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Historicity as a legitimising argument in the case of the Greek educational reforms of 1985 and 1997–1998 in general and technical-vocational education

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The purpose of this study is to investigate how the ‘historical argument’, namely references to the educational policies and practices of other historical periods, was used by Greek politicians in the framework of the 1985 and 1997–1998 educational reforms. Employing the method of quantitative and qualitative content analysis, the authors attempt, on the basis of original sources (parliamentary debates/minutes) both to count and interpret the historical references.

Keywords: historical argument; historicity; Greece; educational reform

Introduction

After the Second World War, and especially after Sputnik in 1958,¹ the developed countries of the West re-approached education and its relationship to economy and society. As a result, reforming actions were taken that were dominated by human capital theory and aimed at the connection of school to economy, the extension of compulsory education, the fighting of educational inequality, and the promotion of equal opportunities. The underlying principle of these reforms was that school can contribute to the financial development of a country (financial efficiency), to the socialisation and politicisation of the individual, and to dealing with social justice.² A liberal entrustment of education was thus expressed. This was also the target of the reforms that were attempted in Greece throughout the twentieth century (1913–1917, 1929, 1964–1965, 1976–1977)³ and especially its last two decades (1985 and 1997–1998). The latter are the subject of our present work.

More specifically, the purpose of this study is to present and analyse the educational discourse of the Greek politicians in Parliament on the 1985 and 1997–1998 educational reforms, invoking the ‘historical argument’. Positive or negative references to educational policies and practices within previous educational reforms were

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¹See Arther S. Trace, *What Ivan Knows and Johnny Doesn't* (New York: Random House, 1961).

²Anna Fragoudaki, *Sociology of Education* (Athens: Papazisis, 1985) (in Greek). Michael F. D. Young, *The Curriculum of the Future: From the 'New Sociology Of Education' to a Critical Theory of Learning* (London: Falmer Press, 1998).

³Andreas Kazamias, ‘Educational Reforms 1957–1977: Myths and facts.’ In *Educational Reforms in Greece (Efforts, Deadends, Perspectives)*, ed. Andreas Kazamias and Michael Kassotakis (Rethymno: University of Crete, 1982), 9–19 (in Greek).

made in these discussions. Our main interest here is to present the degree to which historicity was used by politicians as a legitimising argument towards the new reforms and the contribution of this particular argument to the effectiveness of the effort. This is what Popkewitz calls reform rhetoric (reform discourse).⁴

Theoretical framework

The term 'educational reform' refers to a complicated phenomenon, as it attempts extended changes of the educational system as a whole or within significant sectors of it.⁵ It involves interventions and changes to the structure of the educational system, educational knowledge, or/and educational practices. The specific reform options are connected with the notions of political power and social control,⁶ since they reflect the theoretical and ideological perceptions of the dominant social and political groups that promote them. Consequently, the promotion of an educational reform constitutes a practical social event based on specific ideological principles, suggests specific educational interventions, and is demonstrated and supported by a specific rhetorical argumentation.⁷ In fact, the understanding and interpretation of the evolution and application of educational reforms are greatly facilitated by the sociological approach as a critical policy intervention.⁸ According to M.F.D. Young, such an approach would help explain the starting point of reform policies and assess their potential application in practice, as well as explore the feasibility of predictions regarding future policies and their potential implementation.⁹

The Greek reforms that were attempted in the twentieth century can be viewed, according to Kazamias, as a Sisyphean and ineffective effort.¹⁰ They were, usually, corrective interventions morphological in character rather than structural, and hence substantial, interventions. Moreover for Greece, a country with an extremely centralised bureaucratic system, strong political involvement was critical to the realisation of educational reform.¹¹ Furthermore, the arguments that were used by the dominant

⁴Thomas S. Popkewitz, 'Educational Reform: Rhetoric, Ritual and Social Interest', *Educational Theory* 38, no. 1 (1988): 77–93.

⁵M. B. Ginsburg, S. Cooper, R. Raghu and H. Zegara. 'National and World-system Explanations of Educational Reform', *Comparative Education Review* 34, no. 4 (1990): 479–91.

⁶Basil Bernstein, 'Pedagogy, Identities, Frontiers: Talking about a Theory of Symbolic Control. An Interview given by Basil Bernstein to Joseph Solomon', *Contemporary Issues* 66 (1998): 125–34. Basil Bernstein, *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity: Theory, Research, Critique* (Lanham, MD–Boulder, CO–New York–Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000). Kostas Lamnias, 'A sociological analysis of modified educational practices', *Mentor* 5 (2002): 82–102 (in Greek). Michael F. D. Young, 'An Old Problem in a New Context: Rethinking the Relationship between Sociology and Educational Policy', *International Studies in Sociology of Education* 14, no. 1 (2004): 3–20.

⁷Stephen Ball, *Education Reform: A Critical and Poststructural Approach* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1994).

⁸Young, 'An Old Problem in a New Context', 4.

⁹*Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁰Andreas Kazamias, 'The Curse of Sisyphus in Greek Educational Reform: A Socio-political and Cultural Interpretation', in *Comparative Education III*, ed. S. Bouzakis (Athens: Gutenberg, 2004) (in Greek).

¹¹Nicos Mouzelis, 'Tradition and Change in Greek Politics: From Eleftherios Venizelos to Andreas Papandreou', in *Greece under Development* (Athens, Exandas, 1986) (in Greek). Siphis Bouzakis, *Educational Reforms in Greece: Primary and Secondary General and Technical-Vocational Education. Reform attempts of 1959, 1964, 1976/77, 1985, 1997/98*, v. B. (Athens: Gutenberg, 2002) (in Greek).

political forces to promote their reform actions in the twentieth century had a structural-functionalist character,¹² according to which the educational system is affected by the various technological developments and the demands that emerge in the labour field. More specifically, school targets the students' socialisation, the promotion of social justice through meritocracy, the availability of equal knowledge opportunities, and the securing of financial effectiveness. Educational reforms aim at the promotion of these targets and, thus, they help achieve consensus and system equilibrium in the society.

