

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE TEACHING IN THE SEVEN ISLANDS DURING THE BRITISH PROTECTION

The English language, according to contemporary evidence, was taught in the first Public School in Corfu since 1812¹, three years before Great Britain took the Seven Islands under her Protection. Two years after the British Protection had been established it was decreed that after the first convention of the Ionian Senate and the ratification of the constitutional charter of the Seven Islands by the King of Great Britain and Protector of the Seven Islands, the Ionian Senate should take all measures necessary to establish Elementary and Secondary schools, and later on a University of Liberal Arts and Sciences². Thus the establishment of a University was recognized as a national necessity in the Ionian Constitution, but the first High Commissioner, Maitland, postponed its establishment for as long as he could. At last, in May 1821, the Ionian Senate issued a decree for the establishment of the Ionian Academy. Even then Maitland used various pretexts to postpone its functioning. He failed, however, as Lord Guilford, the famous Philhellene, offered his own house so that the various courses could be taught there temporarily. Among the first courses taught were Greek and Latin Literature, History, Mathematics and English Language and Literature³. In 1824 Maitland was succeeded by Frederic Adam, who gave permission for the Ionian Academy to be housed in the old Government building, where the High Commissioner's office used to be, and in May 1824 the official establishment of the Ionian Academy took place after an impressive ceremony⁴.

Since the first year of the establishment of the Ionian Academy, James Lusignan taught the courses of English Language and Literature, performing at the same time his duties as chief Secretary of the Academy. The Ionian historian Hiotēs (Χιώτης) wrote that Lusignan was of Cypriot extraction and had been Guilford's private secretary⁵. According to the teaching schedule

1. See S. M. Idromenos, *Η πρώτη εν Κερκύρα Δημοσία Σχολή, 1805-1824* (Athens, 1890), p. 12.

2. See G. I. Salvanos, *Η Ιόνιος Ακαδημία. Ο ιδρυτής αυτής κόμης Γύλφορδ. Οι καθηγηταί και σπουδασταί αυτής* (Athens, 1949), p. 19.

3. On these developments see Salvanos, *op.cit.*, p. 21.

4. See Salvanos, *op.cit.*, p. 22.

5. James Lusignan was a descendant of the old Cypriot family of Lusignans. He was Guilford's protégé and private secretary and had studied at the University of Oxford. He was appointed Inspector General of Public Education in the Ionian State by decision of the Ionian Senate on April 9, 1819. When the Ionian Academy was established in Corfu in 1821 he was

of the Academy, Lusignan taught the English Language and Literature courses every day in 1826-27.

The splendid results of the functioning of the Academy during its early years dictated the necessity of adding more seats to the organization of that institution of higher learning. So the seats provided were increased to thirty-one, among them two for the teaching of English Language and Literature. During the forty years between the establishment and the dissolution of the Ionian Academy, six professors taught the courses of English Language and Literature in it. The first professor to teach English in the Academy was, as already mentioned, Lusignan, who had also been given by Lord Guilford the privilege of signing the degrees awarded to the graduates of the Academy. The last professor of English in the Ionian Academy was P. Makris (Π. Μακρής), who was appointed just a few months before its dissolution⁶.

With regard to Elementary and Secondary Education, there were a number of developments in the Seven Islands, starting in 1819. During that year there was established a Teachers Academy in Corfu under J. Lusignan's supervision, for the training of twenty-one Elementary School teachers who would teach in the Seven Islands⁷. Later on, an Ionian educationist of the time, E. Lunzis (Ε. Λούντζης), recommended that the English and French Language, History and Civilization be taught in all public schools in the Seven Islands⁸. By 1828 there were established eight peculiar schools in the main towns of the Seven Islands, called mutually instructive schools, and about 120 Elementary Schools in small towns and villages. A

appointed Professor of English Language, Literature and History, and Secretary of the Academy (cf. P. Karagiorgos, *Τρία γράμματα του Γραμματέως της Ιονίου Ακαδημίας Ιακ. Λουζινιάν προς τον Πρύτανίν της λόρδο Γκύλφορδ* (Bulletin of the Reading Society of Corfu, 1975, No. 12). See also *Εφημερίδα των Ενωμένων Επαρχιών των Ιονικών Νήσων* (Corfu, 3/15 June, 1824).

In 1820 the King of Great Britain, George IV, ratified a decision of the Ionian Senate whereby the Earl of Guilford was elected Chancellor of the Ionian Academy. Guilford's enthusiasm and philhellenism overcame all obstacles in the way of organizing the Academy and his generosity greatly contributed towards satisfying the needs of both professors and students of that institution of higher learning. The Ionian Senate issued the relevant decree for the establishment of the Ionian Academy in 1821. According to its teaching schedule the students of the School of Philosophy were taught, among a number of other courses, English Literature and History (cf. A. M. Idromenos, *Περί της εν ταις Ιονίου Νήσοις Εκπαιδείσεως από της εις τους Ενετούς υποταγής μέχρι της εθνικής αυτών αποκαταστάσεως 1386-1864* (Athens, 1872), p. 214.

