Greece

4.1 The Rental Agreement

Αριθμός 1496, χίλια τετρακόσια ενενήκοντα έξ.
Ενοικιαστικόν (δραχ. 1.468:80).

Εν Σέρραις και εις την οικία του Μεχμέτ Χιλμή εν η έχω το γραφείον μου, σήμερον την τρίτην (3) του μηνός Δεκεμβρίου του χιλιοστού ενιακοσιοστούδεκάτου πέμπτου (1915) έτους, ημέραν Πέμπτην ενώπιον εμού του Συμβολαιογράφου Σερρών Κωνσταντίνου Ιω. Τριανταφυλλοπούλου, εδρεύοντος ενταύθα και επί παρουσία των μαρτύρων Κωνσταντίνου Κυρίτση φοιτητού της Νομικής και Αριστοτέλους Γορτσίδου δικηγορικού υπαλλήλου κατοίκων Σερρών γνωστών μοι, πολιτών Ελλήνων και μη εξαιρετέων ενεφανίσθησαν οι γνωστοί μοι και μη εξαιρετέοι Νάνους Βασιλείου γεωργός κάτοικος Αλημπέκιοϊ των Σερρών και Ευφροσύνη Αγγέλου υποδιδασκάλισα κάτοικος Σερρών ως αντιπρόσωπος του ενταύθα επιθεωρητού των Σχολείων της περιφέρειας των Σερρών δυνάμει του συνημμένου ώδε υπ' αριθμόν χίλια δέκα πέντε (1015) ενεστώτος έτους εγγράφου αυτού εγγράφοντος και τούτον ως αντιπρόσωπον του Υπουργού των Εκκλησιαστικών και της Δημοσίας εκπαιδύσεως δυνάμει του υπ' αριθμόν τριάκοντα επτά χιλιάδας τριάκοντα έξ (37036) από Τρίτης (3) Οκτωβρίου ενεστώτος έτους διαταγής του αυτού Υπουργείου, ο πρώτος αγνοών την Ελληνικών ομιλών δε την Τουρκικήν δι' ό προσελθών μετά του διερμηνέως της εκλογής και εμπιστοσύνης του Γεωργίου Καλαϊτζή δικηγορικού υπαλλήλου κατοίκου Σερρών γνωστού μοι και μη εξαιρετέου, γνωρίζοντας εκτός της Ελληνικής και την Τουρκικήν, όν ωρκίσασμεν επί του ιερού ευαγγελίου κατά τας διατάξεις της Πολιτικής Δικονομίας ότι θα κάμη πιστήν διερμηνεύσιν των θελήσεων και διομολογήσεων του Ελληνιστί προς με, τους μάρτυρας και την μεθ' ης συμβάλλ[ονται];, ακριβή δε μετάφραση του περιεχομένου του παρόντος εις την Τουρκικήν και συνωμολόγησαν τα εξής, ότι γενομένης μειοδοτικής δημοπρασίας δια την μίσθωσιν ιδιωτικού οικήματος όπως τούτο χρησιμεύση ως διδαστήριον του εν Αλιμπέκιοϊ των Σερρών νηπιαγωγείου σχολείου ανεδείχθη κατά ταύτην τελευταίος μειοδότης ο συμβαλλόμενος Νάνους Βασιλείου προσενεγκών την οικίαν του διόροφον κειμένην εντός του χωρίου Αλιμπέκιοϊ, [την]; ακριβώς περιγραφομένην εν τοις πρακτικοίς της δημοπρασίας. Εγκριθείσης δε της δημοπρασίας ταύτης διά της άνω ρηθείσης υπ' αριθμόν τριάκοντα επτά χιλιάδας τριάκοντα έξ (37036) εγκριτικής διαταγής του υπουργείου της Δημοσίας εκπαιδύσεως, ο συμβαλλόμενος Νάνους Βασιλείου εκμισθόι προς το Δημόσιον την ειρημένην οικίαν διά τον εκτεθέντα σκοπόν υπό τους εξής όρους και συμφωνίας.

1. Επί της μισθουμένης οικίας δέον ν' ανοιχθώσιν υπό του εκμισθωτού κατά την βορειοδυτικήν πλευράν της μεγαλειτέρας αιθούσης δύο παράθυρα μεγέθους ενός μέτρου και ογδοήκοντα εκατοστών και πλάτους ενός μέτρου έκαστον.

2. Να κλεισθή ο παραπλεύρως του δωματίου ευρισκόμενος απόπατος εν τω άνω ορόφω και να ανεγερθώσι δύο έτεροι εκτός του κτιρίου.

3. Προς μίσθωσιν παρέχεται ολόκληρος η οικία μετά του κλίβανου εκτός του μαγαζιού.

4. Η διάρκεια της μισθώσεως ορίζεται τετραετής, αρχομένη από της παραλαβής του μισθίου ήτοι από της Τρίτης (3) Σεπτεμβρίου ενεστώτος έτους.