The transition from conception to enactment and eventual application of an educational reform involves several stages. In Greece, a state educational discourse (an educational draft of a law with a preamble) is initiated. Subsequently, the draft is forwarded to the Parliament and is discussed both within the relevant parliamentary committee and in the plenary session prior to the voting procedure, which turns it into a law. During this process and, especially, during the discussion in Parliament, a dialogue on the various issues of the draft takes place. Groups with common interests¹³ (trade unions, institutions, church, political parties) but individuals also attempt to intervene in the debate and to amend the draft to their own benefit. Thus the state, which is represented politically by the governing party, is bombarded by the often contradictory demands of those groups. It is obvious that, as Weiler¹⁴ notes, the government aims at maximum political profit during the phase of reform enactment, while it hopes for the minimum political cost during the application phase. This apt remark particularly concerns Greece, where because of the centralised educational system, the frequently unstable political life and the powerful cliental system many reforms have been postponed and revoked and only few of them have reached the application phase, though with numerous amendments. It is worth noting that the unstable political life in Greece relates to an 'anti-communist' governmental ideology, which developed after the Greek Civil War (1946–1949), lasted until the fall of the dictatorship (1974), and explains the dominant structural-functionalist viewpoint of justification of the need for educational reforms, as mentioned earlier.

Therefore, as the government aims at maximum political profit during the enactment of a reform, it tries to maximise consensus among all social groups. Thus, during the relevant discussions of the draft in the Parliament, the Committees and the media, both the Government and the opposition parties exhaust their arguments to convince the audience of the need for reform and to increase their political influence. The governing party, especially, which is called to vote for its own reforming effort, has a special need for the widest possible consent, particularly among the educators, who are the ones that will eventually apply it in practice.

¹²See: Talcott Parsons, *Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives* (Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966). Talcott Parsons, *The System of Modern Societies* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971). A. H. Halsey and J. Karabel, *Power and Ideology in Education* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1978).

¹³Regarding these groups see: Margaret Archer, 'Educational Politics: A Model for their Analysis', in *Policy Making in Education*, ed. I. McNay and J. Ozga (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1985), 39–64. Kostas Lavthas, 'Political Analysis, Educational Policy and Groups of Interests', in *State, Society, Market and Policies in Education*, ed. N. Papadakis (Athens: Savalas, 2003) (in Greek).

¹⁴Hans N. Weiler, 'The Politics of Reform and Non-reform', *Comparative Education Review* 32 (1988): 251–65.

Numerous legitimising arguments (historical, comparative, research data, socio-economic needs, etc.) are used. Frequent use of the comparative argument¹⁵ is made, through which the speakers refer to the theory and the practice of foreign, usually advanced, educational systems¹⁶ in order to convince their audience that they are themselves modern and eager to imitate what is considered to be internationally modern and effective. A typical example is the frequent reference to the Finnish model by contemporary Greek politicians, due to the high scores of Finnish students in the PISA exam. On a smaller scale, reference is made to educational research findings and to those socioeconomic needs that call for an adjustment of the education system.

A number of essays on the rhetoric concerning the legitimisation of the educational reforms have appeared worldwide, which focus on the comparative argument.¹⁷ This argument follows two main directions:¹⁸ (1) a 'new' successful educational institution, already applied in developed countries, is presented as a candidate institution for adoption; (2) an evaluative approach is used to identify, through comparison, those sectors of the educational situation of a country that are inferior to the respective ones of other countries. Similarly, we could suggest that the focus models of the historical argument can: (a) identify some educational interventions of the past that were abolished by an anti-reform but considered successful nowadays; (b) evaluate negatively the educational situation of the past, thus reinforcing the need for contemporary reform interventions.

Researchers have not particularly worked on historicity as an argument focusing on education, that is, to what extent the historical educational past can formulate, in either a positive or a negative way, a legitimising reform argument. Faber's paper (1978) provides a characteristic example, as it refers to the use of the historical argument in the political dialogue in Germany on three significant episodes of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,¹⁹ which, nevertheless, are not related to education.

¹⁵Philipp Gonon, *Das internationale Argument in der Bildungsreform, Die Rolle internationaler Bezüge in den bildungspolitischen Debatten zur schweizerischen Berufs- und zur englischen Reform der Sekundarstufe LL* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1998). David Phillips, 'Learning from Elsewhere in Education: Some Perennial Problems revisited with Reference to British Interest in Germany', *Comparative Education* 36, no. 3 (2000): 297–304.

¹⁶Nowadays, the case of the two major parties in Greece, that is, of PA.SO.K. and N.D., which often appeal to the Swedish and Finnish models, respectively, is up to the point.

¹⁷Comparative educational research questions centre on the educational systems of the developed industrial countries. In the international literature, relevant publications refer to the educational systems of the USA and Western Europe, especially those of Sweden and UK. See, for instance: National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1983). S. F. Hamilton, and K. Hurrelmann, 'The School to Career Transition in Germany and the United States', *Teachers College Record* 96, no. 2 (1994): 329–44. Hans Luyten, 'School Size Effects on Achievement in Secondary Education: Evidence from the Netherlands, Sweden and the USA', *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* 5, no. 1 (1994): 75–99. Ingrid Nilsson, 'A Spearhead into the Future. Swedish Comprehensive School Reforms in Foreign Scholarly Literature 1950–1980', *Comparative Education* 25, no. 3 (1989): 357–82. Torsten Husen, 'The Swedish School Reform: Exemplary Both Ways', *Comparative Education* 25, no. 3 (1989): 345–48.

¹⁸See D.-S. G. Carter, and M.-H. O'Neill, eds., *Case Studies in Educational Change: An International Perspective* (Pennsylvania: Falmer Press, 1995). D. Halpin and B. Troyna, 'The Politics of Education Policy Borrowing', *Comparative Education* 31, no. 3 (1995): 303–10. Siphis Bouzakis and Gerasimos Koustourakis, 'The Comparative Argument in the Case of the Greek Educational Reform in 1997–1998', *Comparative Education* 38, no. 2 (2002): 155–69.

¹⁹Karl-Georg Faber, 'The Use of History in Political Debate', *History and Theory* 17, no. 4 (1978): 36–67.

