

democratization of education in contemporary Greece

Selected Aspects

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I. the meanings of «democratic education» in the «welfare state» societies

This article attempts to study the process of democratization of education and particularly of higher education in contemporary Greece.

Democratization of education is not an abstract principle but the actual process of rendering a particular educational system within a particular society more democratic.

But what is meant by a democratic system of education? It is obvious that the answers would vary according to one's moral and political feelings and ideas. Therefore, in order to study the extent of democratization of education in a particular type of society, one has to specify at the very outset the criteria by which the educational system of this society will be evaluated as more or less democratic.

Bottomore aptly remarks that «the idea of equality which democracy as a form of society may be held to imply can easily be re-interpreted as equality of opportunity. Democracy will then be treated as a type of society in which the élites—economic and cultural, as well as political—are 'open' in principle, and are in fact recruited from different social strata on the basis of individual merit». ¹ In the field of education in particular, equality has been re-interpreted as equality of opportunity of access to the channels of knowledge and more particularly to the formal educational system which opens also the ways of entry into the more prestigious occupations and positions. Thus, equality of opportunity in education implies also equality of opportunity to move upwards in the existing system of occupational and élite stratification.

According to the «classical» equality of opportunity doctrine, every child has the right to acquire the education which is suited to its interests and capabilities, irrespective of its race, colour, sex or class or any other characteristic which from this particular point of view is considered irrelevant: the only inequalities which are acceptable within the context of this doctrine are the inequalities in the capacity to learn. Intellectual merit is measured by the existing examination and testing systems and is rewarded by higher grades and advancement within the school system and by higher status and class position within the wider social system. In short, all members of the Welfare State have equal rights to compete for differential educational and occupational

1. T. B. Bottomore, *Elites and Society* (Pelican Books, 1966), p. 17.

achievements.¹ The core values of this equality of opportunity doctrine are then free competition and individual merit. The critics of this ideology question exactly the value of its core values, the whole, that is, fundamentally stratification-oriented and elitist conception of our educational and social system. But even conservative thinkers such as T. S. Eliot in his famous «Notes towards a definition of culture» has accused the doctrine of educational opportunity, as Raymond Williams tells us, as «a mere silhouette of the doctrine of economic individualism with its emphasis on competition and 'getting on'».²

There is, however, another type of criticism of the equality of opportunity doctrine which is more relevant to the present analysis, because it aims at the remedy of the failures of the existing social system. This criticism is grounded in a great number of empirical projects in the field of sociology of education which have proved beyond dispute that educability and intellectual merit are for the great majority of people not inherited but acquired capacities. Only at the two extreme cases of the idiot and the genius the environment loses its great influential power over the individual's life-chances. For the middle range of the normal curve of the I.Qs. within a population, the specific family environment, the way of upbringing, and the quality of schooling make all the difference in the level of achievement and, therefore, in the chances of entry to the higher grades of the educational system.³ Once proved that children of equal I.Q. but unequal family background do not have equal chances to get educated according to their character and capacities, the equality of opportunity doctrine had to be reformulated on a more realistic basis, to encompass now as a major aim the reduction of inequalities between families and schools.

From this more egalitarian point of view, 'democratisation of education can only be achieved through the pursuit of more general

equalizing socio-economic policies which aim at the further democratization of the wider society. This reformulation of the «classical» equality of opportunity doctrine has been stressed at the recent conference of the Council of Europe on the «development of democratic institutions in Europe» (April, 1976). In the words of the rapporteur Professor B. Crick: «if equality is the objective, school reorganisation can only follow and assist more radical redistributive measures in wages and incomes and ownership of property».⁴

Moreover, S. I. Benn and R. S. Peters in their highly useful book *Social Principles and the Democratic State* (1975) rightly point out that the present day educational system is not «like a slope that people climb until strength gives out (*which would be the case if the classical 'equality of educational opportunity' doctrine was fully applied*) but more like a transport system in which people are conveyed to different and appropriate destinations» (*appropriate, that is, to their abilities*). And the writers continue: «we do more than treat everyone as if they started on an equal footing: we attempt to compensate for some personal disadvantages, as well as give preferential treatment to special talents. We have schools for disabled, blind and deaf children and we spend far more per head on them than we do on the average child. If this is not accounted 'inequality of opportunity' it is because the discrimination is felt to be justified».⁵

In view of the above the first general meaning of democratization of education is, *rendering knowledge and formal education as free and available a good as possible for all who are willing to acquire it beyond the compulsory education stages, and in the same time counteracting and compensating for those environmental factors (related to the stratification of families and schools) and other disadvantages which affect unequally the willingness and the ableness to learn.*

It is from this more egalitarian and humanitarian redefinition of the «equality of educational opportunity» doctrine, that we derived the values and the criteria through which we assessed the extent of democratization of education in Greece. To use the language of empirical sociology, we translated the concepts of democratization of education into the following indices:

1. For a clear account of the «classical» equality of opportunity» doctrine, see T.H. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class* (Cambridge University Press, 1950), p. 65-66 and «Social Selection in the Welfare State» in A.H. Halsey, et al. (eds.), *Education, Economy and Society* (N. York, Macmillan, 1961).

