

Katerina Dalakoura
Dep. Philosophy and Social Sciences,
University of Crete, Greece

Challenging Education in the Ottoman Greek Female Journals (1845-1907): a Declining Feminist Discourse¹

The paper's intention is to present how Ottoman Greek women challenged social inequalities through press, during the Tanzimat period and up to the 1908 Constitutional Reform. The study is based on three journals published in Istanbul, namely *Kypseli* (1845), *Eurydice* (1870-1873) and *Bosporis* (1899-1907), and focused on the journals' discourses on education inequalities. The debates on women's education, the argumentation and philosophical platforms provided, illustrate the changing contents of the notions like "equality", "inequality", "social injustice" and "female emancipation". The paper will try to evince the impact of the changing ideologies and political events/circumstances on the changing content of the educational debates and on the declining "feminist" discourse, reflected in the aforementioned journals.

Keywords: women's education, women's press, journals, feminisms, Ottoman Empire

The paper's intension is to present how Ottoman Greek women challenged social inequalities through press, during the Tanzimat period and up to the 1908 Constitutional Reform, focusing on the journals' discourses on education and education inequalities. The education discourses, ascendant or permeating other discourses in women's publishing of the time, were a means of negotiating not only women's right to education, but also women's social rights. Thereby analysing educational discourses the notions of "female rights", "equality/inequality", "social justice/injustice" and "female emancipation/counter-emancipation", as well as their changing contents come along. The paper presents women's educational claims emerged in the journals, the argumentations and the philosophical traditions they draw on, and evinces the ideological shift in the aforementioned dipoles, the changing "female sisterhood" and the implied inequalities and hierarchies fought each time. The impact of the changing ideologies and political events/circumstances on the content of the educational debates and on a declining "feminist" discourse it is also illustrated.

The paper is based on three journals published in Istanbul, namely *Kypseli* (1845), *Eurydice* (1870-1873) and *Bosporis* (1899-1907). All three journals belong to the main category of the female press, namely they are edited by women and addressed to female readership. They include many female contributions (more than in the other genres of women's press, f.i. almanacs), and 'education' occupies a great portion of their discourses, as a topic of high female interest at the time. Besides the

¹ The article is based on a paper presented under the same title in the IFRWH Conference "Unequal Sisters: Women, Gender, and Global Inequalities in Historical Perspective" (in conjunction with the 21st International Congress of Historical Sciences, Amsterdam, August 22-28, 2010).

aforementioned journals, three out of four² (of this female publishing category, edited in the Greek communities of the Empire during the period of research), run throughout the second half of the 19th century, each coinciding with the start of a distinct phase in Ottoman Greek women's education. During *Kypseli's* phase, urban primary schools began to be established. Also, early 'secondary' schools (e.g. primary schools extended to include some years of secondary level studies) started operating. *Eurydice* coincided with the beginning of the second phase, during which the girls' school network grew rapidly, in rural areas as well, to a satisfactory number of establishments. Moreover, the first schools for training female teachers appeared. However, there was no provision for vocational education. Finally, *Bosporis* was published at the start of the third phase, when the female educational system was well extended. It included primary and secondary schools, as well as vocational schools for lower-class girls only.³ The correlation of publication timing and education phase in the given historical context will show both how prevalent feminist demands were in the periodicals' discourse, as well as their possible influence on the content and progress of female education.

Kypseli (1845)



Kypseli, a self-declared "female monthly", was published in Istanbul in 1845 by Eufrosyne Samartzidou /1820 (uncertain)-1877/, a well-known teacher, headmistress of various *Parthenagogeia* (girls schools) and one of the first Greek women poets.⁴ *Kypseli* was a short-lived endeavour; indeed, only six issues have been traced, although there may well be more, since the final issue did not imply an intention to stop. It appears that it was also circulated outside Istanbul to Athens, the island of Syros, Smyrni, and Bucharest and Galatsi, two modern-day Romanian cities with prosperous Greek communities at the time.⁵

Kypseli was not just a short-lived but a very early attempt, too, within the

² The fourth one, *Spinthir* (Spark) was published in Chania (a city in the island of Crete) in 1901 and was in circulation for one year.

³ Katerina Dalakoura, *Education of Women in the Greek Communities of the Ottoman Empire (19th c. – 1922): women's socialization, patriarchy, and nationalism* [in Greek] (Athens: Gutenberg Press, 2008), 29-98.

⁴ Eleni Fournaraki, "Samartzidou Eufrosyne", in *Encyclopedia of the Greek Press 1784-1974* [in Greek], vol. 4, ed. Loukia Droulia and Gioula Koutsopanagou (Athens: Institute for Neohellenic Research & National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2008), 58.

⁵ For detailed publishing features, see Eleni Fournaraki, "Kypseli", in *Encyclopedia of the Greek Press 1784-1974*, vol.2, (see footnote 4), 677-678; Katerina Dalakoura, "Discourses on education in the Ottoman Greek women's journals (19th c.- 1906): the emergence of female popular education" [in Greek], *Mnimon* 31(2010):119.