Kazamias, while discussing comparative Proteus in the British and the American case, that is epistemological and methodological development and orientations of Comparative Education in the USA and UK, points out that the historical approach has been neglected by contemporary scientific comparative research, thus rendering the scientific field of the social sciences poorer. This is why he suggests that researchers should reinvent the historical social approach ‘in a cosmos of economic globalization and instrumental rationality’.²⁰

The historical context and the educational reforms of 1985 and 1997–1998

The socioeconomic and political context of the 1980s and the 1990s, within which the two educational reforms under examination were attempted, is characterized by:

- The rise of the Panhellenic Socialistic Movement (PASOK) to power in 1981. In the first half of the 1980s it attempted to introduce significant innovations, involving: the Comprehensive Lyceum, teachers’ training at the universities, completion of the language reform through the introduction of the monotonic system, the introduction of a new Law Framework concerning universities, reorganisation of administration through decentralisation.
- The entrance of Greece into the European Economic Community during the previous government term, when the right-wing party of New Democracy (ND) was in power.
- The entrance of Greece into the European Currency Union in 1995.
- The rekindling of nationalism after the collapse of the former Eastern bloc in 1990 and the creation of the country FYROM under the name ‘Macedonia’. This fact stirred up historical memories, as history was used in the social and political discourse of that period. The confrontation with Turkey in 1996 over the island of Imia in the Aegean Sea had a similar effect. However, these two events resulted in the reorientation of Greek foreign policy by the Simitis Government. It was now believed that the protection of Greece from external dangers and the strengthening of its international status are related to its European integration and convergence, the crucial points being economy and the potential entrance of Turkey into the European Community.

This is a new sociopolitical status that favours reforms. Thus, in the educational sector, connecting school to the new socioeconomic needs becomes a necessity, as it relates to the intensive efforts of the country to achieve convergence with the economy of the other state members.²¹ In the new era, therefore, ideological contradictions appear due to the coexistence of a national discourse that relates to historicity and of an international discourse that refers to the demands of the European Community. In other words, we have historicity versus internationalism, introversion versus extroversion, nationalism versus Europeanisation.

²⁰Andreas Kazamias, ‘Re-inventing the Historical in Comparative Education: Reflections on a Protean Episteme by a Contemporary Player’, *Comparative Education* 37, no. 4 (2001): 439–49.

²¹Michalis Kassotakis, ‘The Challenges of our Era and the Recent Reform in the Greek Education’, in *Historical-Comparative Perspectives: Festschrift in Honour of Andreas M. Kazamias*. *Comparative Education* 5, ed. Siphis Bouzakis (Athens: Gutenberg, 2000), 435–461 (in Greek).

The 1566/85 law on General Primary and Secondary education is considered to be the reform of 1985. The main interventions of this law include the establishment of the Comprehensive Multi-branched Lyceum, the re-establishment of the Pedagogical Institute, the introduction of foreign-language teaching in the Primary School, and the teaching of music and gymnastics by specialists. In the biennium 1997–1998 there was another reform attempt: (a) through Law 2525/97 on the Comprehensive Lyceum, which establishes both the day-long Preschool and the daylong Primary School as well as Second Chance schools, abolishes the appointment list, upgrades the Pedagogical Institute, introduces the evaluation of the educational performance and of the educators themselves; (b) through Law 2640/98 on Technical-Vocational Education (TVE), which introduces Technical-Vocational Schools on a two-cycle basis (a two-year cycle at the beginning, followed by a single-year one). At the end of the first cycle, students receive a certificate that allows them to enter the job market. The same holds for the second cycle as well, at the end of which students can attend an Institute of Professional Training or a Technological Educational Institute. In the latter case, they need to acquire six months' professional experience first.²²

Research questions

In analysing and elaborating our research material, we focus on the following questions:

- Which political forces use the historical argument and how often?
- On which sectors of educational theory and practice does historical argumentation focus?
- What references to previous educational facts are made and why are some particular cases selected over others?
- What are the 'role' and the 'quality' of the historical references? In other words, is the 'historical' argumentation used to legitimise the educational policy that is adopted or aimed at promoting, rejecting or/and simply informing about the educational reality of the past?
- Are there ideological or other differentiations both among the various political forces and among the representatives of a political party concerning the use of the historical argument? If this is the case, why is it so?

Methodology

The primary sources for our research²³ involve: (a) the Recommendatory Reports of the educational drafts of the 1985 and 1997–1998 laws, which reflect the official way of thinking that led to the effort to enact the particular proposals; and (b) the Parliamentary Proceedings²⁴ that contain the argumentation and the potential juxtapositions

²²See: Siphis Bouzakis, *Modern Greek Education (1821–1998)* (Athens: Gutenberg, 2000) (in Greek); Kassotakis, 'The challenges of our era'.

²³The sources of our research, namely the Preambles and Parliamentary Proceedings, have already been published and they are contained in Bouzakis, *Educational Reforms in Greece*. Thus, when speakers' authentic quotations are cited in the framework of the qualitative analysis of our research material, the page number where they are found in the volume above is given.

²⁴This concerns the Proceedings of the following tables of the Greek Parliament: Table 28 (27 August 1985), Table 29 (28 August 1985), Table 31 (2 September 1997), Table 32 (3 September 1997) and Table 15 (11 August 1998).

among the various political forces during the debate on educational law drafts in the Greek Parliament.

Our approach was predicated on quantitative and qualitative Content Analysis.²⁵ The ‘subject’ was taken as the ‘analysis unit’ of our research material. We should clarify that ‘subject’ refers to that part of the content that is based on the meaning of a word group and is incorporated into a specific category of analysis. On the other hand, the ‘context unit’ refers to the entire speech of each speaker and is meant to contribute to the clarification and improved understanding of the significance of each subject.

The following categories of analysis resulted from the systematic study of our research sources:

- (1) Philosophy – School knowledge – Curriculum.
- (2) Educational administration – supervision.
- (3) Technical-Vocational Education.
- (4) Society, economy, production – education and educational expenses.
- (5) Educational reform.

For the evaluation of the quality of the historical references that appear in the research material, we distinguish the following cases:

- Positive references to certain aspects of previous educational interventions.²⁶
- Neutral references aiming to inform the audience about the educational facts of the past.²⁷
- Negative references to certain aspects of educational systems of the past.²⁸

In order to draw valid conclusions, the authors classified the various subjects that include historical references into the preceding categories of analysis, over two time periods with a one-month time difference. A subject was accepted only if it was classified, at least three times, within the same category of analysis (the acceptable percentage of agreement being 75%).²⁹

²⁵Bernard Berelson, *Content Analysis in the Communication Research* (New York: Falmer Press, 1952). Madeleine Grawitz, *Méthodes des sciences sociales* (Paris: Dalloz, 1979). Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology* (Newbury Park, CS: Sage Publications, 1980).

²⁶See: ‘All the voices recognize the significance of education. In a so called first Constitution of 1821–1822 there exists the phrase “the Minister of internal affairs is responsible for the introduction of spiritual lights into Greece” (Kondopodis’s oration in Parliament, 1985. In Bouzakis, *Educational Reforms in Greece*, 498).