5. Το μίσθωμα ορίζεται το προσερχθέν υπό του εκμισθωτού κατά την δημοπρασίαν εις δραχμάς τριάκοντα και λεπτά εξήκοντα (30:60) κατά μήνα, πληρωτέον κατά τριμηνίαν και εις το τέλος εκάστης δυνάμει εντάλματος του αρμοδίου Νομάρχου.

6. Ο υπουργός μετά πρότασιν της οικείας επί της μισθώσεως επιτροπής, προκαλουμένων υπό του αρμοδίου επιθεωρητού δύναται να λύση μονομερώς την μίσθωσιν: α) εάν ο ιδιοκτήτης δεν επανορθοί τας εκ της συνήθους χρήσεως του μισθίου επιγενομένας βλάβας; β) εάν το Δημόσιον αποκτήση ίδιον οίκημα ή προσερχθή αυτώ δωρεάν χρήσις καταλλήλου οικήματος δια τον υπόλοιπον χρόνον ή καταργηθή το σχολείον δι' ο εμισθώθη το οίκημα; γ) εάν αυξηθή ο αριθμός των μαθητών ή μεταβληθή το είδος του σχολείου ούτως ώστε να μην είνε επαρκές το οίκημα δια τα νέας ανάγκας του σχολείου; δ) εάν ένεκα τυχαίου γεγονότος καταστή αχρησιμοποίητον το οίκημα, η δε επανόρθωσις αυτού δεν είνε δυνατή προ της παρελεύσεως μηνός.

Ταύτα συνημολόγησαν και συναπεδέχθησαν οι συμβαλλόμενοι και συνετάχθη το παρόν όπερ αναγνωσθέν ευκρινώς και μεγαλοφώνως εις επήκοον πάντων μεταγλωττισθέν και βεβαιωθέν υπογράφεται παρ όλων και εμού, πλην του εκμισθωτού ομολογήσαντος άγνοιαν γραμμάτων.

Η συμβαλλομένη: Ευφροσύνη Αγγέλου.

Οι μάρτυρες: Κ. Κυρίτσης;; Αρισ. Γορτσίδης.

Ο διευρμηνεύς: Γ. Καλαϊτζής.

Ο συμβολαιογράφος Σερρών: Κ. Τριανταφυλλόπουλος.

::

Number 1946, one thousand four hundred ninety-six.

Rental agreement (drachmas 1,468.80).

In the city of Serres my office is located in Mehmet Hilmi's house. Today, on Thursday the 3rd December 1915 presented before me – the Notary of Serres Mr. Konstantinos Io. Triantafyllopoulos, and in the presence of witnesses Mr. Kontantinos Kiritzis law student, Mr. Aristotelis Gortsidis law firm secretary – both of them Greek citizens and residents of Serres, Mr. Nanous Vassileiou, farmer, resident of the village Alibekioy [1] in Serres district and Miss/Mrs. Efrossini Aggelou, teacher [2], resident of Serres. The latter is acting as a representative of the School Inspector of the district of Serres according to the attached document bearing the number 1015 of this year. After the same document, School Inspector is also acting as a representative of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education under the 37036 Ministerial act issued on the 3rd October of this year. All the above-mentioned persons are of sound mind and legal age. Since Mr. Nanous Vassileiou does not speak Greek but Turkish, he is accompanied by a translator of his trust, Mr. Georgios Kalantzis which I know in person and he is of sound mind and legal age. He is a law firm secretary, resident of Serres, speaking Turkish besides Greek. He took

the oath on the Holy Bible according to the rules of Civil Procedure. He will accurately translate the intent of Mr. Nanous Vassileiou and the discussions in Greek and the content of the rental agreement in Turkish. The parties agreed on the following: The invitation to tender for the rental of a private dwelling in order to be used as a nursery school in Alibekioy was won by Mr. Nanous Vassileiou who offered for the tenancy his two-story building in Alibekioy as described in the tendering procedure. Based on the validation of the present auction between Mr. Nanous Vassileiou and the State as imposed by the order no. 37036 of the Ministry of Public Education, the owner rents out the property for the uses described within the present rental agreement.

1. On the northwest wall of the biggest room the renter is going to open two windows of 1.8 m length and 1m width each.

2. The lavatory located beside the room of the second floor is going to terminate its use, while two new ones are going to be built outside the premises.

3. The rental agreement includes the oven as well but excludes the shop.

4. It is a four-year contract and as a starting date is set the September 3, 1915.

5. The price of the rent, as offered by the owner during the auction, is set for 30.60 drachmas per month. It is going to be paid regularly by the end of every three-months period due to a payment order issued by the local Prefect.

6. The Minister has the right to unilaterally cancel the rental agreement after any proposal raised by the inspector of the intimate renting committee in the following cases: a. The owner does not repair any damages done during the use of the building; b. The State obtains its own building for the described use or obtains by donation its own building for the remaining rental period or abolishes the certain school; c. The number of pupils will rise or the structure of the school will alter, so that the building would not be sufficient to meet the new needs of the school; d. Due to unforeseeable circumstance, the building is non-functioning and the restoration works will extend the period of one month.