2. R. Williams, *Culture and Society* (Penguin Books, 1961), p. 236. Mentioned also by T. B. Bottomore, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

3. See, f. ex., E. Fraser, *The Home Environment and the School* (University of London Press, 1968); D. Wolfe, «Educational Opportunity, Measured Intelligence and Social Background» in A.H. Halsey et al. (eds.), *Education, Economy and Society* (N. York, 1961), pp. 216-229; W.D. Furneaux, *The Chosen Few* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1961); J.W.B. Douglas, *The Home and the School* (8th edition, London, 1972).

4. See B. Crick, «Summary of the Work of Commission II», *Education Policies and Democracy* (Strasbourg, 1976, mimeographed), p. 3.

5. S.I. Benn and R.S. Peters, *Social Principles and the Democratic State* (tenth impression, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1975), p. 119. Sentences in italics are from the writer of the present article.

1. The extent of participation of the population in the educational process.
2. The degree of inequality in prestige and in the quality of education offered by the various types of schools and Universities.
3. The degree of «openness» of the educational system to all categories of the population (e.g., men, women, upper and lower classes, villagers and town inhabitants, etc.).

There is, however, also a second basic meaning of democratisation of education. Democratization in this second sense means *rendering, as much as possible, the school and University systems vehicles for the fostering of democratic values and behaviour, training grounds, that is, for civic participation in the political system of democracy.* This requires rendering the existing organisations of educational systems more autonomous, much less authoritarian and more participatory, both in the methods used for teaching and in the amount of involvement of students and junior staff in the educational decision making process. This second broad meaning of democratization was also stressed in the recent meeting of the Council of Europe: «It should be the overriding objective of schools to create and nurture democratic values, but this could only be done by democratic behaviour, not just in the individual classroom for one lesson a week, but in the basic organisation of schools themselves, and in all subjects in all times. Young people learn best by participating, by working things out for themselves, and genuine democratic values can only be learned through genuine democratic behaviour. Such democratisation of education must begin with teacher-training».¹

From this second aspect of the notion of democratization of education which stresses the political effects of the socialising process of formal education, at least four additional empirical indices can be derived which in their turn could be used for assessing the extent of democratization of education in a given society.

4. The extent to which anti-authoritarian methods of teaching are used (dialogue with pupils, freedom of expressing plurality of opinions, etc.).
5. The ways in which political systems and especially democracy are taught in schools.
6. The degree of involvement of students and junior university staff in decision making about the teaching programmes and the organisation of university life, and
7. The degree of autonomy of educational institutions from state intervention.

This article, in order to remain within the space

1. See B. Crick, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

limits required by the editor of this journal, does not deal with this second important aspect of democratization of education, which is all the more important because of the only recent restoring of democracy in this country after a seven years period of dictatorship. It should be noted, however, that the well known Greek liberal thinker, educator and politician, Evangelos Papanoutsos, in a recent article, used exactly this second category of indices to evaluate the extent of democratization of the Greek University system. He concludes that neither in the degree of participations of students and junior staff, nor in the teaching methods used, nor even in the degree of autonomy from State intervention is our higher education system democratic enough.²

The above seven indices by no means exhaust all the possible ways of evaluating the extent of democratization, in the two senses given above, of a particular educational system. Their obvious advantage is that they are operational, in the sense that they can be used at the level of empirical research for measuring and comparing the extent of democratization of education achieved until now by the various Welfare-state societies. Such studies, precisely because they contribute to a healthy autocriticism of the failings in the social and educational engines of democracy and in the last analysis they may help towards their smoother running, are of special importance nowadays, when the facts of social inequality are widely challenged³ and the pressure of public opinion for greater equality and social justice is more intensive than ever before.

Let us turn now to the application to the case of Greece of the first three empirical indices into which we translated the social aspects of the notion of democratization of education.