²⁷See: ‘We should certainly add the re-establishment of the Pedagogic Institute. It is an action that links historically the current change in education with G. Papandreou’s reform and his legislative enactment 4379/64’ (Kondopodis’s oration in Parliament, 1985. In Bouzakis, *Educational Reforms in Greece*, 501).

²⁸See: “Dear colleagues of ND, it has been four years since you have been informed about an educator’s persecution, which was very common when you were in power, in case someone was exercising his/her Syndicato rights or was expressing his/her views about issues concerning all the Greeks” (Oration of Kaklamanis, Minister of Education, in Parliament, 1985. In Bouzakis, *Educational Reforms in Greece*, 519).

²⁹Berelson, *Content Analysis*, 156. Michael Vamvoukas, *Introduction to Psycho-Pedagogical Research and Methodology* (Athens: Gregoris, 1988) (in Greek).

Results and discussion

Table 1 presents the number of subjects and the politicians in each political party during the educational reforms of 1985 and 1997–1998. The political forces that were represented in the Greek Parliament in 1985 can be categorised as follows:

- Centre-left government: Panhellenic Socialistic Movement (PASOK).
- Main opposition party: conservative neo liberal party of New Democracy (ND).
- Left wing (Communist party of Greece – CP of G).

In 1997–1998, the government and the main opposition party remained the same, but the left wing was enlarged by the addition of the Democratic Social Movement (Dikki) and the Party of Coalition (Synaspismos).

Following Table 1, it can be concluded that the historical argument is used by a small number of speakers in both educational reforms, with a reducing trend. More specifically, for the reform of 1985, four speakers used historical argumentation and made, in total, 71 relevant references, with the following distribution: two speakers from PASOK who addressed 63 subjects (that is, 88.7% of the total, of which 72.9% were brought up by the Minister of Education Kaklamanis); one speaker from the ND who made six references (8.5%); and one speaker from the Communist party, who made two references (2.8%). On the other hand, for the reform of 1997–1998 an increased number of Deputies made use of historical argumentation, owing to the fact that new political parties were at the time represented in the Greek Parliament; however, the number of historical references was not increased. Thus, of a total of nine Deputies who made 65 educational references of a historical character, the following distribution was observed: three speakers from PASOK made 40 references (that is, 61.5% of the total, of which 37.5% were made by the Minister of Education Arsenis); two Deputies from ND made eight references (that is, 12.3%); and four speakers from the broader left wing made 17 references (26.2%, of which 6.2% were made by one speaker from CP of G, 9.3% by two Deputies from Synaspismos, and 10.7% by one speaker from Dikki).

From the above, it can be concluded that: (a) the majority of the historical references were made by the ruling party and, especially, by the Minister of Education; (b) in 1997–1998, there existed a pluralism of political forces that incorporated the historical argumentation into their speeches; (c) in the 1997–1998 period, the number of historical references made by the ruling party decreased compared with the 1985 reform. In the educational reform of 1985, more historical references were made in total as compared with that of the 1997–1998 reform. In addition, it must be noted that, at the 1985 reform, the historical and the comparative argument were used by the same speakers among all parties that were represented in Parliament. Nevertheless, a much higher number of historical subjects (71) than comparative ones (10) were

Table 1. Speakers and subjects by periods of educational reform and by political party (frequencies of occurrence).

	Dikki		Synaspismos		CP of G		PASOK		ND	
	1985	1997	1985	1997	1985	1997	1985	1997	1985	1997
Speakers		1		2	1	1	2	3	1	2
Subjects		9		9	2	4	77	47	6	11

used.³⁰ This is due to the fact that in 1985 a decisive change in Greek educational issues was attempted with two main objectives. First, to show that certain significant and progressive, yet unaccomplished, reforms of the past should be revived and reinforced, which were originally initiated by political forces that were related to the governing party (historical dimension). A typical case is the attempt of the governing party of PASOK to establish the Pedagogical Institute through the 1566/1985 law, which is considered as a historical continuation of a relevant reform effort by the Government of Georgios Papandreou, who was the leader of the Centre Union in 1964. Second, to promote the idea of a new educational system that would take into consideration all the positive European examples (comparative dimension) and, thus, contribute to the democratisation of Greek society in the 1980s, when Greece entered the European Economic Community; such an educational system could then be supported by the 1985 reform.

In the case of the 1997/1998 reform, the historical arguments remain attractive to the Greek politicians (65 subjects) and outnumber the comparative arguments (61 subjects), the latter, however, being used by more politicians coming from all political parties.³¹ It is interesting to recall that the Minister of Education, Gerasimos Arsenis, who was responsible for the 1997–1998 reform, was annoyed by the number of historical references made by the opposition and noted:

I would be tempted to view the frequent use of historical references by our opposition colleagues as a smokescreen. We should not be concerned about the past; it is the present and the future that should attract our interest here. (Parliamentary Proceedings, 1997, 714)

The Minister's reaction is indicative of the Government's effort to promote a reform expected to contribute to improved connections of Greece with the European Union. This explains why the Minister tried to focus the discussion on the present and the future. Besides, the majority of the comparative arguments refer to the educational situation in Europe³² given that, since the mid-1990s, the Greek educational policy has been closely related to community funding from the 2nd Community Support Framework. This fact is gradually leading to the Europeanisation of the Greek educational system, as it follows the plan towards a common European educational policy.

Table 2 shows the distribution of subjects into categories of analysis for each educational reform period and each political party that used the historical argument. From this table, it can be concluded that the speakers from the various parties use the historical argument in order to accentuate those crucial issues that they aim to promote in each reform period. More specifically, at the 1985 reform, the following categories are distinguished in decreasing order of quantitative usage: 'Education's administration' (PASOK and ND), 'School knowledge' (PASOK, CP of G), 'Educational reform' (exclusively by PASOK) and 'Society, economy, production and educational expenses' (PASOK and ND). It is worth noting that, in that period, reform in the sectors of school knowledge (curriculum – new textbooks) and of the administrative supervision of the educational system was promoted. The quantitatively dominant categories over the

³⁰See S. Bouzakis, G. Koustourakis and H. Berdousi, *Educational Policy and Comparative Argumentation in the Case of the Twentieth Century Educational Reforms concerning Primary and Secondary General and Technical-Vocational Education in Greece* (Athens: Gutenberg, 2001): 192 (in Greek).

³¹Bouzakis and Koustourakis, 'The Comparative Argument', 159.

³²*Ibid.*, 161–62.

Table 2. Categories of content analysis by periods of educational reform and by political party (frequencies of occurrence).

