclamation of Romania as a kingdom accelerated the process of establishment of new primary schools, as well as higher level schools. Consequently, the Romanian Gymnasium in Bitola (Monastir) was founded in 1881; between 1885-1887 the school in Krushevo had gymnasium classes while the Romanian Gymnasium in Ioannina opened its gates in 1887, with its own boarding school providing accommodation for 20 students, whose scholarships were supported by the Romanian government.

The opening of the Highschool (1881) and the Pedagogical School for girls (1883) in Bitola (Monastir) and of the Commercial Highschool in Thessaloniki (1895) marked a qualitative leap in the educational process of the Aromanians established south of the Danube.

**Key words:** The United Romanian Principalities; Macedonia; Greece, Epirus; Thessalia; The Romanian Gymnasium in Ioannina and Grevena; the Gymnasium classes in Krushevo; The Romanian Highschool in Bitola-Monastir; The Pedagogical School for Girls in Bitola-Monastir; The Commercial School in Thessaloniki.

In the aftermath of the union of the Romanian principalities, the interest of the intellectual and political elite in the situation of the Romanians established south of the Danube, as well as the presence of some of them in Bucharest compels Mihail Kogălniceanu to create in 1863 “*a fund within the state budget, with a view to helping the churches and schools from the Balkan Peninsula*”<sup>1</sup>.

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\*International Scientific Conference „The Romanians From Balkans (VIII-XXI Centuries), Oradea, 10-12.V.2019.

<sup>1</sup>Mihai Virgil Cordescu, *Istoricul școlilor române din Turcia, Sofia și Turtucaia din Bulgaria și al seminariilor de limba română din Lipsca, Viena și Berlin*, București, 1906, p. 13.

This is the backdrop against which the establishment of the Romanian schools in the south of the Danube unfolds. This is a lengthy process that occurs in several stages. **The first stage, between 1864-1868, derives from the initiative of the Romanians located across the Danube who, relying on financial help from the United Principalities Government** (the rent for the school buildings, the teachers' salaries, textbooks and sometimes even stationery) **open the first primary schools in Romanian in Tarnovo, Abela-Avdela and Grevena.**

Meanwhile, the United Principalities Government founded **The Macedonian-Romanian School** under the wing of the St Apostles Church in Bucharest<sup>1</sup>. This institution was meant to train primary school teachers coming **exclusively from the young Romanians in Macedonia**, for the schools about to be set up there. With the Macedonian-Romanian Archimandrite Averchie at the helm, the school opened in the autumn of 1865 with 11 students (*Apostol Taciuc, Dimitrie Papa Ioachim, N. Danțu, Iconomu, Ioan Guleți, Petralexe -Badralexe, N. Popa, Dimitru Cimite; Gheorghe Papa Costa, Gheorghe Gumă, George Tomara și G. Mărgăritescu*)<sup>2</sup>. All the schooling and subsistence expenses – transport, clothes, boarding and meals, books and stationery – were supported by the Romanian Government.

In September 1866, two more students joined the initial group – *Steriu Cionea* (18 years old, from Krushevo) and *Dimitrie Bulidescu* (18 years old, from Bitola-Monastir) whose training and subsistence were taken over by the Pedagogical Institute of Iași, run at the time by Titu Maiorescu<sup>3</sup>.

The number of students from across the Danube studying in *the Macedo-Romanian School (The St. Apostles Institute)* increased year by year. Thus, in the school year 1866-1867, the School functioned with 16 students; from the autumn of 1867, this number increased to 26, and until June it reached 29 students. In the autumn of the same year 5 more students joined the school. In 1869 the number decreased to 29, but rose again to 33 in 1870. The Institute was shut down in the following year, but the students continued their studies in Matei Basarab and Sf. Sava Highschools.<sup>4</sup>

During the second stage, beginning with the autumn of 1869, the students brought from Macedonia and trained in the schools from the United Principalities

<sup>1</sup>Velicu I. Ioan, *Institutul de la Sf. Apostoli și începuturile mișcării de rededeșteptare națională la românii macedonenii* in „*Revista istorică română*”, vol.XI-XII, 1941-1942, pp. 272-284.