Ottoman Empire, and not just for female publishing. At the time of *Kypseli*'s publication, only one more Greek publication was in circulation in Istanbul, while preceded by only three other Greek publications: two periodicals and one newspaper.⁶ Based on the evidence available, *Kypseli* was the first Greek female publication with a woman editor and probably the first female publication in the Ottoman Empire as a whole. Indeed, the first Turkish publication addressed to female readership (the journal *Terakki-i Muhadderat*) entered circulation in 1869 and the first one with a woman editor (*Shukufezar*) in 1886; the first Armenian one (*Guitar*) in the 1863; the first Bulgarian periodical for women (*Ruzhitsa*) was published in 1871, while there was no Bulgarian female publications edited by women during the Ottoman period; the first such publication was issued within Bulgarian state in 1901 (the newspaper *Zenski Glac*). Serbian community didn't have any publications for women or edited by women within the Ottoman Empire, though periodicals for women edited by men, appeared within the Serbian principality since the 3rd decade of the 19th century (*Talia* in 1829, *Ženski vospitatelj* in 1847 and more (mostly almanacs) during the second half of the century in the parts belonged to AustroHungarian Empire).⁷

The periodical's aim, as proclaimed in its "Preamble" (issue 1) and hinted at in the "Dedication", a kind of foreword tribute to the Sultan's mother, was to contribute to the social advancement of all the peoples of the East: "The zeal for social progress encouraged me to undertake the publishing endeavour".⁸ To help achieve this aim, the publication would be primarily targeted at the enlightenment of the women of the East, as the grand social aim of whole society advancement could not be fully achieved – the editor argues – unless "[...] the unfortunate female gender", "a part of humanity which, too, is entitled to moral life"⁹, was also included. The publication's aim, elaborated further by reference to its contents and goal setting, was specified thus: "[the periodical], distanced from political debate, shall be concerned with matters pertaining to the education and moral edification of the female gender in an encyclopaedic fashion, by means of the most didactic, modest and pleasant content".¹⁰

⁶ These publications were: *O Telegraphos tou Vosporou* (The Bosphorus Telegraph, 1843-1857), *I Melissa tou Vosporou* (The Bosphorus Bee, 1841-1842), *Peristera tou Byzantiou* (Done of Byzantium, 1841 or 1842), *Phanos tis Mesogeiou* (Mediterranean Lantern, 1844) and the newspaper, *Othomanikos Menytor* (The Ottoman Messenger), a translation of the official government gazette, possibly between 1835-1841. Dalakoura, "Discourses on education", 120.

⁷ For the aforementioned publications see Zehra Toska, "From Ottoman Feminism to Turkish Feminism: Women's Journals and Policies of Publication", in *Women in the History of Balkans: Life Stories of Women Teachers*, ed. S. Ziogou-Karastergiou (Thessaloniki: Vantias, 2010), 114-116; Krassimira Daskalova, ed. *From the Shadow of History: Women in Bulgarian Society and Culture (1840s-1940s)* [in Bulgarian], (Sofia: Bulgarian Group for Gender History Research, 1998), 22-30. Nadezhda Alexandrova, "The Debate on the 'Women's Question' in Bulgarian Press of 19th century: Limits and Opportunities for Women's Education", in *Women in the History of Balkans: Life Stories of Women Teachers*, ed. S. Ziogou-Karastergiou (Thessaloniki: Vantias, 2010), 95-104 ; Dojčinović-Nešić Biljana, "On Women and Litterature at the Beginning of XX century", accessed December 12, 2012, http://site.zenskestudie.edu.rs/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=123&Itemid=38 ; see data base *Knjiženstvo*, entry on Julijana Radivojević [http://knjizenstvo.etf.bg.ac.rs/en/authors/julijana-\(rodj-vijatovic\)-radivojevic](http://knjizenstvo.etf.bg.ac.rs/en/authors/julijana-(rodj-vijatovic)-radivojevic), accessed December 12, 2012.

⁸ [Eufrosyne Samartzidou], "Preamble", *Kypseli* 1 (1845): 16.

⁹ [Eufrosyne Samartzidou], "Dedication", *Kypseli* 1 (1845): vi.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Thus, *Kypseli* constitutes a publishing endeavour for the wholesale cultural advancement of women. In all, its features (historical fiction, literary essays on history, philosophy and education, etc.) are directly or indirectly related to education, focusing on highlighting the necessity of women's education.

To begin with, it strongly highlights the importance and value of education in its broader sense of culture, learning and formal instruction. Education is portrayed as the ultimate prize, its power to reform societies and the individual is emphasised, and it is associated with instilling morals in the individual – a reminder of the key Enlightenment principle that knowledge instils morality. So, society progress and man's happiness seem to rely on education as a necessary and sufficient condition. Having adopted the most radical Enlightenment ideas, it refers to a general education common to all, irrespective of gender and social origin: "Whatever we state, we mean it to be common to both genders [...] people of all classes should become literate for them to be accordingly enlightened."¹¹ Indeed, it advocates the feasibility of education for all, especially the under-privileged, arguing that poverty is a pretext. For *Kypseli*, literacy for all implies equal opportunities for all, so that each may benefit according to his/her abilities and so that, in turn, society may benefit.¹² "However, we perceive enlightenment for all to be a baptismal font of rebirth from which let all Demosthenes's and Cleopatras emerge."¹³

Specifically, female education is portrayed as the steadiest springboard for progress, whereas the absence of education provision explains the social and cultural backwardness indicative of the societies afflicted with it. The era's advanced nations (meaning France and Britain) are those that have provided for female education and realised the importance of all-inclusiveness.¹⁴