The present rental agreement has been read clear and loud in front of all parties and it was agreed upon and accepted by them. It has been translated, validated and signed by everybody and me except the owner who is stated to be illiterate.

Party: Miss/Mrs. Efrosini Aggelou.

Witnesses: Mr. K. Kiritsis; Mr. Aris Gortsidis.

The translator: Mr. Y. Kalaitzis.

The notary of Serres: Mr. K. Triantafyllopoulos.

Notes

1. Alibekioy (today Aghios Athanassios) was a Roma settlement just outside of the town of Serres in today's Greek Eastern Macedonia. Roma residents of Alibekioy were sedentary Roma and the large majority of them were Christian. At least the Christians were Romani speaking. Nowadays it is located in the outskirts of the city of Serres in the regional unit of Serres and the official name is Aghios Athanassios.

2. 'Υποδιδασκάλισα' in Greek, a term which is related to a less qualified teacher.

Source: ΓΑΚ – ΑΝΣ. Αρχείο τέως συμβολαιογράφου Σερρών Κ. Τριανταφυλλόπουλου. ΑΒΕ: 229, ΑΕΕ: Συμβ. 2.1, κουτί 2, αρ. συμβ. 1496.

Prepared for publication by Lambros Baltsiotis and Vassilis Koutsoukos.

Special thanks to Giannis Tsarouhas from the Archive of Serres for locating this document.

Comments

The document is a leasing transaction between the Greek state and a resident of Alibekioy. The leased house would be used as a nursery school.

This document is related to the early attempts of the Greek state to include certain Roma communities of *New Lands*, today's Northern Greece, in the educational system, and the positive response of these communities. The so called *New Lands* were annexed to Greece after the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913. The Greek-Bulgarian dispute on the area pursued beyond the end of the War and the main argument clash was related to the language, ethnicity and national identity of the Christian population. We support the idea that the Greek State, even before the Balkan Wars, implemented a concrete education policy towards the Christian Roma communities of the district of Serres. All these numerous communities, or at least their vast majority, were sedentary and most of them Romani speaking. Many communities were landless farmers, i.e. farm labourers attached to the *çiftliks* (from Turkish, large agricultural property) of the area. Thus, it is no surprise that the Roma owner of the building lists "farmer" as his occupation. The importance of these sedentary communities was obvious for the population balance between Greece and Bulgaria, as their number was high in this area and their settlements were visible and 'countable' in the war of figures between the two nationalisms. On the other hand, these communities, which in the most part, are of the most integrated in Greece, responded to this education policy before and after the Balkan Wars. In fact, although the education was supported by the Greek state and her agents in the area, the communities welcomed and advocated the implementation of this policy. It can be argued with reasonable certainty that the communities have opted for their participation in education.

The education apparently contributed to developing a feeling of belonging to the Greek state among Gypsies. Indirect evidence for this can be seen from a vaguely accurate "List of the towns and villages of the Serres prefecture presenting their ethnological composition" (not signed and not dated), conducted in the year 1923. In two villages, there is a remark that "Those referred to as Greeks are Gypsies but of [Greek] national conscience" (ΙΑΥΕ, ΚΤΕ, 1923, φάκελος 3, υποφάκελος 2).

The document discussed here is about the first nursery school in a Roma settlement identified so far in Greece (see Κουτζακιώτης, n.d.), established on the initiative of the local Roma community. This initiative coincided with the state interest in providing classes which, at least, would teach the Greek language to the younger generations in order to strengthen the pro-Greek religious and educational affiliation of the population. So, the Greek Authorities for the school year 1905-1906, financed elementary schools in Dolna/Bayrakli/Kato Djumaya (Herakleia), Ernikiy (Pontismeno), Alibekiyo and Bayraktar (Flambouro), although most probably they failed to open them at the last two

settlements (Ibid.). In the town of Djumaya a specific school for Roma pupils operated in the year 1905-1906. According to the relevant document in this school year enrolled “30 Roma children in their [specific] school which has been established this year” (IAYE, KY, 1906, φάκελος 80, υποφάκελος 1). In the village of Banitsa (today’s Symvoli), a Greek school operated at least during the school year 1903-1904 and Roma pupils were likely enrolled in the school of Ernikiy during the same period (Ζάχος, 2013, p. 180).