II. the use of empirical indices for assessing the degree of social democratization achieved by the Greek educational system

1. How educated is the Greek society?

From the purely distributive aspect, the degree of democratization of education can be measured by the simple numerical index of the extent of participation of the population in the educational

2. See E.P. Papanoutsos, «To Aitima tou ekpaidematos sta anotata ekpaideftika idrimata» (i.e. The demand for democratization in higher educational institutions), Newspaper *Vima* (Athens, 2 September 1976).

3. See A. Bêteille (ed.), *Social Inequality* (Penguin Books, 1972), p. 366.

process: higher marks would be given, for example, to the country with the maximum number of graduates from each educational level. By this obviously crude index which does not take into account the qualitative aspects of the educational process, how is Greece compared with other western-type European societies? Table I (see appendix) informs us about the *highest level of education attained* by the population of males and females of 25 years age and over in 15 selected European countries in the 1970's and the 1960's. These comparative international statistics show the educational trends among at least two generations since they include the educational achievements of people 65 and over and provide us, therefore, with an overtime picture of the share of each population in the world of knowledge.

The picture presented by *all* societies lags far behind indeed from the ideal of the «learned society». At the bottom of this scale of democratization of education are Norway (1960) with its great masses of people who are almost illiterate (84%) and Portugal (1960) with 62%; at the top is Sweden (1970) with its 43% of inhabitants with secondary (35%) or post secondary (8%) education. Greece (1970) is nearer the bottom of the scale with half of its population illiterate or almost illiterate, 39% of its population with only primary education completed and with about 9% of its population with secondary education; when, however, post-secondary education is considered by itself, Greece (2%) is placed nearer the top of the scale together with a number of other countries among which are France (1962), Italy (1961) and Scotland (1970).

This relatively «inflated» character of the Greek higher educational system, which is part of the wider phenomenon of «over-demand» for higher education prevalent in Greece since the early days of its formation as an independent State in the 19th century,¹ is in sheer contradiction with the «under-educated» character of the large masses of Greek people. For this very reason the Greek educational system *as a whole* cannot be evaluated as really democratic. Already, however, new more egalitarian trends seem to emerge.

1. See K. Tsoukalas, *Dépendance et reproduction: le rôle de l'appareil scolaire dans une formation trans-territoriale*, Doctorat es Lettres, Université de Paris I, vol. 2, part II, ch. 2. Also, K. Tsoukalas, «I anotati ekpaidefsi stin Ellada os michanismos koinonikis anaparagotis» (i.e., «Higher Education in Greece as a mechanism of social reproduction») in *Defkallon*, Number 13 (Athens, 1975), pp. 18-33. See also, N. Mouzelis, «Capitalism and Dictatorship in Post-war Greece», *New Left Review*, number 96 (March-April 1976), p. 61 and Jane Lambiri-Dimaki, «Pros mia Elliniki Koinoniologia tis Paideias» (i.e., Towards a Greek Sociology of Education), vol. I (Athens, 1974), p. 135.

What is the share in the educational process of the younger generation of people (that is, no older than 24-25 years of age in the 1970's) in Western Europe and Greece in particular? On the whole, their share is definitely greater than that of the older generations (illiteracy among the young being in fact eradicated) and therefore it could be said that our societies have been recently achieving a greater degree of democratization of education. By the statistically crude but sociological meaningful criterion of «brute enrollment ratio» (see Table 2 in the appendix), in 1971 all Greeks in the appropriate age groups were enrolled in primary education, 69% were enrolled in the secondary schools, about 10% in Universities and other Graduate Colleges. However, this last enrollment figure must be somewhat lower than the one given in the UNESCO statistics (see Table 2, footnote 1).

The younger generation of Greeks is then getting more education nowadays than the Portuguese, the Maltese and the youngsters of Luxemburg and about as much (always by quantitative and not qualitative criteria) as the Swiss. But in the other European countries a greater level of democratization of education at the higher levels, has been achieved, with Italy, Denmark, Sweden and now even Norway, topping the scale.

In the 1970's Greece was the only European country together with Portugal to have only six years of compulsory education. All other countries have set their limits between 8 and 11 years of schooling (United Kingdom and Monaco).² The 1976 Governmental education reform, which has raised at last the age limits of compulsory education to 15, is undoubtedly a great step in the direction of further democratization of education in Greek society. As, however, Professor A. Kazamias rightly pointed out during a discussion we had, the raising of compulsory education to the age of 15 means in the same time loss of income for the poorer farmer families, who profited until now from their adolescent children's labour in the fields. Thus, this reform, to work in practice as a really democratic measure, would have to be followed by a compensatory economic policy for those poorer families who, in the name of equality in education, should not be allowed to become more economically unequal in comparison with their wealthier counterparts.