<sup>2</sup>Velicu I. Ioan, makes a series of clarifications about the changes undergone by the names of the Macedo-Romanian students, see, Ion I. Solcanu, *La fondation et l'appui matériel des écoles roumaines au sud du Danube par les Principautés Unies (1860-1872)(I)*, in „*Annals of the Academy of Romanian Scientists. Series on History and Archeology*”, Volume 1, number 2/2009, p. 86.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibidem*, p. 87.

<sup>4</sup>Velicu I. Ioan, *works cited*, pp. 278-279.

– Bucharest and Iași – returned home to take over the existing teaching positions or to set up new ones. During this stage, which lasted until the proclamation of independence, schools were opened by teachers who completed their training with the support of the Macedonian-Romanian Institute. The Schools in **Ohrida** (George Tomara, 1868), **Vlaho-Kleisoura (1868)**, **Smexe-Smesce** (G. Dante, 1868), **Veria-Calive** (Dimitrie Gheorghiu-Badralex, October, 1860), **Krushevo** as well as the paired summer and winter schools, which followed the shepherds' families during the grazing and winter seasons, in **Smexe-Zarca** and **Perivoli-Trikala** (George Panaitescu, februarie 1874) were set up thanks to these teachers.

The Proclamation of Independence of the United Principalities as well as the proclamation of Romania as a kingdom on March, 14th, 1881, stimulated the national sentiments of the Romanians residing abroad. This resulted in a natural acceleration of the process of establishing a new primary boys' school, the appearance of primary schools for girls as well as a Gymnasium where the subjects were taught in Romanian<sup>1</sup>. **The primary boys' schools in Prilep** (D. Constantinescu, 1878), **Turija, Magarevo, Malovishte, Nizhepole, Neveasta, Krupishte, Pleasa, Samarina, Baesa** as well as the **girls' schools in Magarevo and Malovishte** were set up until 1885<sup>2</sup>. We consider this to mark the beginning of the third stage in the evolution of the Romanian schools in Macedonia, Epirus and Thessalia.

**Quality wise, a big step forward in the evolution of the Romanian schools in Macedonia was marked by the establishment of the Romanian Gymnasiums in Bitola and Ioannina, each with their own boarding school. Subsequently, between 1885-1887, Gymnasium classes functioned in Krushevo (1885-1887).**

**The Romanian Gymnasium in Ioannina** opened its gates in October 1887, and had a boarding school that could accommodate “20 scholars, coming from different localities of Pindus which had Romanian primary schools”<sup>3</sup>. Teacher Iancu Hondrosom was the one who obtained from the Turkish Government the authorization to establish The Romanian Gymnasium in Ioannina, as we can find out from a letter he sent to the general consul of Romania in Thessaloniki, dated April, 11th, 1900. The authorization granted by the Turkish Government for the establishment of the Gymnasium read (in Turkish): “*We grant this authorization*

<sup>1</sup>Ion I. Solcanu, *La Fondation et l'Appui Matériel des Écoles Roumaines au Sud du Danube par les Principautés Unies (1860-1872)*, II, in „*Annals of the Academy of Romanian Scientists. Series on History and Archeology*, Volume 3, number 4/2011, pp.77-78.

<sup>2</sup>Adina Berciu Drăghicesu, Maria Petre, *Școli și biserici românești din Peninsula Balcanică. Documente (1864-1948)*, vol.I, București, Editura Universității, 2004, pp. 114-116.

<sup>3</sup>Inspector Apostol Mărgărit's report from 3rd December 1887 which outlines the stages in the foundation of the Gymnasium, *ANIC, MCIP.*, File 189/1887, sheet 43, f-b.

to Mr I. Hondrosom, founder and headmaster of the Valachian Gymnasium in Ioannina”<sup>1</sup>. In 1897, 50 out of the total number of students were scholars whose tuition fees - including accommodation, meals, fuel, electricity, the staff salary, as well as medicine and medical check-ups – were included in the draft budget and amounted to 1,360 lei<sup>2</sup>.