6. Cf. Salvanos, *op.cit.*, pp. 48, 80. See also K. A. Diamantis, *Η Ιόνιος Ακαδημία του Κόμιτος Γκύλφορδ* (Athens, 1949), p. 10.

7. See Idromenos, *Περί της εν Ιονίσις Νήσοις Εκπαιδείσεως*, *op.cit.*, p. 210.

8. See E. Lunzis, *Περί της εν Επτανήσω διοργανώσεως της δημοσίας εκπαιδείσεως* (Athens, 1857), p. 52.

little later on some schools for girls were established in various towns. Curricula in schools functioning in the main towns included, besides Greek, reading and writing, grammar and arithmetic, a course in English Language and elementary English civilization⁹.

Around 1824-25 two Grammar Schools were established in the Seven Islands. The first one was established in Corfu and the second in Cephalonia. In both of them the English language was taught systematically, while the school established in Cephalonia was under the direction of an English educationist, W. Thistlewaite. This school became famous due to the renowned Greek philologist and educationist, Neophytos Vamvas (Νεόφυτος Βάμβας), who taught Greek literature and philosophy in it for about three years¹⁰. Since 1828 there were established in every town of the Seven Islands the so-called Secondary Schools, that is, Grammar Schools, where students were taught the English language among other courses such as Ancient and Modern Greek, Latin, Geography, Logic and History¹¹. These schools were later called «Lyceums». Thus by 1842 there were 227 elementary and secondary schools in the Seven Islands, manned by 283 teachers and attended by 8248 pupils and students, while the sum of £6,500 was spent on education each year, at a time when education at all levels in England was still largely undeveloped¹².

Finally, a few years before the union of the Seven Islands with Greece the Ionian Society in Corfu was established, due mainly to the efforts of Dr. Wolff, the Secretary to the British High Commissioner in the Seven Islands, aiming at the promotion of Arts and Letters and certainly the spreading of the teaching of the English Language and Literature both in the Seven Islands and in Greece. Soon this Society included 150 regular members and a number of honorary members, some of whom were eminent personalities in the Seven Islands, in Greece and other European countries¹³.

9. See Idromenos, *Περί της εν τοις Ιονίου Νήσοις εκπαιδεύσεως*, *op.cit.*, p. 211.

10. *Ibid.*

11. See Idromenos, *op.cit.*, p. 212.

12. *Ibid.*

13. Cf. Idromenos, *op.cit.*, p. 232.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Σ. Ε. Τσιτσώνης, *Η διδασκαλία της αγγλικής γλώσσας και φιλολογίας στα Επτάνησα κατά τη διάρκεια της αγγλικής προστασίας*

Η Αγγλική γλώσσα διδασκόταν συστηματικά ήδη από το 1812 στο πρώτο δημόσιο σχολείο της Κέρκυρας. Αργότερα ο λόρδος Guilford παραχώρησε το σπίτι του για να γίνει σχολή, όπου ανάμεσα σε άλλα μαθήματα διδάσκονταν η αρχαία ελληνική και λατινική φιλολογία και η αγγλική γλώσσα και φιλολογία.

Από τον πρώτο χρόνο της ίδρυσης της Ιονίου Ακαδημίας (1824) ο James Lusignan, κυπριακής καταγωγής, ιδιαίτερος γραμματέας του λόρδου Guilford, δίδασκε αγγλική γλώσσα και φιλολογία στο ανώτατο αυτό εκπαιδευτικό ίδρυμα. Δύο έδρες αγγλικής γλώσσας και φιλολογίας ιδρύθηκαν κατά την εποχή αυτή στην Ιόνιο Ακαδημία και έξι καθηγητές δίδαξαν αγγλική γλώσσα και φιλολογία κατά το χρονικό διάστημα ανάμεσα στην ίδρυση και τη διάλυση της Ιονίου Ακαδημίας.

Τέλος, η αγγλική γλώσσα και στοιχεία αγγλικού πολιτισμού διδάσκονταν σε σχολεία στοιχειώδους και μέσης εκπαίδευσης στις κυριότερες πόλεις των Επτανήσων, ενώ λίγα χρόνια πριν από την ένωση των επτανήσων με την Ελλάδα ιδρύθηκε η Ιόνιος Εταιρεία (Ionian Society) στην Κέρκυρα που απέβλεπε στην προαγωγή των τεχνών και των γραμμάτων και στη διάδοση της αγγλικής γλώσσας και φιλολογίας, τόσο στα αγγλοκρατούμενα Επτάνησα όσο και στην Ελλάδα.