	Dikki		Synaspismos		CP of G		PASOK		ND	
	1985	1997	1985	1997	1985	1997	1985	1997	1985	1997
Philosophy–School knowledge–Curriculum	1				2	1	11	5		1
Educational administration–Supervision						1	24	1	1	
Technical–Vocational Education						2		26		3
Society, economy, production–education and educational expenses	4						10	5	1	
Educational reform	2			6			16	7	2	4

historical period 1997–1998 are the following: ‘Technical-Vocational Education’ (PASOK, ND, CP of G), ‘Educational reform’ (PASOK, Synaspismos, ND, Dikki), ‘Society, economy and educational expenses’ (Dikki, PASOK) and ‘Philosophy – school knowledge – Curriculum’ (PASOK, CP of G, ND, Dikki).

Consequently, the historical argument in the past but also today attracts Greek politicians and, especially, those who promote these particular educational reforms and attempt to achieve through them the maximum possible social consensus. Moreover, in the periods that are examined here, the majority of the historical arguments focus on issues that relate closely to the educational changes that are attempted in every case. This is also the case with the use of the comparative argument by Greek politicians during the respective reform periods. A typical example is that of the TVE, in the field of which significant interventions are attempted by Law 2640/1998.

The way PASOK and ND use historical references relates to their effort to prove the inefficiency of the opposition party as well as the correctness of their own past selections, as we can see from the qualitative analysis. A characteristic example is the attempt of the left-wing parties, especially the CP of G, to differentiate ideologically from PASOK and ND, which have governed the country over the last decades. This explains the use of negative historical or comparative arguments by its Deputies in the Parliament. The Deputies of CP of G, in particular, attempted to accentuate the dependence of Greece on international capitalist mechanisms (the 1985 period) as well as on European Community funds, which, as they believe, subordinate the country to the ‘neoliberal international centers of the capital’, thus solidifying the social inequalities (1997–1998 period).³³

We will next try to analyse qualitatively our research material on the basis of the various categories of analysis.

Philosophy – school knowledge – curricula

This category includes the historical references that are made by politicians and reveals their ideological and theoretical positions on the general orientation but also on more specific aspects of the Greek educational system during the historical periods

³³See Bouzakis *et al.*, *Educational policy and Comparative Argumentation*, 210 and 230.

under examination. Moreover, these references can be used to reveal the corresponding positions on the formulation both of the curriculum of the Greek school and of school knowledge. Such references are made during both periods examined here by almost every political party that was represented in the Greek Parliament. In addition, in both aforementioned reform periods, significant changes were attempted regarding school knowledge and the curricula of the various levels of Greek education. More specifically, an upgrading of the Greek curricula started in 1982, especially in Primary Education, accompanied by new textbooks and a new educational practice intended to fight arbitrariness. The new textbooks are written in monotonic demotic Greek, whereas an effort is made for their content to become more attractive to students³⁴ though the use of pictures. These were political interventions, which elicited positive and flattering comments from teachers in Primary Education.³⁵ Moreover, the Law 1566/1985 introduced the teaching of music, gymnastics, and art – by specialized personnel – into Primary Education. In 1997–1998, reform in the sectors of the reframing of school knowledge and of curriculum reorganisation focused on Secondary Education. This was implemented through the establishment of the Comprehensive Lyceum and the reform of the TVE through the abolition of Technical Lyceums and the establishment of the Technical Professional Institutions. The latter was intended to contribute to the professional orientation of students and the successful entrance of their graduates into the labour market.

During the 1985 reform, historical references to the category ‘philosophy – school knowledge – curricula’ were made by the progressive parties that were represented in Parliament. Eleven such references were made by the ruling party (eight by the Ministry of Education and three by the Deputy Minister Kondopodis), whereas two references were made by the Deputy of the CP of G, Damanaki. In the reform of 1997–1998, eight such references were made, the majority of which were made by the ruling party (five references, four of which were made by the Minister of Education Arsenis and one by the Deputy Katsilieris), whereas one reference was made by each of the opposition parties, namely, ND, CP of G and Dikki. More specifically, with regard to the relevant arguments of the Greek politicians during the two reforms that are examined here, we note the following.

In 1985, the humanistic orientation of Greek education was raised by the Ministry of Education, while at the same time the helleno-centric character of the curricula was noted (*Preamble*, Parliamentary Proceedings, 1985, 467).

The same direction was followed by the Deputy of PASOK Kondopodis, who claimed that the role of education in the enlightenment of young people has been recognised since 1821. Nevertheless, he regards negatively (a) the liquidation of progressive textbooks by the dictatorship and (b) the cheating phenomenon by students in order to acquire a good grade rather than knowledge:

It has to do with cribs, as they are called in the students’ jargon. It would take a whole year to copy the entire book on them, but if the student had devoted that same time aiming at knowledge and not at a grade, he would have certainly gained both of them. (Kondopodis, Parliamentary Proceedings, 1985, 503)

³⁴Association of Greek Teachers, ‘The New Curricula and Textbooks for Students and Teachers’, *Epistimoniko Vima – Special Issue*, 6 (December 1984, January–February 1985) (in Greek).

³⁵Aristedes Vouyoukas, *Treatise in Educational Questioning* (Athens: Felekis, 1986) (in Greek). Association of Greek Teachers, ‘The new curricula and textbooks’.

In the same reform period, the Deputy of the CP of G Damanaki presents as positive the fact that many capitalist countries have either removed the course on religion from the curriculum or retained it only as elective. On the contrary:

In Greece, the cultivation and the attachment to the religious ideals remains among the goals of the various levels of education; this is entirely anachronistic and conflicts with the Constitution that legitimises religious tolerance. (Parliamentary Proceedings, 1985, 512)

In the 1997–1998 educational reform, the views of the Minister of Education Arsenis and those of the Deputies Karamarios (ND) and Katsilieris (PASOK) coincide as far as the general humanistic orientation of Greek education is concerned:

‘The humanistic education as well as the knowledge of both the historical and the cultural tradition of our country need to be the basic ideals of Greek education. (Katsilieris, Parliamentary Proceedings, 1997, 684)

Tsafoulias, Deputy of Dikki, criticises the attempt to publish new books at that time:

Regarding new books and curricula, the Pedagogical Institute recommends books that were published in 1972 and 1978, according to the relevant records of 9-4-98. (Parliamentary Proceedings, 1998, 755)