No specific references to a female education curriculum are made. Particular courses – for instance, History, Music, the Natural sciences, the Arts, Ethics and Religious studies – are only implied as part of the argument in favour of in-depth female education and pedagogy, and against a rearing that focuses on personal beautification and good social manners.¹⁵ The only specific reference made is to *industrial education*, namely vocational education, once again reflecting Enlightenment's education ideal of "an art of living", particularly the Greek version of it. Learning a trade is specifically recommended for lower-class girls, although necessary for all men and women¹⁶ for security in life. For women, in-depth education (alongside with learning a trade) are their main assurances for any future adversities.¹⁷

The periodical's positions on education, especially female education, draw exclusively on the philosophical principles of European and Greek Enlightenment. Specifically, *Kypseli* reflects the views of M. Wollstonecraft when it criticises patriarchal beliefs that question women's intellectual abilities.¹⁸ The principle of

¹¹ [Eufrosyne Samartzidou], "The Upbringing", *Kypseli* 6 (1845): 180.

¹² [Eufrosyne Samartzidou], "Virtuousness Saves Societies", *Kypseli* 6 (1845): 113-127.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 126.

¹⁴ [Samartzidou], "Preamble", 15.

¹⁵ See [Eufrosyne Samartzidou], "The Sunrise", *Kypseli* 2 (1845): 51. [Eufrosyne Samartzidou], "Necessity and Remissness of a Virtuous Upbringing", *Kypseli* 3 (1845): 102. [Samartzidou], "Virtuousness", 123.

¹⁶ [Samartzidou] "The Upbringing", 177-182.

¹⁷ [Eufrosyne Samartzidou], "The Upbringing: A Deceit", *Kypseli* 5 (1845): 151, 166.

¹⁸ See [Samartzidou], "Preamble", 14-15; [Eufrosyne Samartzidou], "Comparison or on Gender Equality", *Kypseli* 1 (1845): 29-30. See also, Mary Wollstonecraft, 'A Vindication of Rights of Women', in *Mary Wollstonecraft 'The Rights of Women' - John Stuart Mill 'The*

natural equality of human beings is the theoretical cornerstone for its argumentation as a whole,¹⁹ demonstrating the editor's acceptance of fundamental assumptions in Enlightenment's political philosophy. So, denying women the right to education constitutes a social injustice, as social or natural human rights are inalienable to all mankind, men and women in equal measure; for it is "Nature that lavishes"²⁰ rights. In defending this right, the arguments used portray social injustice as a consequence of the absence of progress, which is irreconcilable with the new social mores and in violation of divine/natural human rights, and the male dominated character of societies.²¹

As regards overturning this social injustice, the periodical's discourse is not radical nor does it make any demands. It goes only as far as attempting to highlight the problem and persuading society that it is a reasonable demand and will accrue collective social benefit. Hypothetical arguments that overturn or reverse the genders' social position and circumstances are indeed made, yet merely in an effort to show the irrationality of women's position and the magnitude of the injustice perpetrated against them.²²

Therefore, for *Kypseli*, the demand for female education is essentially a demand for female participation in education for all, portrayed as an Enlightenment-inspired means to society's rectification and progress and as a demand of the times. The notion of gender equality is crucial and it is powerfully argued for all women. Social class/origin or other hierarchies do not usually intrude Kypsel's discourse concerning women or women's rights. When they do, they do not disrupt women's sisterhood. In reverse, it is invoked to unite all women on the base of a social right claimed. When referring to women's vocational education, she does allude to differences in using the knowledge gained: for lower-class women, it would be a professional qualification; for upper-class women, a fall-back for life's adversities. However the argumentation underlying the reference is not the differentiation of vocational education according to social class, but its necessity for all.

Last, though *Kypseli* is denying that it '*negotiates each gender's rights*', we could easily sense a cautiously warded feminist discourse: the notion of women as a distinct social category oppressed in all societies surfaces Kypsel's discourse; women's social position is attributed to the historically male dominated character of the societies; historical written sources portraying women in history are questioned as written only by men; understandings that question women's intellectual abilities are strongly criticized.²³ Thereupon, it could be argued that Kypsel's discourse, even

Subjection of Women, intr. Pamela Frankau (London: Everyman's Library, 1954), 15-42.

¹⁹ For the natural law/rights ideology in women's feminist discourse, see Eleni Varikas, "Droit naturel, nature feminine et egalite des sexes", *L'homme et la societe* 85-86 (1987): 98-111.

²⁰ [Samartzidou], "Comparison or", 26

²¹ See also, Eleni Fournaraki, "An Early Publishing Endeavour: 'Kypseli', edited by Eufrosyne Samartzidou (Istanbul, 1845)", in *Women's Discourse International Conference Proceedings, Komotini, May 26-28, 2006* [in Greek], ed. Vasiliki Kontogianni (Athens: Democritus University of Thrace & Hellenic Literary and Historical Archive Press, 2008), 48-51.

²² «[We discuss] *not to negotiate each gender's rights but to liberate society from a prejudice which still opposes women's beneficial enlightenment*», [Samartzidou], "Comparison or", 25; [Samartzidou], "Preamble", 12-13.

