

The Historical Review/La Revue Historique

Vol 19, No 1 (2022)

The Historical Review / La Revue Historique

The *H*istorical Review
La Revue *H*istorique



VOLUME XIX (2022)

Section de Recherches Néohelléniques
Institut de Recherches Historiques / FNRS

Section of Neohellenic Research
Institute of Historical Research / NHRF

The University as a Punisher: Control Mechanisms and Disciplinary Practices. The Disciplinary Board of the University of Athens (1911–1940)

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To cite this article:

Christodoulou, A., Gkonis, V., & Karamanolakis, V. (2023). The University as a Punisher: Control Mechanisms and Disciplinary Practices. The Disciplinary Board of the University of Athens (1911–1940). *The Historical Review/La Revue Historique*, 19(1), 229–257. Retrieved from <https://ejournals.epublishing.ekt.gr/index.php/historicalReview/article/view/35062>

THE UNIVERSITY AS A PUNISHER:
CONTROL MECHANISMS AND DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES.
THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF ATHENS (1911–1940)

Angeliki Christodoulou, Vassilis Gkonis and Vangelis Karamanolakis

ABSTRACT: This article investigates the control mechanisms and practices of youth discipline in the twentieth century through the example of the archives of the University of Athens Disciplinary Board (1911–1940). The research extends from the introduction of the institution’s first set of regulations and the creation of the disciplinary board in 1911 up to 1940 and the beginning of World War II. The article starts with the assumption that control mechanisms and discipline practices do not remain constant over time; they change according to the spatial and temporal framework and the needs they serve at any given time. The basic working hypothesis is that their functioning and application within an educational institution are directly related to the behavioural patterns and values that the institution cultivated during its historical trajectory as well as to the complex and increasingly changing landscape of Greek society in the interwar period until 1940. At the same time, a comparison is attempted with similar examples to investigate the correlation between the disciplinary policy of the University of Athens and European and American universities.

The subject matter of this article is the investigation of the control mechanisms and the disciplinary practices concerning youth in the first half of the twentieth century by focusing on the example of the disciplinary board of the University of Athens (1911–1940).¹ Our research focuses on the investigation, documentation and study of the activity of the disciplinary board over a long period of circa 30 years by integrating it in the overall operation of the university and bringing forth its supervisory and remonstrative role.

Starting with the enactment of the first definite rules of procedure of the university in 1911 and the creation of the disciplinary board, our research extends chronologically to 1940 and Greece’s entry into World War II. The outbreak of

¹ This article was prepared within the framework of the 2014–2020 NSRF programme entitled “Support for researchers with an emphasis on new researchers: Second cycle”, for which our research team undertook the project “The University as Punisher: Control Mechanisms and Discipline Practices. The Disciplinary Board of the University of Athens (1911–1974).

the war signalled a new period for the disciplinary board, as is reflected in the change in legislation and in the proliferation of cases that were brought before it.

This article considers *a priori* that control mechanisms and disciplinary practices do not remain stable over time; rather, they change on the basis of the spatial and chronological framework within which they operate and also on the basis of the needs they serve at any given time. The basic working hypothesis is that their function and application within an educational institution are directly related to behavioural models and values that the institution itself cultivated over its historical course; moreover, they are also related to the complex and ever-changing political and social background of the Greek twentieth century.

We use a case study in order to generalise the results of the research and to connect them with broader questions regarding the constitution of Greek society in the twentieth century. Within this framework we formulated a series of research questions that allows us to understand the use and function of the notions of *control* and *discipline* and of the mechanisms and practices related to them in the university context.

In particular we look into the reasons and necessities that led to the formation of a special body in 1911, namely the disciplinary board, in order to supervise the *good order* of the university and the *orderly behaviour* of the students. Furthermore, we examine what the board considered transgressive behaviour, what constituted inappropriate student conduct that needed supervision and discipline during the various historical phases of the period under consideration, and, finally, we describe the function of the disciplinary board, its technology and the way in which it constituted its own repertory of procedures for dispensing justice and its own registry of disciplinary penalties.