Some years later, during the school year 1911-1912 (IAYE, KY, 1912, φάκελος 122, υποφάκελος 5), an elementary school operated in the village of Doxombos (today’s Myrkinos) with 10 pupils (a church is also listed even in this small settlement), one more in the mixed village of Zdraviki (today’s Draviskos) with 25 pupils and finally one in the then probably mixed village of Yenikiy (Novoselo) (today’s Neohori) with 12 pupils. In another document, for the year 1911-1912 are recorded salaries for “one teacher-priest” in Bayraktar and Alibekiyo and for “one [female] teacher” in Zdraviki, Doxombos and Alibekiyo and “one [male] teacher” in Zdraviki. It is argued that an elementary school was operating in the village of Bayraktar in the year 1911 and a year before in the village of Georgoulas (Zachos, 2006, pp. 271-272), a settlement that was the population feeder of Bayraktar. In the settlement of Bayraktar a pre-primary school class was established for the year 1913-1914 (Ζάχος, 2018, p. 263). As seen in general, nursery schools were operating among Roma in a certain number of non-Greek speaking Christian villages of *New Lands* even before their annexation to Greece.

Another important observation is related to the *langue véhiculaire* of the Roma of Alibekiyo: The Alibekiyo Christian ‘farmer’, according to the document has to hire a translator as he ignores Greek and speaks Turkish. At the eve of Balkan Wars, Serres was a town with almost half the population being Christian and more than 80 per cent of the later was Greek speaking. However, it seems that even the prominent Roma were ignoring the Greek language, at least in this very settlement.

A third observation has to do with the economic situation of the community: The Roma is renting a two-storey house, which shows that at least certain families were not living in extreme poverty.

Lambros Baltiotis and Vassilis Koutsoukos

4.2 The Struggle in the Village

Η πάλη στο χωριό

Οι αγρότες Μπαϊρακτάρη Νιγρίτας με την ομαδική τους
αντίσταση υπερασπίζονται το ψωμί των παιδιών τους

Τα χωράφια της Βάλτας ανήκουν στον Γεωργικό Συνεταιρισμό της Νιγρίτας. Καλλιεργούνται δε από γύφτους του χωριού Μπαϊρακτάρ εδώ και έξη χρόνια, επειδή στην προσωρινή διανομή δεν

τους είχαν δώσει συμπληρωμένο τον κλήρο, αλλά τους είπαν να καλλιεργήσουν και τα χωριά της Βάλτας.

Τα χωράφια αυτά μέχρι πέρυσι τα πλημμύριζε ο Στρυμώνας και αντί για ωφέλεια είχαν ζημιά οι γύφτοι. Τώρα με τα παραγωγικά έργα που θα μπορούσαν να τα σπείρουν, τους τα παίρνει ο συνεταιρισμός, αλλά προτού τους τα πάρει κατάρθωσε να τους διαγράψει απ' τον συνεταιρισμό με τη δικαιολογία ότι είναι χρεωμένοι κι' έτσι τους αφίνουν τώρα χωρίς χωράφια.

Οι χωριάτες μπρός στην κατάσταση αυτή και βλέποντας πως είνε καταδικασμένοι να πεθάνουν απ' την πείνα αν δεν κινηθούν, έκαναν συλλαλητήριο κι' αποφάσισαν να μη επιτρέψουν με κανένα τρόπο να τους πάρουν τα χωράφια. Εν τω μεταξύ έφθασε το συνεργείο διανομής. Όλοι τότε οι συγκεντρωμένοι του χωριού εμπόδισαν το συνεργείο, λέγοντας τους πως δεν θα σας αφήσουμε να πάρετε το ψωμί των παιδιών μας. Όταν ένας του συνεργείου τους είπε: μα σας αφήσαμε 200 στρέμματα (χέρσα). Τότε όλοι επιτεθήκανε κατά του συνεργείου και πετούσαν εναντίον του ότι εύρισκαν μπροστά τους, μερικούς δε απ' αυτούς τους ξυλοκόπησαν. Όλη την ημέρα περιφρουρούσαν το χωριό τους. Το βράδυ δε ήρθε δύναμη χωροφυλακής απ' τη Νιγρίτα. Μπροστά όμως στην επαναστατικότητα των εργατών δεν μπόρεσαν να κάνουν τίποτε. Τη νύχτα, αφού ενισχύθηκαν και μ' άλλους χωροφύλακες [τους] συνέλαβαν.

Μόλις έμαθαν οι αγρότες τα τρομοκρατικά αυτά μέτρα, ξανασυγκεντρώθηκαν κι' αποφάσισαν να κάνουν κάθοδο στην Νομαρχία. Στας δυό δέ μετά τα μεσάνυχτα ξεκίνησαν για τη Νομαρχία.

Οι φτωχοί χωριάτες του Μπαϊρακτάρ Νιγρίτας θα πρέπει να βγάλουν μια επιτροπή αγώνος απ' τους πιο θαρραλέους αγρότες κι' επί κεφαλής τους ν' αγωνιστούν με διαμαρτυρίες, συγκεντρώσεις και καθόδους στις Αρχές: για χωράφια και καλλιεργητικά εργαλεία στους φτωχούς αγρότες, για κατάργηση των χρεών κλπ.

Ανταποκριτής.

Νιγρίτα, 24/11/33.