²³ [Samartzidou], "Comparison or", 26-27; [Eufrosyne Samartzidou], "The Ancient Greeks", *Kypseli* 2 (1845): 60.

though it emerged in the mid 19th century, is still placed within the critical tradition of the ‘critique with no name’, as it has been called by Caren Offen.²⁴

Eurydice (1870-1873)



Eurydice was the second female Ottoman Greek publishing endeavour. Longer-lived than pioneering *Kypseli*, yet short-lived as well, it was published in Istanbul by Aimilia Ktena Leondias, sister of Sappho Leondias, the well-known pedagogue and girls-only school headmistress. *Eurydice* was circulated for about three years (76 issues in total), initially weekly (21/11/1870 – 24/3/1871), then every five days (14/4/1871 – 30/10/1871) and, finally, fortnightly (15/1/1872 – 20/10/1872, and 8/3/1873 – 30/5/1873). Pagecount varied from 8 to 24 pages, although nominally 16 pages long.²⁵

Eurydice was published 25 years after *Kypseli*. In that quarter of a century, the socio-political and ideological context, and publishing

culture, had changed considerably, not only due to the time lag between the two, but also due to the important historical and political changes of the second half of the 19th century in the given geopolitical and ethnic setting. There were more publishing start-ups, not so much the result of the right to publish – severely restricted as it was – but more so of exploiting the possibilities afforded by law to the maximum.²⁶ During *Eurydice's* life, eight or nine Greek newspapers and five more periodicals were published in Istanbul, among more than fifty publications in all.²⁷ Thus, *Eurydice* was not an isolated endeavour, unlike *Kypseli*, but part of an established publishing culture, as indicated by its longer life and higher number of contributors. Also, social

²⁴ Carren, M. Offen, *European Feminisms 1700-1950: a Political History* (California: Stanford University Press, 2000).

²⁵ For detailed publishing features, see Mary Grivea, “The Female Periodical ‘Eurydice’ (1870-1873)” [in Greek], M.A. thesis, University of Crete, 2001, 12-21. See also, Eleni Fournaraki, “Eurydice”, in *Encyclopaedia of the Greek Press 1784-1974*, vol.2 (see footnote 4), 284-286.

²⁶ Ali Arslan, *The Greek Press in the Ottoman State: Recorded in the documents of the time* [in Greek], trans. Christos Pampalos (Athens: Eplalofos Press, 2004), 30-32, 34-35.

²⁷ The aforementioned numbers are based on details given in: Chysothemis Stamatopoulou-Vasilakou, *The Greek Theatre in Constantinople during the 19th c.*, vol.1 (Athens: Neos Kyklos Konstantinopoliton, 1994), 59-67; Stratis Tarinas, *The Greek Press in Constantinople* [in Greek] (Istanbul: Echo Press, 2007), 33-151; Konstantinos Svolopoulos, *Constantinople (1856-1908): The Prosperity of Hellenism* (Athens: Ekdotiki Athinon, 1994), 64.

ideology on gender had shifted. The debate focused on the ontological, moral and intellectual parity of women gave its place to a pro-woman ideology²⁸ and the granting of the right to education. Primary education was gradually becoming all-inclusive, while the right to secondary and professional education was being claimed.²⁹ From the national and political historical perspective, the establishment of an Autocephalous Bulgarian Orthodox Church (1872), the Treaty of San Stefano (1878) and the Congress of Berlin (1878) confirmed the abandonment of the doctrine for territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire and boosted the antagonism among Balkan ethnicities begun in the late 1860s, as reflected in all their educational and cultural activity.³⁰

These changing ideological and political conditions are reflected in the purpose, content, themes, arguments and philosophical/political evidence presented to support the positions of the periodical. According to its preface, *Eurydice*, too, aims to promote the progress and intellectual growth of the women of the East. However, its foremost aim is not society's progress through women's enlightenment, but the expansion of female education "through **Orthodox Hellenism**", "**in favour of national greatness**".³¹ Therefore, *Eurydice's* agenda puts the national cause, first as the emphasis is placed on the new 'Greek-Orthodox' ideological construct, a result of the new national and political conditions.

Although the female education theme is portrayed as one of many in pursuing the periodical's goals, it does take up a significant share of it: purely education-related articles and studies are found in 25 out of 76 issues, one in three. From this perspective, the 'female education' theme ranks 4th in terms of content, alongside 'news- reports' and 'mores & customs', behind 'women's social position' and 'gendered social ideology', 'woman-related science' and 'literature'.³² However, the female education theme also appears in many other content categories, such as 'home economics', 'biographies', 'mores & customs', 'literature' etc., effectively running through nearly every issue. Besides, both *Eurydice's* preface and, primarily, the scrutiny of its content show that although the majority of articles are concerned with female nature and destiny, their objective tends to be the demand for extended female education. Thus, *Eurydice* is the first to claim the right to education for women so emphatically,³³ intent on organised *public education*.³⁴

Eurydice's dominant education-related demand is for the in-depth and meaningful education that fosters women's abilities, deepens their thinking and provides essential and beneficial knowledge. Shallow learning resulting from the superficial, limited and sub-standard female education offered thus far is castigated as 'anti-Greek' and portrayed as doubly negative for women-mothers of future men.³⁵

²⁸ Eleni Varikas, *The Ladies' Uprising: birth of a feminist consciousness in Greece 1833-1907* (Athens: Commercial Bank's Foundation for Research and Culture, 1987), 50-88.

²⁹ Dalakoura, *Education of Women*, 44-98.

³⁰ Specifically for education and nationalism, see Ibid, 305-340; Sofia Vouri, *Education and Nationalism in the Balkans: the case of North-West Macedonia 1870-1904* [in Greek] (Athens: Paraskinio Press, 1992).

³¹ Aimilia Ktena-Leontias, "Foreword", *Eurydice* 1 (1870) 1-2.