2. *How unequal are Greek Schools and Universities?*

Although some important research (especially

2. See UNESCO, *Statistical Yearbook* (1974).

the American Coleman Report, 1966¹) has pointed out that differences in the quality of schooling do not affect as much the educational achievement of pupils as the inequalities in their socio-economic background, the fact remains that stratification within the educational system as linked with outside social stratification (the better and more prestigious schools being more often frequented by the more socio-economically privileged children from urban areas) does act as an influential factor of inequality in education. In fact, the existing type of school stratification ends up by offering the best education to those who need it less (because of the compensatory educational effects of their family environment) and the worse education to those who need a much better one precisely because of the anti-educogenic influence of their family environment. In view of this highly unjust educational situation the English Plowden Report (1967) is right in suggesting that the principle of equality of educational opportunity will be much more efficiently served, if the socially underprivileged children are given a much higher quality schooling than the one they are actually getting: these children need «not equality but a strong preference if they are to be given a fair start in life».² This is even truer for Greece than it is for England.

In Greece, further democratization of education should indeed aim at raising as much as possible the educational standards of the free State Schools (improving buildings, school teaching facilities, quality of teachers, etc.) which are more often frequented by the children from the culturally and economically underprivileged families and regions. Though not each single private school provides necessarily better education in comparison with each single State school, on the whole, private paid for education follows higher standards of learning and provides the pupil with a more stimulating peer group environment.³ Private primary and secondary schools are mainly concentrated in the cities and in particular in Athens and Salonica; thus, the

city child is favoured most and the country child least. This was also observed by Sherrard and Campbell (1968).⁴

It is of interest to note that official statistics, if taken at their face value, reveal for 1972-73 a quite striking equality between public and private schools in terms of the «teacher : pupil» ratio which is about 1:30 in both categories of schools (see Table 3 in the appendix). In 1961, however, there was less equality between schools in this respect. For example, in State secondary education the «teacher : pupil» ratio was 1:38 whereas in private secondary education it was 1:11.⁵ By this index, further democratization of the school system has been recently achieved in Greece.

According to the official 1972-73 statistics, out of the total 14,935 nursery, primary, secondary and vocational schools functioning in Greece, only 13% are private (see Table 3 in the appendix). Also, all Universities and Graduate Colleges (except Pierce College) are state institutions requiring no tuition fees since the 1964 Free Higher Education Act. It is only in the sector of vocational education both at the lower, middle and post-secondary level that private schools exceed in number the state ones. The primarily private status, however, of vocational education has by no means increased the prestige of the latter, which in Greece is exceedingly low, precisely because it leads mainly to «blue collar» occupations, which in their turn are negatively evaluated. By taking the ratio «private to state education» as a criterion of democratization of education it can be said that Greece has on the whole a democratic system of education, since the bulk of its educational institutions do not require tuition fees.

The fact, however, that the quality of the State schools leaves still much to be desired especially in the rural microsocieties and in many working class districts of the cities weakens the democratic character of our educational system, for real democracy aims at the enlightenment of the masses and is not satisfied with just providing mediocre education for the masses. As was pointed out in the Council of Europe summary report (1976): «The concept of equality of opportunity through education is in danger of being reduced to a programme of equality of minimal knowledge.»⁶

Within the non-vocational post-secondary educational system we can distinguish, in terms of prestige enjoyed, two strata of educational insti-

1. See J.S. Coleman *et al.*, *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966 and the Summary Report of the above in F. Cordasco *et al.* (eds.), *The School in the Social Order: A Sociological Introduction to Educational Understanding* (International Textbook Co., 1970), pp. 107-149.

2. See J. Alsop, «Reaction to the Coleman Report» in F. Cordasco *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

3. *The Coleman Report* has proved that «a pupil's achievement is strongly related to the educational background and aspiration of the other students in the school» (see *Summary Report* in F. Cordasco *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 132. This finding as rightly pointed out has important implications for the reorganisation of schools on a more egalitarian basis.

4. See J. Campbell and Ph. Sherrard, *Modern Greece* (Ernest Benn Ltd., London, 1968), pp. 384-385.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 385.