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The Struggle in the Village

Farmers of the Bayraktar in Nigrita [1] with their mass resistance fight
for the bread of their children

The Agricultural Cooperation of Nigrita owns the plots in the Valta area. They have been cultivated by the Gypsies of the village of Bayraktar for the last six years. During the temporal land distribution, they had not received full plots but the [settlement and rehabilitation authorities] advised them to cultivate plots from the villages of the Valta area.

Since last year these plots had been flooded by the Strimonas river [2], creating loss and not profit for the Gypsies [farmers]. Due to the latest drainage works they could have planted them but instead the Cooperation is withdrawing the plots under their use [confiscates them]. Before that, the Cooperation had crossed their names from its members' list and removed their plots, under the excuse that they have been in debt.

Under these developments, the farmers would be sentenced to hunger if they would not fight back. So, a rally was organised and they decided to fight against the loss of their plots/properties. At the same time, the Agency administering the plot distribution process visited the area. The group of villagers in present deterred the works of the agency stating “we are not going to let you take the bread of our children”. When a member of the agency replied “thus, we granted to you already 200 stremmata [3] of fallow land”, the farmers attacked them; some of them were beaten. The farmers kept patrolling their village for the rest of the day. During early night, police forces from Nigrita arrived, but the rebellious attitude of the land workers did not leave them any space to react. Before midnight a reinforcement unit turned up and arrested the workers.

Soon after the farmers were informed about the terroristic measures taken [on behalf of the state authorities] they decided to march towards the Prefecture [building]. At 02.00 am they launched their march towards the Prefecture.

The poor villagers of the Bayraktar in Nigrita must decide on a fight committee consisting of the braver farmers. The persons in charge must fight with demonstrations, rallies and marches against the Authorities, demanding: plots, agricultural tools for the poor farmers, debt cancellation/remission etc.

Correspondent.

Nigritia, November 24, 1933.

Notes

1. The area is located in the southern part of nowadays district of Serres in Eastern Greek Macedonia, near the town of Nigrita. The village of Bayraktar is nowadays named Flambouro. The settlement was inhabited exclusively by Romani speaking sedentary Roma, the large majority of them being Christian.
2. The river has its sources in Vitosha mountain in Bulgaria and flows to the Aegean Sea in Greece. Its Bulgarian name is Struma. The bed of the river has been artificially reshaped since the early 20th century.
3. The *stremma* or *stremmata* (in plural) is a traditional Greek unit of area, now redefined to equal exactly 1,000 square meters or 0.1 hectare (0.24710 acre). The total area of 200 stremmata is equal to 20 hectares (49.42 acre).

Source: [No Author]. (1933). Η πάλη στο χωριό. Οι αγρότες Μπαϊρακτάρη Νιγρίτας με την ομαδική τους αντίσταση υπερασπίζουν το ψωμί των παιδιών τους. *Ο νέος Ριζοσπάστης*, Περίοδος Α, Χρόνος Γ, αρ. φύλλου 803, 1933, November 24, p. 4.

Prepared for publication by Lambros Baltsiotis and Vassilis Koutsoukos.

Comments

Flambouro is a well-integrated Roma community speaking a South Balkan Romani dialect, as most of the local Romani speaking Roma communities in the district of Serres (Παπακώστας, 2013; Ζάχος, 2005; 2013). A Greek school was operating at least from the school year 1911-1912, although there is an indication that education in Greek was provided from the year 1906 and a kind of nursery school was active in the school year 1913-1914 (cf. 1.).

This document is connected to three major issues:

- a) It marks the first evidence in Greece which associates a Roma community with the struggle for land, or in general is the first evidence of a radicalised Roma community;
- b) It is a further indication that land distribution on a discriminatory basis affected sedentary Roma communities, as this was also the case in the Romani speaking Roma community of Bayrakli/Dolna/Kato Dzhoumaya (now days Herakleia) in the Northern Part of Serres district;
- c) It calls into question the findings according to which Flambouro's Roma community has established links with the communists and the left-wing parties due to accidental causes. According to the dominant narration a left-wing movement appeared in the village after the residence of some communist activists in the village, living there as internally displaced persons (Ζάχος, 2005). Displacement of communists and left-wing activists was rather common in Greece from the Interwar period up to 1974 and the collapse of the "Colonels' Dictatorship".

Additionally, it raises topics for further research concerning the involvement of the Greek Communist Party with some sedentary Roma communities during the Interwar period. Roma are not mentioned in the texts of the Communist Party during the Interwar period or during the 1940s between the discriminated or distinct ethnic or national groups residing in Greece. However, the above article, and at least one more in *Rizospastis* newspaper, are indications that a possible contact between the Communist Party and certain sedentary Roma urban and rural communities might had been the case. The second article reflects on the ethnic communities of Gypsies and Vlachs, and also more generally on the refugees. As *Refugees* are mentioned the Greek Orthodox groups that arrived from the Ottoman Empire/Turkey to Greece from 1913 until the mid-1920s and were included in the Greek Turkish population exchange after the Lausanne Agreement of January 1923. So, under the title *No water and electricity supply: Urban settlements in Naoussa. Refugees, Gypsies, Vlachs, Rizospastis* is making reference to the living conditions of the rundown neighbourhood of Aghios Yeorghios in Naoussa:

This neighbourhood is inhabited by Gypsies [...] every house hosts approximately 5-12 persons [...] Electric supply is not provided [...] two WCs are used by 500 persons. There are two public water tabs [...] the [Christian Orthodox] Church which owns the houses demands the rents [from the inhabitants] without any restoration works done on its behalf [...].