The existence of a few dozens Romanian primary schools for boys, girls or mixed ones in Macedonia, led to the establishment of the aforementioned Gymnasiums. Similarly, the existence of these Gymnasiums required the establishment of some institutes of higher education, and this next step was accomplished with the opening of the **Romanian Highschool and the Pedagogical School for Girls in Bitola (Monastir)**.

The opening of the **Romanian Highschool in Bitola-Monastir** was a lengthy process, and it started in 1874 with the letter Apostol Mărgărit sent to Minister Titu Maiorescu stating that “*I am putting forward for Your approval a project devised long ago, which highlights the literary and political benefits that the opening of a Romanian Highschool would bring to the town of Bitola (Monastir), the capital of Macedonia*”<sup>3</sup>. The institution opened its gates in June, 1880, as proven by several testimonies dating from 1905, occasioned by the 25-year anniversary of the Highschool<sup>4</sup>. The Highschool in Bitola was run initially by “*V. Glodariu, who was infused with the fire of patriotism from Transylvania*” as his former student, I. D. Arginteanu, would recall 25 years later<sup>5</sup>. In 1882, he was succeeded in this position by Radu Corvin, another Transylvanian and by father I. Gheorghiade-Murnu in the following year, 1883. Now, the teaching staff also included Andrei Bagav, Constantin Cairetti and Vangheli Petrescu. The moral authority as well as the pedagogical qualities of the first three teachers impressed the students to such an extent that even decades later they would remember: “*we all thought at the time that they could touch the sky with their hands and move the earth with their feet*”<sup>6</sup>. As this group of four teachers retired in April 1883 to set

<sup>1</sup> Arhiva MAE, Fund: Problema 15, vol. 36, sheets 238-239.

<sup>2</sup> ANIC, MCIP., File 189/1887, sheet 1 f-b and 8 f-b.

<sup>3</sup> Idem, File 1915/1874, sheet 26.

<sup>4</sup> Report no. 710/30th June 1905 written by N. C. Ionescu, on behalf of *The Administration of the Romanian Schools and Churches from Turkey*, addressed to MCIP, see: ANIC, MCIP. File 1149/1905, sheets 68 and 81; Report no. 16/7.03.1907 of the Maintenance service of MCIP to justify the sum of 120 lei spent in 1906 “*for the collection of a case with anniversary medals sent by House Duval in Paris for the Highschool in Bitola*”, idem, File 2138/1906, sheet 244; I. D. Arginteanu, *How we celebrated the Jubilee and Report on the functioning of the Highschool over the course of 25 years*, in “*Lumina*, popular magazine of the Romanians from the Ottoman Empire” year II, no. 10, October 1905, pp. 289-309.

<sup>5</sup> Ion D. Arginteanu, *Report on the functioning of the Highschool over the course of 25 years*, in “*Lumina*, popular magazine of the Romanians from the Ottoman Empire” year II, no. 10, October 1905, p. 294.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 294.

up a new school, Radu Corvin returned at the helm of the Highschool for the next four years (1883/1884; 1884/1885, 1885/1886; 1886/1887). In 1887, upon his retirement, when teacher D. Cosmolei became the new headteacher, students had already enrolled in all the seven classes of the Highschool in Bitola-Monastir. Consequently, in the school year 1887-1888, the highschool functioned with eleven teachers for the lower and superior level, with an emphasis on teaching humanistic subjects, such as Latin, Greek, Romanian, French, Italian and Turkish, as well as History<sup>1</sup>.

In order to complete the teaching body, the Inspector of *The Romanian Schools in Macedonia*, Apostol Mărgărit, recommended in June 1887, “the transfer of a Romanian Macedonian substitute teacher, Pascal – whose training as a teacher had been subsidised by the Romanian state -, from the Gymnasium in Bârlad to the Highschool in Bitola as a science teacher<sup>2</sup> as well as Cosmolei’s transfer from the Gymnasium in Ioannina. “Cosmolei, a Bachelor of Letters, was to take over the post of “Romanian teacher as well as headmaster of the Highschool in Bitola, which, starting with 1st September, 1887 will include the 7th grade, for a salary of 250 lei per month”<sup>3</sup>.