³² Published material was classified here according to its core theme, see Grivea, "The female Journal 'Eurydice' ", 22-32.

³³ For a comparison with the journal, *Thaleia*, published in Athens in 1867, see Aggelika Psarra, "Women's Journals in 19th Century" [in Greek], *Skoupa* 2 (1979): 5.

³⁴ Anonym, "On the Public Education in Prussia", *Eurydice* 8 (1871): 94.

³⁵ Ibid; Anonym, "The School for Girls in Antigone Island", *Eurydice* 8 (1872): 136.

The same demand is also framed as a claim for equal or almost equal female education to men's – founded on the principle of equality in difference.³⁶ It broadens the demand for equal education to include all women. In so doing, it counteracts the view that all-inclusive education is unnecessary, particularly of lower-class or poor women: "Some claim not all women should be educated. The poor ones, they say, are not in need of education [...] it is pointless showing why these claims are ridiculous [...]"³⁷.

Its demand for a broad, all-inclusive female education equal to men's is essentially encapsulated in the demand for 'public education', a term apparently utilised to connote primary education provided with community care and funds.³⁸ It invokes the importance of education of the people "gender notwithstanding" and "from the highest to the lowest echelon of society"³⁹ for progress thereof and points to other nations, such as the United States of America, which – according to the editor– have become "highly esteemed" due to educational provision for all.⁴⁰

Almost as often, one encounters the female *higher education* issue. This is portrayed as a rightful female need and is associated with moral equality, the result of developing reason through higher education.⁴¹ This demand is founded on the ontological equality of human beings, therefore on the entitlement of women to identical intellectual pursuits to men's. Affirmation or denial of this right is portrayed as a political stance linked to a society's system of government; education monopolies are favoured by despotic regimes, while democracy institutes free access to it.⁴² 'Higher education' seems to connote two meanings. Sometimes it is identical to the broader and deeper education demanded, without a clear-cut association with a specific level of formal education.⁴³ On other occasions, it clearly points to secondary education, since it speaks highly of those girls-only schools that also provide secondary level subjects (e.g. Ancient Greek Language and Literature, Science) taught at boys' schools, and of women's entitlement to the Arts and Sciences.⁴⁴

Regarding the aim and qualities of the education demanded, the periodical is predominantly concerned with women fully performing their duties in the family circle.⁴⁵ Broad, carefully structured and even higher female education is required, so that a woman may become suitable for precisely what she was created, namely for being a mother, a spouse and a helper. Without questioning the distinct female nature and home-bound destiny, the right to a deeper and broader education is claimed precisely because of the significance of her destiny and roles thereof.⁴⁶ This is a time when the gradually rising number of literate women demands a social basis for their education. The private sphere's female roles are renamed 'social', embellished in the

³⁶ Sappho Leontias, "On Woman's Calling Part V", *Eurydice* 6 (1870):63; I. Athanasiadis, "On Education and Upbringing of Female Sex", *Eurydice* 8 (1872): 125-128.

³⁷ Hope, "To Eurydice", *Eurydice* 10 (1871): 116.

³⁸ Anonym, "On the Public Education", 94.

³⁹ Athanasiadis, "On Education and Upbringing", 127.

⁴⁰ Hope, "To Eurydice", 117.

⁴¹ Bosporis, "Few on women", *Eurydice* 10 (1871): 109.

⁴² *Ibid*, 110-111.

⁴³ Aristaia A. B., "Women's Destination", *Eurydice* 7 (1871): 81.

⁴⁴ Anonym, "Theano the Pythagorean", *Eurydice* 5 (1870): 52-54; Bosporis, "Few on women", 111.

⁴⁵ Sappho Leontias, "Opinions on Women and their Education", *Eurydice* 8 (1872): 133.

⁴⁶ Aristaia A. B., "On Woman's Position", *Eurydice* 5 (1870): 43-44; Anonym, "The Woman", *Eurydice* 3 (1870): 28.

dominant male rhetoric and idealised. Female rhetoric adopts this role re-signification and turns it into a powerful argument for demanding an education that matches her role's social gravity.⁴⁷ So, the task of tackling family matters requires teaching, science's contribution – particularly the so-called science of Home Economics.⁴⁸ The considerable number of features with a Home Economics theme, as well as Health, Hygiene, Pharmacology, coping with illnesses and so on,⁴⁹ and their placement on the front page, show *Eurydice's* predilection for linking the in-depth female education demanded with the performance of the 'nature-' or 'God-ordained' home-bound role of women. As national rhetoric is gradually becoming nationalistic, such roles acquire even greater significance, since progress and the 'welfare of our nation' are predicated upon the literate performance of them.⁵⁰ Female literacy becomes vitally important for the nation: "[...] where woman possesses knowledge of national history, there the nation's ideal reigns and is bolstered".⁵¹ So, the promotion of a broad, higher and public female education gains strong support.

In the same nation-related discourse the aim of female education is also linked to women's social activity. Although the periodical does not demand their full participation in social and political life, it does demand their participation in social activity that does not run contrary to female nature (e.g. charitable and cultural activity), does not hamper their family duties and makes them useful to society and the nation.