The choice of our case study is not incidental. First and foremost it concerns the University of Athens, the first university founded in Greece and the country's only one until 1926. In addition to its academic and educational role, the university played a critical ideological role during the nineteenth and twentieth century through its significant contribution to the formation of dominant ideological currents while serving the needs of the community and contributed to social mobility. Through its discourse and practices, the university shaped the image of the male university student and, in the course of the twentieth century, of the female student as well;² it determined and normalised models of behaviour, values and mentalities that ought to characterise the student body.

The disciplinary board played a critical role in this direction, as it undertook to determine and oversee compliance with specific normative models, the

² The University of Athens admitted its first female student in 1890.

evaluation of misconduct or of aberrations and the rendition of penalties in a system that attempted to set an example within the university community. Moreover, all university employees – professors, teaching assistants and administrative personnel – fell under the jurisdiction of the disciplinary board.

This article aims to fill a bibliographic and research gap that exists in the pertinent bibliography. Most historical studies on the university that have been completed or are underway focus on its foundation, its departments, its course during significant historical events and its relation to the executive power. At the same time, relevant research concerning young people and especially male and female university students of the twentieth century usually focuses on their ideological disobedience and their political activism. This present study, however, attempts to bring forth a hitherto unknown segment of the university history, namely the university as *chastiser*; it also wishes to contribute to the discourse regarding the identity of the students over the course of a long historical period and shed light on the transformations it went through on the basis of political and social circumstances.

Both notions – *control* and *discipline* – have been the subject of multiple analyses from various cognitive fields, while a good part of the relevant bibliography pertains to young people.³ In our analysis, which is deeply influenced by the work of Michel Foucault, these two central notions are a constituent part of the study of power relations, which are viewed as a complex and historically determined phenomenon. Power is directly related to knowledge: there is no power relation without the construction of knowledge and there is no knowledge that does not presuppose and does not construct power relations.⁴ Within this framework, control and discipline are political technologies that determine formal institutions and, at the same time, shape the subjects who come into contact with these institutions.⁵ The state determines the mechanisms of control and enforcement of its power over the people, the content and the limits of which are redefined depending on historical circumstances. The necessity of discipline puts into motion a series of mechanisms, methods and techniques which characterise, classify, arrange, analyse, rank, assess and regulate relations and behaviours. Finally, the citizens themselves, in our case the student body, redefine and construct a series of

³ For example, see Barbara Grant, “Disciplining Students: The Construction of Student Subjectivities,” *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 18, no. 1 (1997): 101–3.

⁴ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London: Penguin, 1991), 138.

⁵ Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” in *Art after Modernism: Rethinking Representation*, ed. Brian Wallis (New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1986), 420.

practices to respond to the control and discipline mechanisms through their actions and reactions.

The First Disciplinary Regulations in European Universities

The issue of student compliance with behavioural regulations preoccupied members of the university community from early on. During medieval times, university students in Europe did not have a good reputation. From the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, the student image was associated with nightlife, gambling, provocative and aggressive behaviour towards guild members and city authorities, while it was common practice for students to carry and use weapons. The University of Paris was considered an “international nest of sin” and promiscuity, a place which attracted immoral souls from all over the world. Similarly, in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italy, university professors criticised the laziness and indifference of students towards their academic obligations, and condemned their inclination for promiscuity and luxurious living. Towards the end of the Middle Ages in the universities of the Holy Roman Empire, this criticism acquired another dimension, namely the disappointment in the failure of young students, who had spent their youth in the university and wasted their fathers’ money due to their derelict and indulging lifestyle while at the end the only gain obtained was to bring shame to their family.⁶

The reformation of the University of Paris in 1452 and the charter of Oxford University, the *statuta aularia*, in 1489 were breakthroughs in the legislative history of European universities. Gradually student life began to be regulated on a central level.⁷ The general charter of each university instituted rules for all its members, namely administrative personnel, professors, students and apprentices. In both colleges and dormitories the aim was not only to gain knowledge and methodology but also to acquire social skills and models of behaviour.⁸