Another report from August, 23rd 1887, submitted by the same inspector, informed the Ministry of Instruction in Bucharest that “M. Pascal failed to report for duty”<sup>4</sup>. Consequently, the headteacher position was assigned to D. Cosmolei, who was confirmed in this position by decree of the Ministry of Public Instruction in Bucharest on September, 1st 1887<sup>5</sup>.

The policy implemented by the Ministry of Public Instruction in Bucharest stipulated that all the teachers teaching in the Romanian schools in Macedonia, regardless of level, should come from among the local Aromanians, but should be trained in Romania. As a result, Apostol Mărgărit’s proposal to include “the young Macedonians M. Statu și Otto Cristu on the payroll” for the school year 1892/1893 was accepted. The former, “specialised in Letters” was to teach the higher level courses in “Romanian, Latin and History” at the Highschool in Bitola, while the latter, “specialised in Science” was to teach “the sciences of Maths and Physics at the Gymnasium in Ioannina”. However, as the two nominees had not passed their Bachelor degree until the autumn of 1892, due to

<sup>1</sup>Adina Berciu-Drăghicescu, Maria Petre, works cited, loc. cit. in *Tabloul profesorilor Liceului român din Bitola, în curs de 25 de ani*, we can identify the following teachers: **I. Ciuli, N. Maimuca, N. Craja, D. Covati, Isuf Zia, Pr. Faveyrial (French), Nic. Papahagi, Lazăr Duma, Dim. Cosmulei, Tache Mărgărit și Ștefan Cudela**, acc. to Ion. D. Arginteanu, works cited, p. 307.

<sup>2</sup>ANIC, MCIP., File 189/1887, sheet 25f-b.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibidem*, sheet 8.

<sup>4</sup>Radu Corvin is replaced from the position of headmaster of the Highschool after suffering an embolism. *Ibidem*, sheet 33.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, sheet 36.

reasons beyond their control, they were also included in the draft budget of the schools in Macedonia for the following year, 1893/1894, as teachers at the Highschool in Bitola<sup>1</sup>. The Minister approved these proposals<sup>2</sup> but, unfortunately, neither of them reported for duty<sup>3</sup>. As a result, in 1894, following Apostol Mărgărit's insistence, minister Tache Ionescu from Lascăr Catargiu's cabinet gave his permission for two graduates from the Faculty of Letters in Bucharest to be brought in to teach the higher level courses of the Highschool while a Baccalaureate graduate from "Matei Basarab" Highschool was brought in for the lower level courses<sup>4</sup>. M. Statu and Otto Cristu took over their teaching posts only in the following year, 1894/1895, and were registered as such within the Highschool which was now under the authority of the Central Ephoria<sup>5</sup>.

A memorandum dated 1st April, 1895, sent from Constantinople by Dimitrie Athanasescu, the first Romanian teacher in a school in Macedonia, informs us that the evolution of the Romanian Highschool in Bitola was not a straightforward matter. This was also the result of the conflicts that arose between the inspector of the Romanian schools in Macedonia, Apostol Mărgărit, and a significant part of the teaching staff, most likely caused by the former's authoritarianism. In 1883 Dimitrie Athanasescu blamed Apostol Mărgărit for „ruining the Highschool in Bitola”. Without clearly stating it, the author of the memorandum referred to the group of teachers who left the Highschool as a result of the aforementioned conflicts in April 1883. However, the school managed to continue their activity without any interruption.

A positive consequence, if somewhat late, of the conflicts between Apostol Mărgărit and the teaching staff in the Macedonian schools was the foundation in 1895 of an organization called **The Romanian Ephora of Bitola** as „an authority for guiding the Romanian schools in Turkey”<sup>6</sup>.