[...] I do not share the opinion of those suggesting and labouring for woman to go beyond the bounds of the sphere demarcated by nature and exit into social life, plying man's work, voting, electing, debating in assembly, presiding in court perhaps, and generally being politically active alongside man [...] I agree as to admitting women to all societies and all associations aiming to perform certain philanthropic work [...].⁵²

However, a more radical discourse – within the pages of the journal – portrays work not only as something possible but also as something necessary to support a family, cope with any future life adversities and become moral. Therefore, instruction should not only aim to educate but also to familiarise women with work.⁵³

Regarding its philosophy, the views expressed stem from the fundamental principles of Enlightenment's natural law and Christian philosophy. It is the Gospel's theology as well as Enlightenment's fundamental principles that justify female natural/social rights⁵⁴ and substantiate the demands for extended education and access

⁴⁷ Varikas, *The Ladies' Uprising*, 39-63; Dalakoura, *Education of Women*, 291-296.

⁴⁸ Anonym, "The Woman", 29.

⁴⁹ Articles concerning Home Economics are encountered in 21 issues; the same number of issues (22) includes articles providing health, medicine and pharmacology practical knowledge, Grivea, "The female journal 'Eurydice' ", 22-32.

⁵⁰ See Athanasiadis, "On Education and Upbringing", 128.

⁵¹ Anonym, "The State of Women's Education in Thrace", *Eurydice* 2 (1873): 26.

⁵² Leontias, "On Woman's Calling Part V", 63.

⁵³ [Headmistress of the Haskioi School for Girls], ["On Labour"], *Eurydice* 19 (1871): 225-229.

⁵⁴ See Anonym, "The Woman Part I", 4. Sappho Leontias, "On Woman's Calling Part IV", *Eurydice* 5 (1870): 49-52.

to new areas of social activity. However, Christian philosophy is shown to be the dominant influence here.

In general, the female education debate in *Eurydice*'s pages takes the form of a campaign for the provision of extended community-sponsored, equal to male, female education to "all echelons of society", and for more attention to an adult education in the gender and nation ideology contexts. Essentially, the periodical's discourse is part of the period's intensifying debate on developing a systematic popular education in the community, necessary in view of the new social and national realities, with the periodical demanding a place for women.

Eurydice's discourse shifts the debate to women's position in society and to inter-gender relations both being directly/indirectly connected to education issue. *Eurydice*'s pro-women claims are broadened to include female participation in communities' social and cultural activities, and women's right to work. The ways the journal challenges education, cultural and work inequalities are: a) by a rhetoric based on the principle of equality in difference, which is for the first time elaborated and systematically presented by the ascendant journal's discourse. According to this rhetoric, gender equality is meant more as parity than as isonomy, though a more combating minor discourse also appear, b) encouraging women to journalism and writing so that they could contribute to the intellectual development of the female sisterhood and c) demanding female governing of women's institutions.

The notion of 'women's sisterhood' is clearly expressed and has replaced in the journal's rhetoric the simple collective category of 'women' used in *Kypseli*. Although the term invokes a stronger consciousness of female unity and awareness of communality, educational, class and nation hierarchies penetrated the 'sisterhood' discourse; the clear national if not nationalistic ideology, echoed in *Eurydice*'s discourse, breaks somehow the appealed female unity, and the phrase "all sisters of East" is rather addressed to Orthodox/Greek speaking women than to all female subjects of the Empire.

***Bosporis* (1899-1906)**

This was the third female periodical to be published in Istanbul, owned and edited by a woman. *Bosporis*⁵⁵ was published by Cornelia Preveziotou (later Tavaniotou) (1878- [unknown])⁵⁶ in 1899 and circulated up to 1906,⁵⁷ so it had a significantly longer life than *Kypseli* and *Eurydice*. Initially a newspaper (7/4/1899 – 20/1/1900), it then became a periodical (10/3/1900 – 20/2/1906), weekly for the first three months and every ten days after that. While a periodical, its sheet size changed from quarter to eighth and its pagecount grew from 8 to 12.⁵⁸ An interesting change during its

⁵⁵ For the first year of the periodical's circulation in its title was also included the female definite article (*I Bosporis*).

⁵⁶ For Cornelia Preveziotou, a poet, short-story writer, translator and editor, see Persa Apostoli, "The female publishing activity (Literary and Art periodicals 1900-1940): Artemisia Landraki and Kornilia Preveziotou", in *Women's presence in Literary and Art Periodicals 1900-1940. Conference Proceedings*, ed. Sofia Denisi (Athens: Gutenberg, 2008), 227-229.

⁵⁷ *Bosporis* continued being published after 1906, however no longer as a female periodical. It circulated as a family periodical (May 1907 - April 1908), edited by male editors.

⁵⁸ In some issues pagecount is over 12 in the double issues up to 20.



seven-year run was the shift in its gendered self-characterisation. For a year and a half (7/4/1899 – 5/9/1900), it called itself an *illustrated women's weekly* or *illustrated women's periodical*. Then, *women's* was left out and *illustrated periodical* remained (5/9/1900 – 20/4/1901). Finally, it became a *family periodical* (30/4/1901 – 10/2/1906). Despite these changes, it remained an essentially female publication, not only on account of its female publisher/editor and its consistently woman-authored articles (also proclaimed in a subtitle throughout its life), but also because women-related themes remained its mainstay even when it defined itself as a family periodical, despite the falling number of articles on the

emancipation issue. Likewise, its ideological orientation, style and type of features remained unchanged.