6. See B. Crick, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

tutions: the various teacher training Colleges which form the lower one, and the Universities and equivalent Graduate Colleges which form the upper one and absorb the greatest bulk of our student population. In this upper stratum some stratification in terms of prestige exists, the maximum prestige being enjoyed by the older Universities of Athens, Salonica and the «Polytechnion», which results mainly from the fact that the degrees awarded by these three institutions have, one the whole, greater value as opening keys to important middle class occupations. A much wider prestige cleavage exists, however, *de facto* between Greek and foreign Universities which absorb a considerable number of young Greeks especially at the post-graduate level.¹ The foreign doctoral degrees from prestige universities when imported into Greece, though formally equivalent to those acquired from the Greek Universities, open nonetheless easier the way to their recipients into the upper occupational and élite categories. Further democratization of higher education in Greece should, therefore, also aim at raising much more effectively, than it has been the case until now, the educational standard of our Universities and Higher Colleges in order to render them as equal as possible to the best foreign Universities. Decreasing considerably the number of students per teacher is a priority objective in that direction.

At the moment, the «teacher : student» ratio in Greece is the highest in all Western Europe reaching about one teacher to eighty one students (1:81). This ratio results in case we subtract from the teaching staff, the assistants (Voithous) who are not all involved in teaching and, even in case they are, they help mainly with preparatory courses for the examinations. In case we include the assistants in the teaching staff proper (as is done in the UNESCO statistics) the resulting ratio is 1:18. The equivalent ratio is for England and Wales and W. Germany 1:8 (see Table 4 in the appendix).

3. How «open» is the Greek educational system?

In enquiring into the degrees of democratization of education achieved within various types of societies, we have to know not only «how many» get «what kind of education» but also «who get, how much, and what kind of education».

Our actual knowledge about this very important

second question is derived mainly from empirical estimates of the statistical chances that young people of similar age, but belonging to different social categories, have of entering the various grades and institutions within the non-compulsory educational hierarchy in each country.² Such research has shown that the various social categories in each population within a certain age range are not represented within the pupil and student bodies proportionately to their size, but that some (in particular the upper class urban males) are overrepresented at the expense of others (mainly rural low class females) who are underrepresented. And though this inequality in life-chances through education has been reduced over the years (especially since the second world war), it still constitutes a stubborn social fact which reveals that the process of selection in education is still more a matter of family background than of capacities and, therefore, still not democratic enough.

Some countries, however, are more democratic than others in this respect, as a result either of the implementation of more effective equalizing educational policies and (e.g. Italy after 1968) or of their specific economic and social structure and prevalent value system about «who should get educated». Greece belongs to this last category and constitutes a case in point, for in the 1960's before higher education was provided free by the Greek State (1964), it had one of the most open—and according to some social scientists (Tsoukalas, 1975)³ the most open—educational systems to its under-privileged strata and regions among Western European societies.⁴ At the same time, however, it had one of the least open educational systems to its women, especially in the agricultural and working classes where more pro-

2. See C.A. Anderson, «Access to Higher Education and Economic Development» in A.H. Halsey *et al.* (eds.), *op. cit.*, for a summary of the methods usually used in such research. For a concrete application of such methods in the study of French society, see P. Bourdieu and J.C. Passeron, *Les Héritiers* (Paris, 1967) and in the study of Greek Society, see J. Lambiri-Dimaki, *op. cit.*, vol. I, ch. 2 and «Les chances d'accès à l'enseignement en Grèce» in R. Castel *et al.* (eds.), *Education, Développement et Démocratie* (Paris, Mouton, 1967), pp. 107-116.

3. See «Higher Education in Greece as a Mechanism of Social Reproduction», *op. cit.*, p. 21-22.

4. For a comparison between Greece and France as regards the degree of class openness of their educational systems, see J. Lambiri-Dimaki, *op. cit.* And for the relatively low degree of regional inequality in higher education in Greece, see B. Kayser, *Géographie humaine de la Grèce* (Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1964), pp. 70-71 as well as J. Lambiri-Dimaki, «Regional, Sex and Class Distribution among Greek Students: Some Aspects of Inequality of Educational Opportunities» in *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, vol. 268 (February 10, 1976), pp. 385-394.

1. A study of the socio-economic and other characteristics of Greek students studying abroad remains still to be done. Its findings will throw more light on the extent of social democratization of higher education in Greece.

nounced education for the woman was never viewed favourably since it led to female roles in full contradiction to the traditionally accepted ones.¹