Under the subtitle 'Minorities' the article concludes that "Refugees, Gypsies and Vlachs ought to fight and solve their neighbourhoods' problems [...]" (Νέος Πιζοσπάστης, 1933).

Naoussa was a Greek-speaking town in today's Central Greek Macedonia. The Roma community of Naoussa is nevertheless Slavic-speaking and still inhabits the same neighbourhood. Their dialect is closely related to that spoken in those neighbouring rural settlements that are Slavic-speaking. Greek speakers used to identify the language in the Interwar period mostly as 'Bulgarian'. The document quoted above shows the acceptance

of the Gypsies on behalf of the Communist Party as a minority specific group facing discrimination from the Greek Authorities. The document also raises one more topic for further research: In many towns in Northern, and to a lesser extent Central Greece, in the neighbourhoods usually called *Gyftika* the poorest strata of Greek Refugees were cohabiting with Christian or/and Muslim Roma. Many of these refugee communities were radicalised and supported the Communist Party, as was the case of the Refugees tobacco industry workers in Eastern Macedonia. We might assume that the Roma residing in the same neighbourhoods, quite probably engaged in the same professions, were influenced by their colleagues in radicalisation. An effective research is encountering problems as significant parts of these communities are assimilated or deny their Roma background.

We note that the newspaper uses the term *Gyftos* (plural *Gyftoi*) for the communities, instead of the more official *Athigganos/Tsigganos* (pl. *Athigganoi/Tsigganoi*). The adoption of this very term might not be related though with its targeted legitimization or the self-identification of the communities in Northern Greece, where the more official term *Athigganos/Tsigganosis* is perceived as pejorative by communities and connected to non-sedentary Roma. The use of a vernacular language variety by the newspaper is by far the most obvious explanation for the adopted term by the newspaper.

Lambros Baltsiotis and Vassilis Koutsoukos

4.3 The Statute of the Panhellenic Cultural Association of the Greek Gypsies

29428. [αναγνώρισης]; 11806/1939] (ιδιόγραφα).

Π. αρ. Μητρ [ώου]. 4943/ [19]39 (ιδιόγραφα).

[αναγνώρισης]; 11806/1939] (ιδιόγραφα).

Αριθ. 1. ΚΑΤΑΣΤΑΤΙΚΟΝ

Του Πανελληνίου Μορφωτικού Συλλόγου Ελλήνων Αθιγγάνων

Κεφάλαιον Α. Τίτλος-Έδρα-Σκοπός.

ΑΡΘΡΟΝ 1^{ον}. Συνιστάται εν Αθήναις Σύλλογος μετ' Αλληλοβοηθητικού Ταμείου υπό τον τίτλον 'ΠΑΝΕΛΛΗΝΙΟΣ ΜΟΡΦΩΤΙΚΟΣ ΣΥΛΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΩΝ ΑΘΙΓΓΑΝΩΝ' με έδραν τας Αθήνας.

α) Η μελέτη, και προαγωγή των οικονομικών συμφερόντων των μελών αυτού.

β) Η ηθική και πνευματική εξύψωσις των μελών αυτού, μετ' αδελαφικής και ειλικρινούς συνεργασίας.

γ) Η διοργάνωσις νυκτερινών σχολών, διαλέξεων, εκδρομών, ψυχαγωγικών συναυλιών και παν άλλο μέτρον προς ανάπτυξιν των μελών.

δ) Η ίδρυσις Ταμείου Αλληλοβοηθείας προς παροχήν εις τα μέλη ιατρικής περιθάψεως [,] φαρμάκων, χρηματικού επιδόματος.

ε) Συμμετοχή όλων των μελών εις τας Εθνικάς εορτάς της πατρίδος μας Ελλάδος ας οργανώ-
ναι η Εθνική Κυβέρνησις, δωρεαί προς την Εθνικήν Βασιλικήν Αεροπορίαν, ως και υπέρ παντός
Εθνικού σκοπού.

‘ΑΡΘΡΟΝ 2^{ον}. Μέλη του Συλλόγου δύνανται να εγγραφώσιν άπαντες οι εν Ελλάδι Αθήγγανοι
και τα μέλη των οικογενειών των μηδέ των συζύγων των αποκλειομένων επί καταβολή δραχμών
μεν 25 δια δικαίωμα εγγραφής[,] δρχ. δε 10 μηνιαίως.