The presentation of qualitative data in the category ‘philosophy – school knowledge – curricula’ regarding historical references leads to the following conclusions: (a) in both periods examined, no differentiation among the views that are expressed by the representatives of the ruling party can be discerned. In fact, these views appear to support and reinforce the corresponding arguments that are expressed by the leadership of the Ministry of Education, (b) during the 1985 reform effort, only silence comes from the conservative main opposition party regarding the use of the historical argument concerning the issues of the analysis category examined here. The latter had recently lost the elections. On the other hand, the PASOK party strongly criticises the post-Greek Civil War period and attempts to investigate the inadequacies of the system, the treatment of which necessitates reform interventions. Moreover, the CP of G, the views of which are clearly cosmopolitan and have an antireligious–atheistic viewpoint, questions the stratification of school knowledge within Greek curricula. This is due to the fact that, according to Young,³⁶ the contribution of the school to the formulation of a religious, namely Greek-Orthodox, identity is evident from the significant position of religious studies within Greek curricula. In fact, the course on Religious Studies is mentioned first among all other courses of the curricula of the first two degrees of Greek education. And (c) in the 1997–1998 reform, there is agreement between the positions of PASOK and ND regarding the preservation of the humanistic orientation of Greek education, whereas the leftist parties criticise only the formulation of school knowledge.

Educational administration–supervision

This analysis category includes historical references to the administrative and supervisory mechanism of education. During the 1980s, when the first Socialist government

³⁶Young, *The Curriculum of the Future*, 16–19.

came to power (led by Andreas Papandreou), significant innovations were applied to the administrative sector of Greek education, through which it was attempted: (a) to reduce the autocracy in education by abolishing the position of School Inspector and replacing it with two other positions (Law 1304/1982), namely, the School Counsellor who is expected to access and guide teachers in pedagogical, instructional and scientific matters; and that of Director of the Education Office, who has an overall administrative and organizational role. These responsibilities were formerly held by the School Inspector, who, on several occasions in the history of education was considered strongly dictatorial, threatening and abusive towards the teachers, taking advantage of the power of his/her position. And, (b) to re-establish the Pedagogical Institute as a scientific–consulting education organisation that would be in charge of the formulation of curricula and training of teachers under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. This specific reform appears as the continuation of an older initiative, undertaken in the 1960s by the Centrist government, led by Georgios Papandreou (the father of Andreas Papandreou) and stopped by the conservative forces that governed the country from 1965, the year of the Apostasy, until the end of 1981.

In 1997–1998 an upgrading of the role of the Pedagogical Institute was attempted, with a strong emphasis placed on the evaluation of educational work by an attempt to reintroduce evaluation of the teachers themselves.

This specific category of analysis was mainly promoted during the 1985 reform since during the reform of 1997–1998 only two relevant references were made (one by the governmental Deputy Katsilieris and one by the Deputy of the CP of G Tasoulas). More specifically, the historical references of 1985 to the ‘administration–supervision’ of education focus on the efforts of Minister of Education Kaklamanis to legislate the new measures after having accentuated the inadequacies and discontinuities that had developed in the past (25 references in total, of which 23 were made by Kaklamanis, one by governmental Deputy Kondopodis, and one by the Deputy of ND Kaletziotis).

Within the 1985 reform the issues discussed were the institution of the School Inspector, the organisation-administration of schools through the institutions of the School Fund and the School Board and, finally, the re-establishment of the Pedagogical Institute.

The abolition of School Inspectors and their replacement by School Counsellors was justified by the fact that when ND (right wing) was in power, the School Inspectors acted oppressively, were selected exclusively from supporters of the governing party and were known to police and control the educational world:

You used Inspectors as commissars, having obliged them to police educators, thus creating a serious problem in Greek education by dividing the educators into two parts, the directorate, which was a small part, and the rest of the educators. (Kaklamanis, Parliamentary Proceedings, 1985, 520)

The extensive discussions on the Pedagogical Institute noted that: (a) it was first established through the Legislative Act 4379/1964 by the Government of Georgios Papandreou, but its duties were limited because of the Apostasy of 1965 and was, finally, abolished by the dictatorship; (b) it was re-established under the same name (Pedagogical Institute) not only for historical reasons but also because it appears to be a continuation of the progressive reforms of G. Papandreou’s Government; and (c) it replaced the Centre of Educational Studies and Training, which had been established by the former ND government and was considered a cumbersome bureaucratic mechanism.

In contrast, the Pedagogical Institute aims at becoming a strategic research establishment and at contributing to the improvement of the quality of education.

In the 1997–1998 reform the oppression of the educators by the old institution of the Inspector is expressed again, this time by the governmental Deputy Katsilieris. Nevertheless, Tasoulas, Deputy of the CP of G, claims that the School Counsellors, who replaced the School Inspectors, were selected for their political party affiliation, by both the PASOK Government and that of ND.

Two crucial issues regarding the ‘organisation–administration–supervision’ of education arise from the historical argumentation. The first focuses on the negative experiences related to School Inspectors in Greek education before 1981. In Greece, after the Greek Civil War, the ruling party’s ideological opponents were prosecuted, citizens were often under police surveillance, a nationalistic along with an anticommunist Greek-Christian ideology was promoted and, thus, School Inspectors, due to the power given them by the State, could check on and direct both the performance and the social life of the teachers. This was the reason why teachers agreed with the abolition of this position in 1982. The second issue refers to the establishment of the Pedagogical Institute in 1985. This effort promoted and implemented the progressive policy of the Centre Union party in 1964–1965, which was violently interrupted by the seven-year dictatorship.

Technical-Vocational Education

This specific analysis category refers to those historical references that relate to the regulation of issues on Technical-Vocational Education used by the politicians exclusively during the 1997–1998 reform

The majority of the relevant historical references were made by the government party (26 references in total, 17 of which were made by the Minister of Education, eight by Deputy Akritidis and one by Deputy Katsilieris), whereas several were made by the opposition parties (two by the Deputy of ND Konstantopoulou, one by Deputy of ND Karamarios and two by the Deputy of the CP of G Tasoulas). Thus we see that the Government placed great emphasis on TVE. The Minister of Education, Gerassimos Arsenis, stressed the fact that TVE was degraded and socially underestimated both because it was not supported by the business world and because parents were not willing to send their children to these specific schools. Consequently, social discrimination and inequalities were apparent in TVE schools, since their students came mainly from low-income families. Besides, TVE graduates faced unemployment problems, similar to those that were encountered by the General Lyceum graduates who failed to enter university and remained uneducated. Consequently, as PASOK Deputy Akritidis notes, TVE neither persuaded society nor attracted young people.