In all European universities the notion of decent behaviour, the *Honeste se gerrere*, meant a series of strict orders-prohibitions regarding the appearance of students and their behaviour, their daily interactions, their leisure time and their social gatherings. In particular, the avoidance of women of *all kinds*,

⁶ Rainer Christoph Schwinges, “Student Education, Student Life,” in *A History of the University in Europe*, vol. 1, *Universities in the Middle Ages*, ed. Walter Rüegg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 223; Charles Homer Haskins, *Studies in Medieval Culture* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1929), 1–35.

⁷ Schwinges, “Student Education,” 224.

⁸ Michael Benedict Hackett, *The Original Statutes of Cambridge University: The Text and its History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

both outside and especially inside the university, was obligatory. The second prohibition had to do with the use of guns, and particularly with carrying a gun in any meeting or class of the university and also during the night, so as to avoid clashes between students or between students and citizens. The third prohibition referred to the use of modern clothes while emphasis was laid upon simple attire, the so-called “academic wear”. A fourth behavioural trait that was prohibited in European universities was the verbal and factual insulting of fellow students and professors. What was at stake here was personal honour and, even more so, the avoidance of internal clashes. In the charter of the University of Prague, which represented a bridge between older and newer forms of university discipline, there was a catalogue of the most common types of verbal insult that incurred punishment. Moreover, the same charter contained a particular paragraph regarding body injuries that incurred stricter forms of punishment, which influenced to a great extent the charter of many German universities.⁹ In addition to these prohibitions there was a plethora of further regulations which took on a different character in the various universities.

University rules were often violated and universities reacted by imposing sanctions. Every charter included strict orders and prohibitions and was also followed by a specially expressed warning of punishment. It was the duty of those in charge of the universities to ensure that rules were observed everywhere and that violators were found and punished. Universities could impose fines, the amount of which depended on the number and severity of misdeeds, while in more serious cases the culprit was confined to jail or “was excluded”; the latter meant he lost the important protection of university benefits. In Paris, and also in German universities, stricter penalties were imposed on poorer students, who could be expelled more swiftly than wealthier classmates.¹⁰

Up to the French Revolution European universities were organised in a similar way and many of the disciplinary structures of the medieval period and early modern times survived into the nineteenth century.¹¹ There was no distinction between academic and social or moral behaviour, while discipline was paternalistic and strict. The “systems” used for handling discipline were simple and immediate. Students who violated any of the numerous rules that controlled almost all their movements or actions were punished either by their professor or by the president of the college.

⁹ Schwinges, “Student Education,” 225.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 227–28.

¹¹ Walter Rüegg, ed., *A History of the University in Europe*, vol. 1, *Universities in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 6.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century a liberalising tendency emerged in German-speaking universities regarding disciplinary policies. Even though the medieval practice of imprisoning disorderly students was maintained, in the course of time this particular punishment did not retain its initial harsh character, but rather turned into a title of honour for those students who were led into the campus prison.¹² The upgrading of the institution of rector in every university was a considerable breakthrough for the disciplinary system of German universities. From now on rectors acted as *in loco parentis*, namely as “legal guardians” of students, and were responsible for student behaviour in accordance with the rule of decent conduct, the famous *Honeste se gerrere*. In this way presidents and professors were no longer occupied with issues of student discipline on a daily basis. This development was an impetus for the creation of a more modern system of student discipline.