How is the impressive class openness (by West European standards) of the Greek educational system of the 1960's to be explained? Mainly in terms of the ways in which the whole Greek social system functions: this, since the early days of its formation, was characterised by a non-rigid class stratification, an inflated State bureaucracy and an underdeveloped agrarian and industrial economy.² Under such socio-economic conditions higher education—useful also for a career in politics³—came to function as a road to occupational mobility (mainly from the peasant and working classes to the urban lower middle and middle classes) sought after at the cost of any economic sacrifice by the ambitious families of the lower strata for their children. In Greece higher education was never viewed as an exclusive privilege of the upper classes (as, for example, was the case in England or France at the beginning of the century) and very rarely was it appreciated as a cultural good worthy in itself. It was mainly valued as a means to a livelihood. As early as 1847 Buchon in *La Grèce Continentale et le Morée* (Paris, 1847) observed: «The least sophisticated Greek whom you employ for reading and conversation in his language, will put aside what little he earns by this to go and get his law degree in Paris.. Hire a servant and he will save up to study medicine at Pisa.»⁴ The Greek social system with its limited occupational openings in industry and the mass media used for a long time University degrees and the positions they opened as a safety valve to the pressures of the masses for social movement into a more rewarding state of life: unable to reward them with sufficient money gained in the fields or in blue collar occupations it rewarded them with degrees and on the basis of these with positions in the State bureaucracy. Or to use a less deterministic language, the actors themselves within the limitations of the system found in the pursuit of higher education a solution to their life-problems.

In Greece, higher education was not the privilege of the rich industrialists's and merchants's children, who having a ready made

career ahead of them had less interest in the acquisition of a University degree than their less wealthy peers of the upper and middle classes, as some empirical evidence has shown.⁵

Moreover, the Greek educational selection system being geared almost exclusively to the testing of memory—that is of knowledge learned by heart—and not to the testing of the ability to think critically and originally and in an intellectually sophisticated manner, ironically enough functioned in a relatively just way, in the sense that it allowed the hard working lower class children to succeed during the various entrance exams without finding themselves at a strong disadvantage in the competition with the middle and upper class children coming from more educogenic families.⁶

Such a total explanatory middle range theory has not been systematically explored, though more partial explanations of the open class character of the Greek educational system have been attempted.⁷

It is of great interest to note that during the decade (1962-72), under the short run impact of the free higher education policy (no tuition fees and free provision of textbooks), the student body has more than doubled its size, but whereas the women have about tripled their size, the men have only about doubled theirs (see Table 5 in the appendix).

When we compare the share of the upper, middle and lower classes (by the criterion of occupation) in the Greek male economically active population of 45 and older (that is, in the population which supposedly includes the students' fathers) to the share of these social classes (by father's occupation) in the student population for the two periods under examination (see Table 5 in the appendix), there arises that the participation of the upper classes in Greek University education has slightly decreased in favour mainly of that of the working classes.

From the above evidence it may be concluded that some further reduction in sex and class inequality in the opportunities for higher education in Greece has been achieved between the 1960's

1. See J. Lambiri-Dimaki, *Towards a Greek Sociology of Education*, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 133-138.

2. See N. Mouzelis and M. Attalides, «Greece» in M. Archer and S. Giner (eds.), *Contemporary Europe* (London, 1971), pp. 162-197.

3. See K.R. Legg, «Political Recruitment and Political Crises. The Case of Greece», *Comparative Political Studies* (January, 1969), pp. 536-540.

4. Mentioned by K. Andrews, *Athens* (Phoenix House, London, 1967), p. 75.

5. Empirical evidence for this see in J. Lambiri-Dimaki, *Towards a Greek Sociology of Education*, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 125-126.

6. The relationship between social class and achievement has not yet been studied systematically in Greece. Some empirical evidence exists, however, which suggests that within the University of Athens (1965-66) higher class, and men students did not do as well as lower class ones and women at intermediate examinations. For this finding see J. Lambiri-Dimaki, *Towards a Greek Sociology of Education*, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 172-177.

7. See, f. ex., Tsoukalas, op. cit.

and the 1970's. Not, however, as much as might have been achieved if the 1964 reform had been followed by parallel compensatory economic policies and measures for democratizing the wider social system.¹

For the less privileged Greek social strata it looks as if the University degree continues and even more so to be considered as the magic key for opening the doors to white collar occupations which are disproportionately valued in relation to blue collar ones. In reality, however, the competition among University graduates for positions in banks and ministries has recently become fiercer than ever before and success in the liberal professions and entry into the élite occupational categories is *de facto* achieved more often by the upper class male graduates than the lower class ones and the women.

To what extent is this contradiction within the Greek social system, which opens wide the gates of the Universities to the members of its less privileged strata only to close later on them the gates to the upper layers of the prestige, wealth and power structure felt by the students themselves? One might venture the guess that a growing number of students are sensing—if not fully realising it—and that this is partly the cause of their unrest and political radicalisation.²

At this junction of perhaps new social formations under way, the educational reform of 1976-77, comes as an impressive catalyst to push more Greeks than ever before towards vocational education. It is obvious that the spirit which inspired this reform is not to democratize further the Greek educational system (as it was the case with the 1964 reform) but to decongest the higher educational institutions and lower the demand for University education by achieving a greater bal-

ance between the latter and the demand for vocational education.