Thus, the teachers' egos and the misunderstandings that occurred resulted in the decision taken by seven teachers (Șt. Cudela, C. Cosmolei, Cristi Otto, M. Statu, dr. Miculescu, I. Arginteanu și Kemal) and a part of the students to leave the old Highschool and to found **The Romanian Highschool in Bitola under the administration of the Central Ephora**. Over the next three school years, 1894/1895, 1895/1896, 1896/1897 two Romanian highschools functioned in parallel in Bitola. From the existing sources we can conclude that **The Romanian Highschool under the administration of the Central Ephora**, detached from the initial highschool, was the new educational heavyweight. The high number of students

<sup>1</sup> Idem, File 561/1893, sheet 20.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, sheet 21 f-b.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, sheets 31-33.

<sup>4</sup> Idem, File 561/1893, sheet 31 f.

<sup>5</sup> Ion D. Arginteanu, *works cited*, p. 300.

<sup>6</sup> ANIC. MCIP., File 637/1895, file 20-21.

who attended it stands proof to that. Thus, in 1894/1895 70 students attended the highschool, in the second year the number increased to 108, and in the third year the initial figure stood at 63 students, who were joined on April 28th by 53 more, (making thus a total of 116 students!) together with Pericle Papahagi, teacher and headmaster of the old Highschool.<sup>1</sup>

According to *The attendance logbook for the payment of the subsidies for the months of September – December 1897*, **The Romanian Boys' Highschool in Bitola** had 14 teachers on the payroll<sup>2</sup>. The subjects they taught ranged from sciences (Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Geography and Natural Sciences) and humanities (Philosophy, Logic, History, Religion and Romanian, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, German, Turkish). Four tutors were in charge of supervising the students during the study hours. The boarding house accommodated 90 students and also offered meals and medical assistance, all paid by the Romanian Government.

In 1898, following the pressure exerted by the Ministry of Public Instruction in Bucharest, which subsidised the functioning of the Highschool in full – the rent of the building, the teachers' salaries, the meals and the accommodation of the 90 scholars, as well as their medical assistance, etc. –, the two Highschools unified<sup>3</sup>. **Doctor Pericle Pucerea**, originally from the Macedonian town Prilep, graduate of the first promotion of the Highschool in Bitol, was entrusted with the delicate task of harmonizing the egos of the teachers from the two highschools. He had completed his medical studies in Bucharest, also as a scholar of the Romanian state. However, in order for him to be appointed headmaster of the Highschool, he needed to be a full time teacher and thus, the subject *Knowledge of hygiene and internal medicine* was introduced in the curriculum. Over the course of the three school years – 1898/1899; 1899/1900 și 1900/1901 – while he was the headmaster of the institution, Pericle Pucerea, though young, managed to solve the conflicts among the teachers and to soften their egos, thus restoring peace and harmony among them.

His mandate also saw the introduction of several changes into the curriculum. Besides the subject especially devised for Pericle Pucerea, two more subjects – *Administrative Law and Comparative Romanian and Turkish* – were introduced. Following these changes, *The draft budget for the school year September, 1st 1898*

<sup>1</sup> Ion D. Arginteanu, *loc. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> The teachers were: **G. Costescu**, Romanian, higher level courses; **I. Delametra**, Latin and Logic; **C. Fpert**, French language and literature and Philosophy; **N. Bațaria**, History; **V. Constantinescu**, Romanian, French, lower level courses; **N. Caracota**, Natural Sciences; M. Pinte, Turkish and Religion; **N. Papahagi**, Greek; **Ioan Ciuli**, Maths; **Iusuf Efendi**, Turkish; **A. Bonati**, Italian and Art; **C. Chiriaz**, Music and Calligraphy. Adina Berciu-Drăghicescu and Maria Petre were to be hired for Physics-Chemistry, German, Geography and Religion, *works cited*, p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> Ion D. Arginteanu, *loc. cit.*

– *September, 1st 1899* made provisions for 17 teaching positions. At the same time, the draft included the expenses for the 90 scholars<sup>1</sup>. The rent for the Highschool building and for the boarding house amounted to 5250 lei per year and separate provisions for that were made separately<sup>2</sup>. In fact, the Romanian state paid 24,000 lei per year for the rent of all the primary schools, (that school year counted 44 primary schools for boys, girls and mixed ones) of the Highschool in Bitola, of the Gymnasium in Ioannina, of the Commercial School in Thessaloniki, of the library in Bitola and of six boarding houses, besides the expenses for renting the school buildings in Albania and Bulgaria<sup>3</sup>.