The Greek University Case

The University of Athens was founded in December 1836 on the basis of a royal decree issued by Count Armanberg, chief secretary of King Othon. The foundation of the university in the capital of the new state was part of a wider plan of the new dynasty and constituted the capstone of an educational system that aimed to provide staff for the public and private sectors. The Othonian University, named in honour of its founder, marked the establishment of the first higher education institution not only in the newly established Kingdom of Greece, but also in the Balkans and in the Eastern Mediterranean as a whole.¹³

¹² Towards the end of the nineteenth century, imprisoned students would woo their fellow students to meetings/parties inside the campus prison with alcohol. In German universities prisons were abolished shortly before World War I and today they are tourist attractions in many cities. Mark Twain, *A Tramp Abroad* (London: Penguin, 1998); Carolyn J. Mooney, “Notes from Academe: Germany. Slammer or Shrine? How German Students Left Their Mark on the Walls of a Campus Prison,” *Chronicle of Higher Education* (1 March 1996): A 55.

¹³ For the history of higher education in Greece and the University of Athens during that period, see Kostas Papapanos, *Χρονικό-Ιστορία της ανωτάτης μας εκπαίδευσης* (Athens: Pierce College, 1970). See also Kostas Lappas, *Πανεπιστήμιο και φοιτητές στην Ελλάδα κατά τον 19ο αιώνα* (Athens: Historical Archive of Greek Youth; Institute for Neohellenic Research of the Hellenic National Research Foundation, 2004); Chaido Barkoula, Kostas Gavroglu and Vangelis Karamanolakis, *Ιστορία του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών 1837–1937* (Irakleion: Crete University Press, 2014).

The December 1836 decree also included the regulations of the future university,¹⁴ a series of provisions concerning student conduct which were mostly copied from German university rules. Students were obliged to pay due respect to university professors and also to state employees and the police. Assemblies and demonstrations were prohibited as were the gathering of petitions, gun possession, the posting of documents without a permit, acting, travelling outside the city without a permit, and duelling. Students also had to declare in writing that they were not members of any secret society.

The surveillance of the diligence, morality and religious conduct of the students was part of the duties of the rector and senate. As regards the penalties, the rector could impose the penalty of scolding either in private or public, custody and incarceration, while the senate was in charge of more serious penalties, such as issuing a warning of suspension, suspension and, finally, expulsion. In the case of expulsion the student was “condemned on a blackboard” and his punishment was announced to his legal guardians and foreign universities. Any student under disciplinary investigation was not allowed to spend a night outside the city without the permission of the rector until the investigation was completed. Whoever attempted to leave the city was threatened with expulsion.

This first regulation was immediately criticised by the press for being a direct copy of foreign models that was uncritically applied to Greek reality. In particular the provisions regarding student conduct were a direct copy of the equivalent Bavarian student regulations issued in 1827,¹⁵ which aimed to restrict student activity connected with the liberal movements of the period and the demand for the unification of the German states. The fear of what was taking place in German-speaking areas, which greatly influenced the authors of the Bavarian regulations, is reflected in the Greek text.

Nevertheless, the regulation was never implemented. The overall conflict between Othon and Armansperg, and the dismissal of the latter, led to the annulment of the royal decree and the issuing of another, in April 1837, in the name of the king himself.¹⁶ The new regulation was considerably shorter. While

¹⁴ “Διάταγμα περί συστάσεως πανεπιστημίου,” *Εφημερίς της Κυβερνήσεως* (ΦΕΚ), no. 86Α, 31 December 1836 [henceforth 1836 Regulation]. Also see Lappas, *Πανεπιστήμιο και φοιτητές*, 82–86.

¹⁵ “Satzungen für die Studierenden an den Hochschulen des Königreichs Bayern (26 November 1827),” in G. Döllinger, *Sammlung der im Gebiet der inneren Staats-Verwaltung des Königreichs Bayern bestehenden Verordnungen, aus den amtlichen Quellen geschöpft und systematisch geordnet*, vol. 9 (Munich: s.n., 1838), 254–70; see Lappas, *Πανεπιστήμιο και φοιτητές*, 83.

¹⁶ “Διάταγμα περί συστάσεως πανεπιστημίου” and “Διάταγμα περί προσωρινού κανονισμού του εν Αθήναις συσταθησομένου πανεπιστημίου,” ΦΕΚ, no. 16, 24 April 1837 (henceforth 1837 Regulation).

it continued to follow the German university prototype, it differed considerably especially as regards the disciplinary policy of the institution. The list of prohibited activities was reduced and the policing of student life was scaled back.