The functioning of TVE in practice was negatively criticised. More specifically, both the Minister of Education and the Deputy of ND Konstantopoulou claimed that TVE has remained underdeveloped for decades. Besides, Deputy of PASOK Akritidis noted:

The Technical-Vocational Lyceum, which was ambitiously established during the reform of 1976 as the main branch of the vocational education system, failed. This happened because it ended up setting the grounds for the entrance of graduates into the Technological Educational Institutes taking advantage of a certain bonus given to its students along with their grades on the graduation certificates. Thus, Technical-Vocational Lyceums

became a pathway to the Technological Educational Institutes and a factory of high grades, including the perfect 20/20. (Parliamentary Proceedings, 1998, 740)

The CP of G approached TVE in a different way:

This new draft law is hypothetically intended to organize the TVE by changing the current legislative framework, which included the Technical-Vocational Lyceums, the Comprehensive Multi-branched Lyceums, and the Technical-Vocational Schools, that complicated the Governmental policy as they failed to bar students from Higher Education. (Tasoulas, Parliamentary Proceedings, 1998, 749)

Analysis of the relevant historical references indicates a relative coincidence of the views of the two main political parties (PASOK, ND) regarding the underdevelopment of technical vocational education in Greece and its rejection by Greek society. This fact is explained by: (a) the stabilisation of the humanistic character of Greek education to the degree that the relevant courses had an important place in the curricula of the Technical-Vocational schools in Secondary Education; (b) the stratification of school knowledge and its separation from everyday knowledge, that is, from students' experience;³⁷ (c) the social stereotypes regarding the inferiority of manual work compared with mental work, which appear even in the Greek mythology according to which the God of (manual) Labour Hephaestus was lame; and, (d) industrial underdevelopment in Greece, which hinders the successful entrance of graduates of the Technical-Vocational schools into the labour market. Moreover, the CP of G raises the issue of reduced accessibility to universities by TVE graduates and criticises the educational reform as it suppresses this opportunity, which existed in the past, encouraging thus the creation of high- and low-class schools and the maintenance of social inequalities.

Society, economy, production – education and educational expenses

This category includes the historical argumentation that refers to the contribution of education to the confrontation of significant social issues and to the relationship of school to production and the economy. During the 1980s, the Socialist Government attempted through an educational reform to render school the basis of a social change, in accordance with its 'change' ideology. This would be achieved by the stabilisation of democracy and the participation of the people in the management and treatment of various social issues. However, in the 1990s, geopolitical change as a result of the collapse of the former Eastern socialist bloc and the promotion of globalisation resulted in the inevitable shift of political and socioeconomic interest from internal to international. Thus, the need for Greece to join the political and economic institutions of the European Union was raised, expecting thus to bring to the country sufficient power and international prestige to help solve both the economic and the national problems (the FYROM issue, relations with Turkey, the Cyprus issue). This is why the demand for the entry of the country into the European Economic and Currency Union proved to be the major political issue in Greece over the second half of the 1990s. Consequently, the 1997–1998 educational reform appeared as a necessity for the modernisation of the country and its integration into the new European environment.³⁸

³⁷Young, *The Curriculum of the Future*.

³⁸Kassotakis, 'The challenges of our era'.

This specific analysis category was mainly developed in relation to the reform of 1985, when 10 relevant references were made by the governmental party (nine of them by the Minister of Education and one by Deputy Kontopodis) and one reference was made by the main opposition party (Deputy Kaletziotis). At the time of the reform of 1997–1998, such references were made by the Minister of Education (5) and by the Deputy of Dikki, Tsafoulias (4). The content of these historical references follows.

In 1985, the governmental party pointed out that there was a discord in the Greek society that had to be tackled:

In addition to the national and political discord, we preserve here the language discord as well. (Kondopodis, Parliamentary Proceedings, 1985, 498)

Thus, as Minister of Education Kaklamanis underlines, the need for reforms appears as a social demand of the social, educational and scientific community. This happens because the school has to provide society with honest, free and brave citizens, who will support democracy, as G. Papandreou stressed in 1964. Before 1985, nevertheless, school had been alienated from the country's lower social groups, and a contrast had developed between social needs and their repletion. A characteristic example is that of preschool education:

Thus, preschool education and social care ended up functioning against the children of workers and farmers since at this age the society has to attempt to alleviate the effects of the different economic, social and cultural conditions met when raising children. (Preamble, 1985, 466)

Moreover, the Minister mentions that the Government intends to increase education funding from the state budget. This aims to accomplish the target of the Government of the Centre Union, according to which 15% of the budget should be devoted to education. Deputy Kaletziotis of ND, commenting on this observation, notes that in the period 1976–1981, when his party was in power, almost 11% of the budget was invested in education.

In 1997, Minister of Education Arsenis stressed the country's need to adapt to international technological development through lifelong training of Greek citizens. In addition, he mentioned that a significant number of students had dropped out of school and, consequently, could not easily find their way into the labour market. Deputy Tsafoulias of Dikki criticized the educational interventions of both ND and PASOK. More specifically, he spoke about a gap between the society and its political directions, due to the political services offered by the educational sector to the governing party. That is why the various educational draft laws are rejected by the Greek people (Parliamentary Proceedings, 1997, 712).

What derives from the historical argumentation of the 1985 reform is that the governmental party aims at promoting the democratisation of Greek society, national reconciliation and confrontation of social inequalities; all these issues can be promulgated through the appropriate shaping of the Greek school. This can happen only if school connects with society. In fact, an attempt has been made to emphasise the contribution of the educational system to the social and economic development through the need to increase expenses for education. This measure is aligned with human capital theory, dominant among the civil political forces, and, consequently, is also accepted by the main opposition party. In 1997–1998, the Ministry of Education attempted to promote new legislative measures that would help the country to take

advantage of contemporary economic and technological developments. Nevertheless, the leftist opposition talked about a dishonest effort, aiming to hide the negative consequences of these educational reforms, and claimed that the Greek people would not support this policy.

Educational reform

This analysis category includes the historical argumentation that refers to the institution of certain educational reform interventions. In the 1985 reform, most of the relevant references (18) were made by the government party (11 were made by the Minister of Education and seven by Deputy Kondopodis), whereas two relevant references were made by the main opposition party (Deputy Kaletziotis). In 1997–1998, of 19 relevant references in total, seven were made by the government party (five by Minister of Education Arsenis and two by Deputy Akritidis), six were made by the Synaspismos party (one by Deputy Alfieri and five by Deputy Kounalakis), four were made by the main opposition party (three by Deputy Karamarios and one by Deputy Konstantopoulou) and two were made by Dikki (by Deputy Tsafoulias). Our findings concerning the historical argumentation regarding the educational reforms are as follows.