Greece, in comparison with Belgium, Portugal, Austria and Germany, has the lowest percentage of its population in vocational education. According to the 1976 Educational Act to be fully implemented by 1980, after nine years of compulsory education at about the age of 15 the Greek children, who would like to continue their studies, will be given basically two options: on the basis of selective examinations to enter either a Lyceum of general education, which will ensure to the successful graduates automatic entry into the Universities, or a Lyceum of technical education which will ensure them free entry into the higher vocational schools. However, the selection system will not be completely rigid allowing for some movement of pupils from the one stream to the other.

In what ways will these radical educational measures affect the sex and class inequalities in our educational and wider social system? It is of course dangerous to prejudge the issue. But anyway I shall venture a sociological guess: unless it is succeeded—something which is very difficult in such a short time—to upgrade impressively the prestige of vocational education, and unless aptitudes and educational interests are precisely tested during the nine year compulsory educational process and justly rated during the entrance exams to the general or vocational Lyceums, a strong danger exists of creating rigid strata: of «pushing», that is, more men as well as more lower class pupils than before to vocational education and on the other hand more middle and upper class pupils to general education and via this into the Universities. For at the age of 15 the differences in family background and upbringing are more likely to be felt in educational preferences and achievement, since at that early age the lower class child will not have had the time to compensate for his «intellectual» disadvantages by widening his «horizons» outside his restrictive family environment and by following the «frondistirion» (private schools pretraining for University exams) as it has been the case until now. If the guess is correct, the principle of equality in education will tend to give away to the principle of economic efficiency in the Greek society of the future.

1. On the non-equalizing effects of the free higher education policy as implemented in Greece, see P.P. Papageorgiou, «The Poorer Classes Finance in the Last Analysis Free Education» (in Greek), *Oikonomikos Tachydromos*, No. 1154 (June, 1976), p. 29 and on some of the general effects of this policy, J. Lambiri-Dimaki, *Contradiction between the Structure of Educational Opportunities and the Structure of Occupational Opportunities: a Source of Social Tension in Modern Greece* (mimeographed, written contribution presented at the Conference on the development of democratic institutions in Europe, Strasbourg, 21-23 April 1976), p. 4-5.

2. For some evidence on this see J. Lambiri-Dimaki, *ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

APPENDIX

TABLE 1. Highest Level of Education Attained*
(by males and females 25 years and over)

Selected European countries	No schooling ¹	First level incompletd ²	First level completed ³	Entered secondary level ⁴		Post-secondary ⁵
				First cycle	Second cycle	
Greece (1971)	49.8	—	38.8	9.4		2.0
France (1962)	59.4	—	30.9		7.5	2.1
Italy (1961)	12.5	71.4	—		13.9	2.1
Austria (1971)	—	61.7	—	35.8		2.6
The Netherlands (1960)	—	87.6	—		11.1	1.3
Belgium (1970)	—	62.6	—	34.8		2.6
Norway (1960)	83.9	—	—	14.2		1.9
Sweden (1970)	—	49.1	7.5		35.0	8.3
Switzerland (1960)	0.2	68.6	—	21.8		9.4
Federal Republic of Germany (1970)	—	77.7	—		18.0	4.3
England and Wales (1951)	—	13.3	65.6		19.5	1.6
N. Ireland (1961)	—	6.6	67.1		24.5	1.8
Scotland (1951)	—	4.5	76.7		16.7	2.1
Spain (1970)	12.9	64.7	12.9		5.8	3.7
Portugal (1960)	62.9	25.2	19.4	3.2		1.0

* Source: UNESCO, *Statistical Yearbook* (1974), pp. 69-77. 100% = population of males and females 25 years and over.

1. No schooling: less than one year of schooling; occasionally only includes illiterates.

2. Incompleted first level: Not completed the last year of primary education.

3. Completed first level: Completed primary education but did not continue.

4. Entered secondary level:

First cycle: Only stages of secondary school.

Second cycle: Those who moved to the higher stages but did not continue.