According to the regulation, the rector had to keep watch on the students and especially those from the provinces or from abroad and had to notify their relatives whenever they deviated from “the path of virtue and decency”. For this reason he had to know the social circle of the students. During classes, professors were responsible for student conduct. In cases of student misbehaviour, the rector could inflict the penalty of reprimand either in private or before the university council and also order the 24-hour detention of the student. More severe penalties, such as a four-week detention or final expulsion from the university were imposed by the senate upon approval from the Education Ministry.¹⁷ The 1837 regulation, which was clearly more lenient than the previous one, did not define the boundaries of student activities nor the quality of the offences. University students had to pay due respect and obedience to the rector and senate, which were responsible for the surveillance of their diligence, religious conduct and moral values; they were also obliged to live a decent life in agreement with the ethical values and the laws of the state.

This first regulation of the university was retained for 74 years, until 1911. During this period many bills concerning the reorganisation of the university were drafted, yet not a single one was ever passed. During this period the rector and senate decided on the penalties for students engaging in any sort of unlawful conduct, whether it concerned moral matters or was connected to active, mainly nationalist, student movements. The earliest proposal for the establishment of a disciplinary board can be found in pertinent bills drafted at the end of the nineteenth century. One 1896 bill foresaw a disciplinary board that would police the university and also proposed stricter control of student conduct and the suppression of “deviations” from the academic order. In the same spirit, but even stricter, was a bill of 1899 that drafted provisions for students that did not attend class regularly and a registry of disciplinary penalties for predetermined student deviations. The most noteworthy of the proposed penalties was the collective penalty (loss of a semester or a year) for all students of a department or all departments who obstructed lectures or were involved in “rebellious movements”.¹⁸

¹⁷ Articles 29 and 31, 1837 Regulation.

¹⁸ See Lappas, *Πανεπιστήμιο και φοιτητές*, 293–94; Sifis Bouzakis, *Η Πανεπιστημιακή εκπαίδευση στην Ελλάδα (1836–2005): Τεκμήρια ιστορίας*, vol. 1, 1836–1925 (Athens: Gutenberg, 2006), 295–97.

A New Institution: The Disciplinary Board, 1911–1922

The disciplinary board was finally instituted by the 1911 regulation, which was introduced by the new government of Eleftherios Venizelos¹⁹ in the context of a wider legislative change in education and the overall state administration. In 1909, a military movement, the so-called Goudi coup, called for the reformation of public life and the recovery of the country after the defeat in the Greek–Turkish War of 1897. This resulted in the extensive cleansing of the state administration, including the teaching staff of the country's sole university. In 1911 the voting of a new regulation that aimed at the modernisation and Europeanisation of higher education signalled the beginning of a new era for the university.

The new regulation expressed a rule of academic conduct that was maintained in future regulations as well. In particular there was the provision that a student, who was considered an adult for his university obligations, would be faced with disciplinary penalties if he broke the law or the decisions of the senate, if he acted in a way that insulted the dignity of the university or the honour and dignity of his fellow students, if he did not pay due respect to university authorities or the teaching staff, if he disturbed peace and order in the university premises and in general if he behaved in a way that was not consistent with student dignity.²⁰

In accordance with the regulation, a special body was established, the disciplinary board, consisting of 11 members who served a three-year term: the rector, who had the chair, and two professors from each school (Theology, Law, Medicine, Philosophy, Physics and Mathematics). The regulation defined the penalties that could be inflicted by the university authorities in the following order: reprimand by the rector, reprimand by the disciplinary board and the senate, a written warning of expulsion, suspension ranging from 3 months to 2 years and, finally, permanent expulsion. Moreover, even though the regulation recognised the right of assembly upon prior approval, it nevertheless prohibited any student gathering at the university entrance (Propylaia) and any other university premises. At the same time a disciplinary board was also established for teaching staff. It consisted of the members of the senate and six members of the Supreme Court of Greece.