‘ΑΡΘΡΟΝ 3^{ον}. Μέλη γίνονται δεκτά τηρουμένων το [ορθώς: των] εις το άρθρον 2
προβλεπομένων, κατόπιν αποφάσεως του Διοικητικού Συμβουλίου.

‘ΑΡΘΡΟΝ 4^{ον}. Παν μέλος όπερ καθυστερεί επί τρεις μήνας τας μηνιαίας συνδρομάς
αποκλείεται του Συλλόγου και δεν έχει το δικαίωμα του εκλέγειν και εκλέγεσθαι [...].

‘ΑΡΘΡΟΝ 26^{ον}. Άμα τη ισχύση του παρόντος καταστατικού ιδρύεται και Ταμείον
Αλληλοβοηθείας συμφώνως τω άρθρω του παρόντος, ούτινος η λειτουργία και οι πόροι κανονί-
ζονται ως εξής.

α) Οι πόροι του Ταμείου Αλληλοβοηθείας έσονται οι αυτοί μετά του Ταμείου του Συλλόγου
συμφώνως τω άρθρω 2.

β) Σκοπός του Ταμείου είναι η παροχή φαρμάκων μέχρι 500 δρχ. και η παροχή χρηματικών
βοηθημάτων προς παθόντας συναδέλφους, το ποσόν δε κανονίζεται υπό του Διοικ. Συμβουλίου
πάντοτε όμως τη εγκρίσει της Συνελεύσεως.

γ) Την διαχείρισιν του Ταμείου Αλληλοβοηθείας έχει το Προεδρείον του Συλλόγου το οποίον
τηρεί βιβλία προς τούτο.

‘ΑΡΘΡΟΝ 27^{ον}. Ο Σύλλογος έχει ιδίαν σημαίαν με την εικόνα της Αγίας Σοφίας εις το μέσον
φέρουσιν δε το τίτλον του Συλλόγου. Εορτάζει δε ωρισμένην ημέραν ήτις θα ορισθή δι’ αποφά-
σεως του Διοικ. Συμβουλίου.

‘ΑΡΘΡΟΝ 28^{ον}. Το παρόν καταστατικόν συγκείμενον εξ είκοσι και οκτώ άρθρων εψηφίσθη
κατ’ άρθρον και σύνολον κατά την πρώτην Γεν. Συνέλευσιν του Συλλόγου γενομένην την 28^{ην}
Ιουνίου 1939.

Εν Αθήναις τη 28^η Ιουνίου 1939.

Ο Πρόεδρος Ο Γεν. Γραμματέυς.

Ν. Σιδέρης (ιδιόγραφα) Ι [;] Μπ[α;ρ;ζ;]ίδης (ιδιόγραφα).

[σφραγίδα του σωματείου: τίτλος και εικόνα χειραψίας].

::

29428. [recognition]? 11806/1939 (handwritten).

Register No. 4943/ 1939 (handwritten).

No. 1. Statute
of the Panhellenic Cultural Association of the Greek Gypsies

Chapter A. Title-Registered place of the Association-Objectives.

Article 1. Establishment in Athens of an Association including a Solidarity Fund under the title 'Panhellenic Cultural Association of Greek Gypsies', and Athens as the registered place of the Association.

[Objectives]:

- a) The study and promotion of the economic interests of its members;
- b) The moral and spiritual progress of the members with cooperation in good faith and fraternity;
- c) The organisation of night classes, lectures, excursions, recreational concerts and any action in order to facilitate the development of the members;
- d) The establishment of a Solidarity Fund in order to provide members with medical care, pharmaceutical services, financial benefit;
- e) Participation of all the members in the National Holidays of our homeland Greece, being organised by the National Government, donations to the National Royal Air Forces and to any national purpose.

Article 2. May become members of the Association all Gypsies residing in Greece and the members of their families, the spouses not excluded, paying the amount of 25 drachmas for the membership and of 10 drachmas monthly.

Article 3. Members shall be admitted, in compliance of the provisions of article 2, after a decision of the Administrative Board.

Article 4. Every member who is late with the monthly payments for three months is being excluded from the Association and is deprived from the right to vote and stand in the elections. [...].

Article 26. By entering into force of this statute a Solidarity Fund is established according to the provisions of this article:

- a) Fund resources will be identical with those of the Association's Fund, according to article 2;
- b) The objective of the [Solidarity] Fund is the provision of medicines up to 500 drachmas and the provision of financial aid to colleagues in need. The amount of the sum [of the financial aid] is determined after obtaining the consent of the Assembly of the members;
- c) The programming and the management of the Solidarity Fund operates by the Bureau of the Association, which has the obligation to keep records.

Article 27. The Association has a specific flag. The design in the middle of the flag represents Saint Sophia and on the flag is written the title of the Association. The celebration day of the Association will be designated by the decision of the Bureau.

Article 28. This statute, consisting of 28 articles, adopted in all its articles and its entirety at the first General Assembly of the Association which took place the 28th of June, 1939.