The report submitted by Dr. Pericle Pucerea to the Ministry of Cults and Public Instruction in Bucharest informs us that in the school year 1898/1899 154 students attended the seven classes of the Highschool (the 1st grade, 20; the 2nd grade 31; the 3rd grade, 25; the 4th grade 18; the 5th grade, 22; the 6th grade, 22 and the 7th grade, 16). At the end of the school year, 116 year passed their final exams, 23 flunked some subjects and 13 failed so many exams that they had to repeat the year<sup>4</sup>.

In the next school year, 1899/1900, The Highschool in Bitola moved from the headquarters of the Catholic mission of the French priests to a place better fit for its purpose, which was inaugurated through a ceremony of consecrating the water, on 17th October, 1899, as Al. Podeanu, The Diplomat of the Romanian General Consulate in Bitola reported<sup>5</sup>.

A memorandum dated June, 12th 1900, sent to Dr. Constantin Istrati, minister of the Cults and Public Instruction in Bucharest, by 15 teachers from the Highschool reveals the general mood of the elites and of the Aromanian population from Bitola: “*..our highschool, read the memorandum, is now situated in the most modern and grand building in Bitola, [...] and the Romanian schools for boys and girls attract more and more students and the teachers work hard to form a new young generation **infused with the national sentiment**, generation that, in its turn, will spread **the national idea** (emphasis added I.S.) to the furthest corners of the Romanian enclaves*”<sup>6</sup>. **The memorandum submitted by these intellectuals clearly states affirms the conviction that the Macedonian Aromanians are an integral part of the Romanian nation!**

The signatories of the Memorandum were in the right when they talked about a new generation of intellectuals shaped in the Highschool in Bitola – Monastir. Starting with 1887, the year of the first promotion and until 1900, 127 students

<sup>1</sup>ANIC. MCIP., File 506/1900, sheet 33.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibidem*, sheet 29.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibidem*, sheets 29-30.

<sup>4</sup>Report no. 53/20.07.1899, in *Arhivele MAE, Fund Problema 15*, vol. 37, sheets 273-276.

<sup>5</sup>Report no. 463/4.11.1899, *Ibidem*, sheet 357.

<sup>6</sup> Adina Berciu-Drăghicescu, Maria Petre, *works cited*, p. 157.

had graduated from this Highschool. The names that we can see on the list devised to mark the 25-year jubilee of the Highschool offer valuable information about the graduates' further studies, current occupations as well as places of residence. The humanistic orientation of the Highschool is reflected in the graduates' choices of careers. From the 41 students who pursued higher education, 11 studied Medicine, 3 Pharmacy, 5 Law, 21 Letters and Sciences (all of whom were now teachers), and only one studied Technical studies, i.e. engineering. 28 others were primary school teachers, 18 clerks, most of whom worked in Romania, while 18 more were still pursuing their higher education (2 in Germany), all of them scholars of the Romanian state. Five out of the nine graduates who worked in the field of commerce lived in America, as did three others who worked in agriculture<sup>1</sup>. Even this brief report on the functioning of the Highschool over the course of 20 years – between 1880 and 1900 - clearly outlines the outstanding moral and financial effort the Romanian state made to ensure the intellectual progress of the Macedo-Romanians.