The boundaries of the jurisdiction between the rector and the rest of the members of the disciplinary board were set down at its first meeting in December

¹⁹ Law 3823, “Περί Οργανισμού του Εθνικού Πανεπιστημίου,” *ΦΕΚ*, no. 178, 12 July 1911, and Law 3825 “Περί Καποδιστριακού Πανεπιστημίου,” *ΦΕΚ*, no. 183, 17 July 1911 (henceforth 1911 Regulation). It is essentially the same regulation that also refers to the students.

²⁰ Article 12, 1911 Regulation.

1911. The lighter penalties (reprimand) were imposed by the rector, while more serious penalties (warning of suspension, temporary or permanent expulsion) were imposed by the disciplinary board. During the period 1911–1922 four disciplinary boards were appointed, each serving a three-year term, while members were replaced during each three-year term of office. There was no set frequency of meetings; the board convened when there were grievances and offences to deal with. During this period, lighter incidents, such as reports of student disobedience or mischief, were examined in a single session and usually incurred the penalty of immediate reprimand. There were some instances, however, such as the one that took place in 1920 when a case occupied consecutive meetings of the board; it concerned 17 students from the School of Dentistry who participated in a strike against one of their professors. The Board convened five times exclusively to deal with this case.²¹

According to the minutes of the meetings, it appears that from 1911 to 1921²² the disciplinary board had to decide on 24 cases. In their majority (19), the cases dealt with student issues that did not all have the same weight. Most common cases (14) concerned individual students and referred to mischief during class or exams (copying, falsification and forgery) and to disrespectful conduct (smoking in university premises, noise or fights during class, swearing at fellow students or professors). There were, however, five cases which took on wider dimensions. Students, either individually or in groups, were brought before the disciplinary board because they were actively involved in student movements and in student organisations; in two cases the movements had a political dimension.

The disciplinary board also had to deal with issues of a moral nature and of the conduct of students outside the university. The five pertinent cases referred to legal transgressions, financial matters and jokes or insults that were not in accordance with appropriate student conduct, as defined by the university authorities.

Even though the establishment of the disciplinary board in 1911 was considered a necessary measure for modernising the university and overseeing the student body, the evidence of the disciplinary cases recorded show that it dealt with a limited number of transgression cases. From 1911 to 1922, when

²¹ See meetings of 28 and 29 January, and 1, 4 and 5 February 1921, Historical Archive of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (HA NKUA), Proceedings of the Disciplinary Board, 1911–1922. The referral to the board was caused by the discontent of students with a Dentistry School professor, Lykourgos Kokkoris, which led them to a strike in December 1920, a disruption of the class and the constitution of a students' committee that delivered a resolution to the Education Ministry demanding the replacement of the professor.

²² Except for the years 1914–1917, for which no proceedings have been found.

more than 14,000 students were enrolled in the university,²³ only 52 students were brought before the disciplinary board to answer for their actions. The activation of the disciplinary mechanisms concerned mostly the activities of male students. The six female students that had to face the board were all students of the School of Dentistry; accused of involvement in the 1920 strike, they were cleared of the charges, however.²⁴

The treatment of the offences depended on their severity, the opinion of the board members, the presumption of guilt or innocence, outside interference, social conditions, the presence of witnesses and the extent of repentance of the student. The legislative intention was for the board to operate as a mechanism that would hand down penalties to students who misbehaved, which would prevent the occurrence of similar incidents. In any case, we know that of the 24 cases that were brought before it, the board only imposed severe penalties on five students (a three-month suspension for two students, a six-month suspension for two students and a year-long suspension for one student). In one case all implicated students were punished with a written warning of permanent expulsion in the case of recurrence. In all the other recorded incidents of disobedience or misbehaviour the board issued a reprimand, always using the term “judged with leniency.” In the early years, the members of the board did not operate as judges, but rather as instructors choosing to counsel rather than condemn.