Bosporis appears to have had subscribers in all Ottoman Greek communities, the so-called Near East, and in Europe (Greece, modern-day Ukraine, Georgia, Russia, England and France). The broad reach of *Bosporis* probably resulted not only from the different publishing conditions in the Ottoman Empire at the dawn of the 20th century⁵⁹ and the increased female readership – itself the result of the rapid expansion of the female education network in Greek communities – but also from the warm reception of *Bosporis* in view of its content, style and ideology. *Bosporis* was an apparently conservative periodical preaching a moral female education aligned with the Greek-Orthodox national ideology. Given the popularity of nationalist and irredentist ideologies within Ottoman millets at the time resulting in the decline of feminist discourse,⁶⁰ such a periodical naturally appealed to more readers than pro-emancipation ones.

Bosporis was at the opposite end of *Kypseli* and *Eurydice* as regards its views on women's social destiny. It sternly opposes the 'malady' of the times, e.g. "the ill-boding social phenomenon of female emancipation",⁶¹ as stated clearly in its maiden issue's programmatic statements and their annual anniversary repeats. Its anti-

⁵⁹ During the second half of the 19th century and up to the beginning of the 20th, Greek publications run to a hundred (Svolopoulos, *Constantinople 1856-1908*, 64).

⁶⁰ See, Efi Avdela και Angelika Psarra, «Engendering 'Greekness': women's emancipation and irredentist politics in nineteenth century Greece», *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 20, αρ. 1, (2005) 67-79.

⁶¹ [Cornelia Preveziotou], "Programmatic statements of *Bosporis*", *Bosporis* 1 (1899): 2.

emancipation stance is also proclaimed in its front-page editorials, most of them on this or gendered relations.

Woman has begun – alas! – to ask that she be considered a being identical to man in powers and destiny, in spite of the immense and irrefutable witness borne by nature, and consequently demanding a social standing and livelihood activity identical and indistinguishable to man's, namely political significance and professional emancipation.⁶²

Its core belief regarding women's social role and destiny is summed up in this: "woman was created to fulfil important moral duties and great social ideals on earth, making a **moral** living [...] **at home** and by the **hearth**".⁶³ Aligned with this socio-philosophical stance, its aim is 'the moral and intellectual education' of women by the promotion of 'healthy' principles and knowledge suitable for their home-bound activities, within the broader Christian Orthodox and Greek-befitting principles.⁶⁴

Female education is thus portrayed as essential for conveying moral principles and values needed to fulfil a woman's destiny 'as God and nature ordained' and to form a Greek-Orthodox consciousness and conduct:

Never cease to be Women, not like those who reject tenderness, purity, shame, who denounce the hearth, which for us is the field of duty, and who share the pitiful, strange, heinous delusion of emancipation! Never cease to be Mothers [...] Never cease to be Greek [...] Never sell out your religion [...].⁶⁵

The debate on education in *Bosporis* does not include further demands for extending women's rights. Female primary education was by then nearly all-inclusive and secondary education boasted a substantial network of comprehensive higher girls-only schools. In Istanbul, for instance, there were four community-run higher girls-only schools, 'Hellenic' schools (lower tier of secondary education) and a large number of private schools for girls with a sizeable 'Hellenic' department.⁶⁶

The right to primary and secondary education is portrayed as the nation's concession to women and is equated to granting full rights to them. The editor argues that education, the "supreme and, all in all, sole female right",⁶⁷ has been conceded to women by the Nation (*Ghenos*) of its fair-minded disposition and, in fact, more amply than was due, as the good quality of materials and infrastructure of girls-only schools testify.⁶⁸ This stance probably explains the absence of further education-related demands, which, furthermore, are portrayed as part of the meaningless 'new emancipation'.⁶⁹

Thus, not only no mention is made to the female right of access to university education – at the same time as C. Parren's combative *Efimerída ton Kyrión* (The Ladies' Journal) in Greece is demanding access to tertiary education for women -, but such access and activity is implicitly criticised:

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ [Euthaleia Adam], "I will not Dishonour the Sacred Arms", *Bosporis* 1 (1899): 98-99.

⁶⁶ Dalakoura, *Women's Education*, 47-56, 103-136.

⁶⁷ [Cornelia Preveziotou], "The Women's Congress in London", *Bosporis* 15 (1899): 114.

⁶⁸ Dalakoura, *Women's Education*, 105-107, 120, 126-127, 145-146.

⁶⁹ [Preveziotou], "The Women's Congress in London", 114.

Miss de Briez [...], having obtained her Doctor of Medicine diploma, asked for and was given permission to submit a scientific thesis for examination, to attain the title of anatomy and physiology professor. The pro-emancipation organ reporting this news congratulates itself on this new conquest for emancipation. We do not congratulate it.⁷⁰

However, the periodical appears to acquiesce to vocational training for lower-class girls. Its criticism of women's professional emancipation does not refer to poor women's work, 'who are unfortunately employed outside women's spectrum of activities, forced as they are to earn a decent living'. What is rigidly criticised is female work resulting from the desire to do male work or to be comfortably off, in contrast with *Eurydice's* portrayal of family prosperity as one objective of female work.