While the 1566/1985 law was discussed in the Greek Parliament, the party of ND tried to emphasise the virtues of its own reform attempt in 1976–1977:

In the process of organising education, the Government of ND tried to apply a politically independent and consenting procedure. It is particularly interesting that the major reform of 1976–1977 resulted from a fruitful cooperation between both the – directly concerned – teachers and the representatives of the authoritative opposition at the time. (Kaletziotis, Parliamentary Proceedings, 1985, 504)

Deputy Kondopodis of PASOK considers the 309/1976 law, which was voted in by the Government of ND, as a positive step, since it constitutes a revival of the reform that was attempted by the Centre Union in 1964, and, more specifically, by G. Papandreou, L. Akritas and E. Papanoutsos. At this point, the Minister of Education Kaklamanis, while addressing the main opposition party, notes with emphasis:

In the past you [the conservative political forces] reproached G. Papandreou's reform, you condemned it, you persecuted it, and now, 10 years later, you come to praise it. (Parliamentary Proceedings, 1985, 521)

During the discussion on the educational draft laws in 1997–1998, Deputy Tsafoulias of Dikki claimed that the various post-Second World War reform interventions lacked a vision for the future, in contrast to those made by Venizelos (Parliamentary Proceedings, 1997, 706).

Synaspismos Deputy Kounalakis claimed that education was in an 'unacceptable situation' due to the indifference of the previous governments to educational needs. He also said that other countries organise broad public dialogues in order to reach a consensus on significant educational measures. Furthermore, he talked about the historical continuity and the complementarities of the reform interventions that have been attempted by the two big parties since 1974:

First of all, the adjustments that are suggested in the current draft law basically treat the backlogs of the attempts made in 1974 and 1985. (Parliamentary Proceedings, 1997, 699)

ND Deputy Karamarios mentioned that his party followed a liberal policy when it was in power, aiming to remove political influences from education, to accentuate competition and, finally, to apply evaluation and meritocracy in practice. Thus, the reforms introduced by PASOK came to overturn the ‘correct measures’ of ND, which were not given the time required for successful implementation.

Finally, Deputy Akritidis of PASOK, while talking about the reforms in Technical-Vocational Education introduced since 1963, underlines the existence of continuity:

Nowadays, we recollect Papandreou’s collaborative reform attempt in 1963–1964, G. Rallis’s significant reform in 1976, as well as the latest reform that institutionalised the Comprehensive Multi-branched Lyceum. (Parliamentary Proceedings, 1998, 739)

From the presentation of the politicians’ views on the use of the historical argument regarding the educational reforms, it seems that the political parties appeared to support the correctness of their own reform interventions when they were in power. In fact, the conservative party claimed when it came to power that its own correct, educational policy was refuted by the socialist party. In other cases, a coincidence of the views of the two main parties regarding application of the educational reforms was noted. A notable example is the 1976–1977 educational reform by ND, which was considered as promoting the unaccomplished Centre Union 1964–1965 reform attempt; the Government of PASOK later revived various aspects, such as the reestablishment of the Pedagogical Institute, during its mandate. The leftist parties recognise the continuity among the reform interventions of ND and PASOK, but, nevertheless, criticise their educational policies, because they believe that they lack social consensus and make no provision for long-term potential consequences

Conclusions

From the analysis of our research material, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The historical argument is used by speakers from all political parties that are represented in the Greek Parliament. Nevertheless, in both reform periods examined here, the majority of this argumentation is found within the speeches made by Government Deputies and, especially, in those by the leadership of the Ministry of Education.
- The historical argumentation focuses each time on those sectors of educational reality that relate to the reform interventions attempted. More specifically, the issues that are dealt with in the 1985 reform period are the ones that relate to the organisation–administration–supervision of school knowledge, as can be seen by the relevant political educational interventions that were attempted. These interventions include the re-establishment of the Pedagogical Institute (a revival of the 1964 institution), the abolition of the institution of School Inspector and its replacement by that of School Counsellor (scientific guidance sector) and that of Directors (administrative supervision sector), and the formation of new curricula followed by the publishing of new textbooks. In 1997–1998, the historical argument was used to support the reform interventions that basically related both to the Technical-Vocational Education and to the abolition of the teachers’ appointment list.
- The historical educational references have a legitimising character since they are used to show that there is historical continuity among many educational

interventions, as for example in the case of the Pedagogical Institute, and that the past educational initiatives of the current main opposition party were in the right direction.

- The historical argumentation of the politicians whose political parties have ruled Greece is more positive about their own reforms. This can be interpreted by the fact that PASOK and ND appear to have different political aims and ideological orientations.
- No ideological differentiation regarding the promotion of educational measures is discerned among members of the same party. Such differentiation appears only among the representatives of different political parties and, typically, comes from the left-leaning parties who wish to differentiate their position from those of the Government and the main opposition party.

Finally, on the basis of the above findings of our present research effort, we can say that: (a) presentation of older educational aspects by the politically dominant forces is associated with their effort to accentuate within the current social reality the actual educational problems by making, at the same time, their own interventions³⁹ more convincing and comprehensible, and (b) the specific use of the historical argument by the political parties that have governed the country shows their theoretical and ideological approaches in their attempt to dominate and control social behaviour⁴⁰ through the acceptance of their interventions by society. Nevertheless, the attempt by leftist politicians to differentiate themselves from the main political parties through the use of historical argumentation could also be interpreted as a political reaction to the perspective of domination and control of society by the two major Greek parties (PASOK, ND). The fact that in the two reform attempts (1985 and 1997–1998) the draft laws were eventually approved and enacted to a significant degree allows us to believe that the legitimising arguments that were used, like the historical one, contributed to the successful presentation of the draft and to the eventual acceptance of the corresponding legislation by Greek society. However, it is difficult to quantify the relative significance of this particular type of argument. We rest our case with the hypothesis that the historical argument had an additive role to that of other arguments used by Greek politicians (comparative, socioeconomic needs, etc.) in the acceptance, voting and implementation of these reforms. In our opinion, this is still an open significant research problem of historical-sociological interest that calls for further research.

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³⁹Antony Giddens, *Sociology* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997).

⁴⁰Bernstein, *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity*; Lamnias, 'A Sociological Analysis'; Young, 'An Old Problem in a New Context'.

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