**The Romanian Gymnasium in Ioannina** opened its gates in October 1887, and had a boarding school that could accommodate “20 scholars, coming from different localities of Pindus which had Romanian primary schools”<sup>2</sup>. Teacher Iancu Hondrosom was the one who obtained from the Turkish Government the authorization to establish The Romanian Gymnasium in Ioannina, as we can find out from a letter he sent to the general consul of Romania in Thessaloniki, dated April, 11th, 1900. The authorization granted by the Turkish Government for the establishment of the Gymnasium read (in Turkish): “We grant this authorization to Mr I. Hondrosom, founder and headmaster of the Valachian Gymnasium in Ioannina”<sup>3</sup>. In 1897, 50 out of the total number of students were scholars whose tuition fees - including accommodation, meals, fuel, electricity, the staff salary, as well as medicine and medical check-ups – were included in the draft budget and amounted to 1,360 lei<sup>4</sup>.

Since the Romanian Highschool in Bitola was only for boys, a **Pedagogical School for girls** was founded as well. Apostol Mărgărit recommended such an undertaking in Macedonia as early as 1874. This information appears in a report submitted by General I. Ghika, the diplomatic representative of the Principalities in Constantinople, to the Minister of the Public Instruction, Titu Maiorescu, informing the latter of “Mr. Mărgărit’s proposal to open a Pedagogical School in Macedonia”<sup>5</sup>.

The Pedagogical School for girls in Bitola was already functioning in the school year 1893-1894, since on 10th September 1893 Apostol Mărgărit required the appointment of “Elena Pocletaru, graduate of the Central School for Girls

<sup>1</sup> Ion D. Arginteanu, *works cited*, pp. 303-305.

<sup>2</sup> Inspector Apostol Mărgărit’s report from 3rd December 1887 which outlines the stages in the foundation of the Gymnasium, ANIC, MCIP., File 189/1887, sheet 43, f-b.

<sup>3</sup> Arhiva MAE, Fund: Problema 15, vol. 36, sheets 238-239.

<sup>4</sup> ANIC, MCIP. File 189/1887, sheets 1 f-b and 8 f-b.

<sup>5</sup> ANIC. MCIP., File 195/1874, sheet 25.

from Iași, as a teacher at the Pedagogical School for girls in Bitola, for a monthly salary of 150 lei” as well as “200 francs to cover the travel expenses and the salary in advance for two months, September and October”. Minister Tache Ionescu granted all these requests<sup>1</sup>.

The teaching staff of the **Pedagogical School for girls in Bitola** for the first semester of the school year 1897-1898 included nine posts. Out of these, six taught Romanian, History, Geography (M. Bolintineano), French (Matilda Buzer, headmistress), Greek (Ida Merazini), Pedagogy (Marigo Damianovici), Maths (Aurelian ?) and Crafts and Romanian (A. Nicolescu). Two posts, Romanian and Sciences were left uncovered<sup>2</sup>. In the next school year, 1st September 1898 – 1st September 1899, **the School** offered ten teaching posts, two of which, History-Geography and Greek-French – remained vacant. The boarding house had enough funds for 30 scholarships. The students received free accommodation, meals and medical services.

**The Superior Commercial School in Thessaloniki.** In 1895, the minister of Cults and Public Instruction in Bucharest empowered Ioan Ciuli, a Romanian teacher, to establish a Commercial School. For this purpose, he was granted the sum of 9,000 lei, the equivalent of 390 gold Turkish liras<sup>3</sup>. A report submitted by Ioan Ciuli on 10th February 1899 describes how this significant sum was spent. **As the report does not include the sum of 600 lei destined for the rent of the building between July-September 1895, we can infer that the opening of the Commercial School did not occur that year.** The reasons are still unknown. However, Ioan Ciuli submitted receipts only for 4611 lei, out of which 4369 was paid to the Socec bookshop in Bucharest for the acquisition of “*books with the intention of founding a library; merchandise samples for the foundation of a museum; geographical maps and a few teaching materials for Physics and Chemistry*”<sup>4</sup>. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs urged Ioan Ciuli to justify the *fligh high on the Romanian school*<sup>5</sup>. On the same occasion, the headmaster made a series of suggestions meant to motivate the teaching staff even more and to persuade the

<sup>1</sup>Idem, File 561/1893, sheet 23.