Thus, the periodical's content on purely education-related issues is more concerned with system structure, school organisation, curriculum, instruction, and new pedagogical principles and theories.⁷¹ In those areas, *Bosporis* provides considerable coverage of the popular education theme. Particularly, female popular education is portrayed as a highly serious matter to be addressed by the community as a corollary of its having catered for men's equivalent. Female popular education should be practical and feminine. Purely feminine subjects should replace subjects of no value to the people's daughters (e.g. Calligraphy). Also recommended is the addition of one more year of primary education to teach purely female courses (Home Economics, Pharmacology, Hygienics etc.). But what is emphatically stressed for female popular education (as it is for female education of all levels) is the need for moral education. Particularly lower-class girls' education should cater for instilling morality, for their families could not contribute to it.⁷²

Conclusion

The key discourses in the analyzed periodicals are concerned with negotiating gendered relations and women's social destiny on the one hand, and education on the other. Although education is not their top theme in terms of published content, it is effectively their core one and their *raison d'être*, as declared in all three publications' programmatic statements, since it permeates all their other discourses and demands on behalf of women.

Education as a core theme of the journals discourses is negotiated in different ways in each journal, due to changing ideologies, and historical and political circumstances. The Enlightenment philosophy and the Tanzimat Reforms in Ottoman Empire (started with the issue of Hattı i Serif in 1839) lead to an optimistic approach to women's education, as a part of the society's progress, an approach reflected in the pages of *Kypseli*: the elementary education system proposed by the Greek

⁷⁰ [Cornelia Preveziotou], "World News", *Bosporis* 7 (1901): 84.

⁷¹ See for example: Aglaia Preveziotou, "Pedagogics (Edmond Demolins): How we should bring up our children. Part 1", *Bosporis* 1 (1899):5; G. Karatzas, "The Instruction of Handicraft in Primary Schools", *Bosporis* 6 (1899):43-45; [Cornelia Preveziotou], "The female teacher", *Bosporis* 5 (1899): 65-67; [Sokratis Sarivaxevanis, "Schools in Norway", *Bosporis* 23 (1902):258-260; Cornelia Preveziotou, "Pupils' Homework", *Bosporis* 3 (1905):25-27.

⁷² [Cornelia Preveziotou], "Female Popular Education", *Bosporis* 27 (1900):217-218.

Enlighteners for men's education was the same one that was adapted and proposed by *Kypseli* for women's education, overstepping – additionally – its class hierarchies in educational provision. Moreover, the proposed educational system was much ahead of the era, as it started being in practice quite later than the time it was proposed (f.i. education “for all” started being provided from the decade of 1870s onwards, meanwhile vocational education was partly provided only at the beginning of 20th century). *Kypseli*'s discourse on education constitutes a critique of the historically constructed, gendered social order. It points out women's oppression as a universal social phenomenon attributed to male dominated character of the societies. It also reflects a radical politic thinking as it involves political notions such as social justice/injustice, equality of all human beings, and, based on these claims, gender equality in regard with social/natural right to education.

Eurydice's discourses, more powerful and concrete/specific in regard with the educational claims, emerged in political and ideological circumstances receptive to such claims: the educational system of primary education was already extended and a need for its further extension had already been sensed; economic growth in addition to the same political circumstances brought forward a broader questioning and a debate on the effectiveness of the education system and the educational reforms needed. Thus, *Eurydice*'s discourses supported by the philogynic discourse of the era pointed out women's right to community's educational provision in all its aspects. *Eurydice*'s discourse on education, though more clearly connected to other social rights for women (social activity, and, on conditions, women's work), it highly emphasized the priority of home/family-bounded women's roles. The principle of ‘equality in difference’ that penetrated its argumentation eliminated the incisiveness of the critique concerning women's social position and defined the genre of the claimed social rights.

Unlike the preceding journals, *Bosporis*' discourse argued forcefully against the claims for extending women's rights to education, as the status of educational provision was equated to granting full educational rights to women. Extended educational rights were identified with emancipation claims and mainly with livelihood activity which was strongly opposed. The proposed educational changes merely supplemented the existed provision or amended operational parameters of the school system, but they did not change the gendered educational philosophy. These views on women's education and the gendered social ideology penetrating them reflected the concervatization of the gendered social ideology and the boosting of the nationalistic and irredentist Greek ideology that made emancipation/feminist claims seem ‘hostile’ to -so called- ‘national cause’ and thus were unable to appeal to the society.

Thus – and based on the preceding analysis of the education theme in Ottoman Greek female publications – women's discourse on female education proves very progressive, even radical, until the 1870s. This is consequent to the demand for equal community provision of education to women in the middle of the century; the demand for education for all women, irrespective of social origin; mainly, the demand for female vocational training, also in the middle of the century, when the female education network was just beginning to take shape and women's general education was effectively confined to urban areas, middle and upper class women, with vocational training left out of community schools until the 1910s. From *Eurydice*'s time onwards, women's ‘feminist’ discourse wanes. At the close of the century, their demands appear to be limited to improving education quality, without venturing outside what has already been achieved. Moreover, the opposition to broadening

women's educational rights as well as social rights (such as women's work), when endangering domesticity, turned female discourses on education to deeply conservative/reactional discourses. The anti-emancipation/anti-feminist discourse in women's serial publication that followed *Bosporis* (and until the establishment of the Turkish republic in 1923 and the abolition of the communities' institution), though surfaced women's writing, was neither that strong nor such insistent as in *Bosporis*.⁷³ The forthcoming collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the First World War and the Greek-Turkish war that followed shifted women's concerns away from the women's rights issue and the feminist/antifeminist debate.

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⁷³ See for instance the following serial publications: "*Ladies' Newspaper*" (1909-1912) edited in Istanbul by Xarikleia P. Melandinou, "Almanac of Aegean sea" (1905-1906) and "Almanac of Asia Minor" (1906-1918), both edited in the Aegean island of Samos by Eleni Svoronou.

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