5. Post secondary: Any one who undertook post-secondary studies whether or not completed.

TABLE 2. Brute Enrollment Ratios¹ (for males and females)
1971 or 1972

Selected European Countries	First level	Second level	Third level
Greece	107 ²	69	10.39
Italy	107	64	20.11
France	113	81	16.99
Belgium	N.D. ³	N.D.	20.5
Austria	104	90	14.85
Denmark	99	81	23.75
Finland	124	80	13.81
F.R. of Germany	128	70	17.13
Luxemburg	99	49	1.89
Malta	109	70	6.53
The Netherlands	101	97	N.D.
Norway	101	93	19.03
Sweden	98	74	22.39
Switzerland	87	71	10.33
The United Kingdom	112	76	15.0
Portugal	91	65	7.6
Spain	119	71	14.32

1. All ratios are expressed as percentages. The gross enrollment ratio is the total enrollment of all ages divided by the population of the specific age groups which correspond to the age groups of primary, secondary and third level schooling.

At the third level the figures for the population 20-24 have been used throughout. Given that a good number of Greek students are older than 24, the resulting percentage should in reality be somewhat lower than the one actually given for Greece.

2. For countries with almost universal primary education, among the school-age population at the first level, the gross enrollment ratio will exceed 100 if the actual age distribution of pupils spreads over the official school ages.

3. N.D. = no data available.

TABLE 3. Type of School by Teacher : Pupil ratio
(1972—1973)¹

Type of school	State		Private	
	Number T:P ratio		Number T:P ratio	
Nursery schools	2,507	1: 30	360	1: 32
Primary day schools	8,882	1: 33	654	1: 27
Primary night schools	159	1: 20	41	1: 24
Day high schools	803	1: 31	234	1: 34
Night high schools	34	N.D. ²	40	N.D.
All vocational schools (lower and middle level) ³	547	N.D.	674	N.D.
Total	12,932		2,003	

1. Source = *Statistical Yearbook of Greece*, 1974 p. 124 and p. 132 and 134.

2. N.D. = No data available.

3. Including 76 post-secondary vocational schools out of which 25 are State and 51 private.

TABLE 4. *Teacher : Student Ratio in Universities and Equivalent Institutions among Selected European Countries¹ (1971 or 1972)*

Countries	Teacher : Student ratio
Greece	1: 81 ²
France	1: 19
Italy	1: 18
Spain	1: 14
Portugal	1: 14
Norway	1: 11
Switzerland	1: 10
Scotland	1: 9
N. Ireland	1: 8
England and Wales	1: 8
W. Germany	1: 8

1. The basic data on which I estimated the teacher: student ratio for all countries except Greece, is included in the *UNESCO Statistical Yearbook* (1974) pp. 328-334. This data refers to the absolute numbers of teachers and students in each country for 1971-1972. The number of the latter divided by the number of the former gives us the teacher : student ratio.

2. In the *UNESCO Statistical Yearbook* (1974) the number of teachers in relation to the number of students (1:18) given for Greece in 1972 might be considered misleading, since among the teaching staff are included the University assistants, whose main function is not teaching. The moment we subtract from the total number of University teachers that of the assistants, the number from 4220 (as stated) falls to 869 (as corrected). It seems more realistic to divide by this number the 70,161 Greek students of 1971 (source: *Statistics of Education*, 1971-72, Athens, 1975, especially pp. 160-161). The resulting ratio, much truer to Greek University life than the one suggested by the UNESCO statistics, is thus 1:81.

TABLE 5. *Percentage Distribution of Economically Active Greeks 45 of Age and Older by Social Class (A) and of University and Equivalent College Students by Social Class (A.1) and Sex (B)*

Social Class	1961-62		1971-72	
	(A) Economically active Greek Men 45 and over ¹	(A1) Students ²	(A) Economically active Greek Men 45 and over ³	(A1) Students ⁴
Upper	6.3	19.2	8.9	14.4
Middle	13.0	29.1	14.7	31.8
Total upper and middle	19.3	48.3	23.6	46.2
Agriculturalists	55.6	33.9	49.4	28.1
Workers	25.0	17.8	29.7	25.7
Total lower	80.6	51.7	79.1	53.8
Grand total=100	(860,600)	(30,617) ⁵	(865,324)	(61,907) ⁵
Sex	(B) Students		(B) Students	
Men	(22,678)	74.0	(48,002)	68.0
Women	(7,939)	126.0	(22,159)	32.0
Total	(30,617)	100.0	(70,161)	100.0

1. Source: *Results of the Population and Housing Census, Sample Elaboration*, Vol. III, *Employment* (Athens, 1962), p. 22.

2. Source: *Statistics of Education 1961-62 Higher Education* (Athens, 1964), p. 46.

3. Source: *Statistical Yearbook of Greece, 1976* (Athens), p. 84.

4. Source: *Statistics of Education, 1971-72* (Athens, 1975), p. 132.

5. Total of student minus: orphans, students whose father was a pensioner and students who did not declare father's occupation.