



Summary :

Institutions established in Ayvalik (Cydoniae) in the early 20th century aiming at improving the agricultural economy of the area and at training farmers.

Date

1905-1914

Geographical Location

Ayvalik

1. The “Botanical Garden”

In 1905 agricultural subjects were included in the curriculum of the highest grades of primary and high schools of the community of [Ayvalik](#) (Cydoniae). This development in the educational matters of the city was due to the need for new methods and techniques concerning the cultivation of basic commercialized products like oil and raisins. The new methods were based on the discoveries made in Europe in the 1870s pertaining plant pathology and the use of chemicals for fighting diseases (phylloxera, downy mildew) as well as the use of new farming tools like the viticultural plough.¹

The architects of the above educational movement in the city of Ayvalik were the doctor Ioannes Kerestetzis, president of the **board** of the community schools, and Dimitrios Liapis, teacher and inspector of primary schools. Kerestetzis and Ioannis Gonatas, another member of the education board, prompted some members of the Pantazopoulos family, who had settled in [Dikeli](#), to donate a garden of nearly 6.7 acres to the schools. The garden was above the city hospital, near the small church of St. Constantine. The school board used the above area in order to make a school garden aiming at the theoretical teaching of agricultural subjects as well as the application of teaching in practice. The smooth operation of the new educational institution was helped by two newly employed gardeners, while Dimitrios Liapis and P. Lagidis, a Greek subject originating from Ayvalik, who was also a state agriculturalist, served as teachers. Some months later the garden was expanded, since the brothers Theodoros and Ilias Iliopoulos, who had settled in Italy, donated an area of 4.4 acres bordering the land where the new institution was already in operation. This means that the overall area of the garden was approximately 11.1 acres, including a variety of trees (figs, pears, olives, peaches, etc.) as well as a vast vineyard. In addition, there was a two-storey building inside the Iliopoulos estate, whose rooms were converted into classrooms so that the students could attend lessons there in case of bad weather. The classrooms were also used by the female students for lessons of silkworm breeding. In general, the process of education included learning and training the students in vaccination, saplings, practical plant pathology (diseases of trees, vineyards, olives, etc.) and the new methods of treatment, according to the new developments in agricultural science. The female students mainly practised floristry and sericulture.

2. The “Agricultural Association”

The Agricultural Association was founded in Ayvalik in 1907. The founder of the association was the doctor Ioannis Kerestetzis, while in most elections held for the designation of the board of directors M. Alexiou was elected secretary and A. Moraitelis and S. Krystallidis treasurers. Technical counselors of the association were the agriculturalist P. Lagidis and the teacher D. Liapis, while honorary members became the donators of the Pantazopoulos and Iliopoulos families. The association operated for seven years, until 1914. The objectives of the Agricultural Association, as they were defined by its founding members, were: a) the economic support of the school garden so that its operation would not be at the expense of school boards. From the first year of operation 180 members joined the association with an annual subscription of 6 **mecidiye**; b) the elevation of the garden to an educational institution and a profitable property; c) the impartment of practical agricultural knowledge to farmers by means of consultative lectures given by special agriculturalists; d) the reforestation of the hills around the city with the help of students, gardeners and foresters of the garden; e) the foundation of an Agricultural School according to the standards of the Greek state.



The members of the association helped considerably mainly the vinedressers of the area. In order for the latter to cultivate better varieties of raisin, in great demand abroad in that period, the members of the association were in regular contact with Greek and foreign teachers of agricultural schools, who occasionally sent consultative reports relevant to the modern methods of farming and producing. At practical level, the members of the association were particularly active. It should be noted that they were responsible for carrying special vines protected against phylloxera from Montpellier in France, to Ayvalik. The vines were planted in a specially prepared vineyard of the garden.² In this way, special seedbeds were created including 10-12,000 growing vines the local vinedressers had bought at very low prices. The board of the association helped greatly with the incorporation of the hills surrounding the city into the land register. They were the hills of Agios Konstantinos, Agios Antonios, Paramythelia and Anemomylos. As a result, the hills became a property of the hospital and the schools of the city at a very modest expense. This development mainly resulted from the intervention of the Greek-speaking **kaymakam** Ibrahim Hakki from Ioannina. The above hills were reforested with trees of the garden by its students. By 1914 a quite extensive thicket had been created there.

1. Καλλιβρετάκης, Λ., *Η δυναμική του αγροτικού εκσυγχρονισμού στην Ελλάδα του 19ου αιώνα* (Athens 1990), pp. 253, 331-332.
2. In the 19th century phylloxera was the most common disease of the vineyards, which resulted in lower production of raisins, thus directly affecting wine industry. The French vineyards went through a major crisis in the 1880s; see Γεννάδιος, Π., *Περί φυλλοξήρας της φθοροποιού* (Athens 1889), pp. 15-16, and Πιζάνιας, Π., *Οικονομική Ιστορία της Ελληνικής Σταφίδας 1851-1912* (Athens 1988), p. 109.

Bibliography :

	Σακκάρης Γ. , <i>Ιστορία των Κυδωνιών</i> , Αθήναι 1920
	Κερεστετζή Α. , <i>Αϊβαλί (1832-1922). Αναμνήσεις από το ανέκδοτο τετράδιο του ιατρού Ιωάννου Κερεστετζή</i> , Αθήνα 1981
	Μαμώνη Κ. , "Σωματειακή οργάνωση του ελληνισμού στη Μικρά Ασία", <i>Δελτίο Ιστορικής και Εθνολογικής Εταιρείας</i> , 26, 1983, 63-114
	Καλλιβρετάκης Λ. , <i>Η δυναμική του αγροτικού εκσυγχρονισμού στην Ελλάδα του 19ου αιώνα</i> , Αθήνα 1990
	Πιζάνιας Π. , <i>Οικονομική Ιστορία της Ελληνικής Σταφίδας 1851-1912</i> , Αθήνα 1988
	Γεννάδιος Π. , <i>Περί φυλλοξήρας της φθοροποιού</i> , 1889 Αθήνα

Glossary :

	board of schools
The board of schools (ephoreia) consisted of members either elected by the community or nominated by a commission. They were authorized to supervise the proper functioning of the educational institutions.	
	kaymakam
An Ottoman official, governor of the administrative unit that succeeded the kaza in the late Ottoman period.	
	mecidiye
Silver Ottoman coin equal to 20 kuruş (piastres) and 1/5 of the gold Ottoman lira (1 lira = 100 kuruş), named after Abdülmeçid I. The	



coin was put in circulation during in 1844.