The President: Mr.N. Sideris [handwritten].

The Secretary General: Mr. I [?] Mp[a?r?z?]ides [handwritten].

[Stamp of the Association: Title and handshake motif].

Source: ΠΑ – ΓΑ: ΚΑΤΑΣΤΑΤΙΚΟΝ. Του Πανελληνίου Μορφωτικού Συλλόγου Ελλήνων Αθιγγάνων.
Prepared for publication by Lambros Baltiotis and Vassilis Koutsoukos.

Comments

There is little and scattered documented evidence of the Roma presence in Athens over the course of the 19th and early 20th centuries. In the 1920s, during the Greek-Turkish exchange of populations, several Greek-Orthodox Roma groups arrived from Ottoman Empire/Turkey and settled in Greece. Parts of these groups settled in Athens. They were originating mostly from Istanbul, Izmir and other cities of Western Turkey and they spoke Vlax Romani. These Roma groups of Athens were initially settled in Petralona district near the center of Athens and after Second World War gradually moved to Aghia Varvara town in west Attica. Today they consist one of the most integrated Romani speaking communities of Roma in Greece (cf. Παυλή & Σιδέρη, 1990)

The Association was established prior to their settlement in Aghia Varvara, thus the registered place of the association is Athens. Undoubtedly, this is the first Roma Association in Greece, at least having an official status. There are several interesting points in the articles of the statute related to the views of the Roma elites of this certain community. Between the objects of the association we highlight the following: a) the establishment of night classes and b) “Participation of all the members in the National Holidays of our homeland Greece, being organised by the National Government, donations to the National Royal Air Forces and to any national purpose”. In fact, we do not know if any night classes were ever organised by the Association or the state aimed at the Roma community in Athens, although they were rather common in some areas of northern Greece inhabited by communities with other languages than Greek as their mother tongue. We underline the reference of Greece as “our homeland” and the inclusion of the participation in the National Holidays and the “national” donations as one of the objectives of the Association. There are also two more points of significance at the title of the Association: The adoption of the term ‘Greek Gypsies’ and the ‘Panhellenic’ dimension of the Association. The term ‘Greek Gypsies’ was not in use at that time and quite probably this is the first document in which we meet this term, as other known references are coming from documents after Second World War. The Association according to the statute addresses all Roma communities in Greece. This mention holds specific symbolic

importance as it goes beyond the prospect of a typical local association, although there is no evidence that the association ever attracted members from other Roma communities. Manolis Rantis however strongly supports that during the 1940s and the 1950s the Association was highly active and overrode its regional nature (Ράντης, 2008, pp. 189-198).

The religious symbol of the flag might have a certain significance as it underlines the religious community of the Greeks. We did not conduct any research concerning the common symbols on association flags of that era though; therefore, the above observation has to be placed in context.

The “Objectives” of the association show that at least the elites of this community were eager to adopt a Greek identity and demonstrate their loyalty to the state. The political sense of the association cannot be disputed, but it is difficult to assess if there was also a latent effort to create a political tool.

Lambros Baltsiotis and Vassilis Koutsoukos

Additional Comments

The case of the Statute of the Panhellenic Cultural Association of the Greek Gypsies of June 28, 1939, reveals another example of a multiplication of a historical mistake that once introduced into scientific circulation, continues to be repeated from book to book. The creation of this organisation was mentioned for the first time in the comprehensive publication of the Council of Europe, entitled *Gypsies and Travelers* (Liégeois, 1987, p. 166). There, one can also find a note that this organisation was set up by two Gypsy women (Ibid.). According to the memories of Jean-Pierre Liégeois himself, this information was received by him from the late Evangelos Marselos, and today it is not possible to establish from what historical sources Marselos himself had obtained it. We can only suppose that in the backdrop of this information may stand some unregistered accounts from oral history. In any case, since its first publication, this information has been repeatedly referenced in numerous other publications (e.g. Hancock, 2002, p. 118; Klímová-Alexander, 2005a, p. 190-191), including in the next two editions of the Council of Europe (Liégeois, 1994, p. 166; 2007, p. 2009). More recently, authors have been paying attention to the fact that two anonymous Gypsy women (in contemporary terms referred to as ‘two Romani women’) were mentioned as initiators of the organisation. While specifying that this information was “based on uncertain and speculative, secondary sources”, these authors have stated that, from that moment, even the beginning of Roma women’s civic movement was implanted (Kóczé, 2019b).

However, the Statute of the Panhellenic Cultural Association of Greek Gypsies, published here, clearly indicates that there were no women in the organisation’s leadership (all the signatories of the Statute have male names). There is thus no reason to link the date of the beginning of the Roma women civic emancipation movement to this Greek organisation, and until new discoveries are made, we need to accept the data showing that they emerged in Bulgaria and Romania (see the relevant chapters in this book).

Elena Marushiakova and Vesselin Popov