<sup>2</sup>Adina Berciu-Drăghicescu, Maria Petre, *works cited*, p. 137.

<sup>3</sup>ANIC. MCIP., File 506, sheet 101 f. Out of that sum, 7,550 lei were destined for equipping the school with furniture, teaching materials – measurements and weights, objects and substances for Physics and Chemistry - , a lab containing samples of different merchandise, geographical maps, etc.; 850 lei for teaching materials (books) and 600 lei for the rent for July, August, September 1895, *ibidem*, 99 f and 101 f.

<sup>4</sup>The remaining sum out of the 9000 lei, i.e. 4631 lei, could not be justified by Ioan Ciuli with receipts. 3000 lei was presumably “*spent in 1895-1896 following the formal order of the Romanian School Inspectorate in Turkey in order to save our Highschool from this town in Bitola (where Ioan Ciuli worked at the time of the report, AN) as well as the other schools in Macedonia which were in danger of being closed, since at the time, as is well known, the President of the Permanent Council of Public Instruction in this vilayet, as well as the other Ottoman authorities, were trying to destroy our schools’ organisation*” *ibidem* sheets 99-100.

<sup>5</sup>MCIP address to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accompanied by teacher M. Dimonie’s report, cf. *Arhivele MAE, Fond, Problema 15*, volume 38, sheets 46 f-b – 51 f-b.

parents to enroll their children in the Commercial School in Thessaloniki. His suggestions were: 1. Salaries and retirement benefits for the teaching staff of the Commercial School similar to the ones of the teachers in Romania; 2. The purchase of a new, suitable location where the primary classes could also function; 3. Equipping the Physics and Chemistry labs with the necessary equipment and enriching the library<sup>1</sup>. The MCIP's address to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that "*the demands to rectify the shortcomings of the school will be dealt with in April*"<sup>2</sup>, when the budget for the following year was finalised. The same suggestion to "*put the School on an equal footing with the schools in Romania*" can also be found in "*Study on the schools in Macedonia*" by teacher Cutula V. Adam, submitted to MCIP on 14th November 1900<sup>3</sup>, which leads us to believe that the levelling up of salaries of the teachers in Thessaloniki with the ones of the teachers in Romania had not yet been accomplished.

The opening of the Superior Commercial School in Thessaloniki in 1899 is also confirmed by an address sent by the school on 14th May 1901 requesting that the exams for the two existing classes be scheduled between 25th May – 4th June. It is obvious then that the school functioned first in 1899/1900, and then in 1900/1901. The exam subjects were: Maths, Physics-Chemistry, Accountancy, Geography, History, as well as Romanian, Modern Greek, German, French and Turkish. Apart from the teachers who had been members of staff since the School opened in 1899, the exam board also included Gheorghe Biciola, for Geography and History<sup>4</sup>.

A conclusion must be drawn at the end of this paper. The moral and material effort of the governments in Bucharest to educate the Romanian Macedonians between 1864 and 1900 was an impressive one. The establishment of dozens of primary schools for boys, girls or mixed ones, followed by the opening of the two Gymnasiums and the Commercial School in Thessaloniki resulted in the creation of an intellectual elite among the Macedonian Aromanians whose highest value was the sense of belonging to the Romanian nation. The ultimate proof for this belief was the Aromanians' presence in the Romanian Army in the unification war of 1916-1919.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the following schools were still in operation: **The Gymnasium in Ioannina** which continued to function until 1925, when it was transferred to Grevena; in 1901 **The Commercial School** was founded in **Thessaloniki**, and another one in Ioannina; **The Highschool in Bitola-Monastir**, and starting with 1930, a new one was founded in Grevena, by transforming the Gymnasium here. In 1945, the Romanian Highschool in Grevena was still functioning. However, the evolution of these schools in the 20th century will be covered in another paper.

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<sup>1</sup>*Ibidem.*

<sup>2</sup>*Ibidem*, sheet 46 f.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibidem*, sheets 116-117.

<sup>4</sup> ANIC., MCIP., File 572/1901, sheets 11-12.