From Abolition to Reestablishment, 1922–1932

A decade later, in 1922, a new regulation²⁵ abolished the disciplinary board for students but retained it for teaching staff. The reasons for this change are unclear. It is probable that due to the low frequency and severity of incidents, the student-focused one was not deemed necessary; cases could be handled adequately by existing university bodies. It is also possible that professors, who were preoccupied with various responsibilities (teaching, research, management of clinics and labs, and administrative positions), were not willing to undertake the responsibilities of yet another university body; even more so because the disciplinary board had the onerous duty of punishing students, an unpleasant activity that disturbed the relationship between professors and students. In any

²³ Barkoula, Gavroglu and Karamanolakis, *Ιστορία του Πανεπιστημίου*, 238–39.

²⁴ HA NKUA, Proceedings of the Disciplinary Board, 1911–1922, session of 5 February 1921.

²⁵ Law 2905, “Περί οργανισμού του Αθήνησιν Εθνικού και Καποδιστριακού Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών,” *ΦΕΚ*, no. 127, 27 July 1922 (henceforth 1922 Regulation).

case, the responsibility for student punishment returned to university authorities, either the rector or the senate depending on the incident and the severity of penalties. The senate dealt with the more severe offences. As regards the code of student conduct, there were no major differentiations from the previous 1911 regulation.²⁶ At the same time the prerequisites for the operation of student unions were set out. In order for a union to be recognised it had to have legal status (an approved statute) and the approval of the rector. If any union deviated from its goals, the senate had the right to dissolve it.²⁷

The revocation of the disciplinary board for students did not last for long. Seven years later, in 1929, the new Venizelos government decided on its reinstatement, reconstituting it in the new university regulation of 1932.²⁸ The occasion for this was a strike, but the real cause was the fear of a new enemy: communism.

The strike, which broke out in November 1929, mainly concerned student matters. It was an unprecedented event in the history of the university since the large-scale participation and determination of the strikers led the senate to shut down the university and allow the police to establish itself in the university premises. At the same time there were violent and cruel incidents during student demonstrations as well as arrests and convictions of students who “defamed” the government in public opinion. Most importantly, however, the authorities considered that the strike was instigated by communist students who participated in the strike committees. On this basis, both the government and the university decided to reinstitute the disciplinary board.

Already from the mid-1920s there was information and indications that communist students were to some extent operating in the university.²⁹ In order to handle this situation, the university proceeded with a series of measures that were mainly paternalistic in character. The need to “protect” the student body and to control the management of their leisure time contributed to the creation of the University Club.³⁰

²⁶ Articles 149–51, 1922 Regulation.

²⁷ Articles 157–60, 1922 Regulation.

²⁸ Law 5343, “Περί οργανισμού του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών,” *ΦΕΚ*, no. 86Α, 23 March 1932 (henceforth 1932 Regulation).

²⁹ Communist student organisations were already noted in 1921. See Angeliki Christodoulou, “Από τον Πάγκαλο στον Βενιζέλο: Κομμουνιστικό κίνημα και αντικομμουνισμός στο Πανεπιστήμιο Αθηνών (1926-1928)” (Master’s thesis, Panteion University, 2007).

³⁰ The University Club was established in 1922 in collaboration with the Young Men’s Christian Association. See Despina Farfaratzi, “Ίδρυση, δομές και λειτουργία Πανεπιστημιακής Λέσχης” (Master’s thesis, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, 2014).

In March 1927 the Education Ministry issued a confidential circular to all public educational institutions recommending the strict monitoring of every pro-communist motion within the student body and proposing the organisation of lectures against communism.³¹ In 1925–1926 the rector, having contacted other European universities, proposed to adopt the practice of Oxford University, namely to require enrolling students to declare in writing that they were not communists.³² In October 1927 the rector distributed to all university schools multiple copies of the book *Ο Κομμουνισμός εν τη πράξει*, written by the anti-communism theorist Georgios Fessopoulos, for use by students.³³

The campaign against communist ideas did not only preoccupy the state and the rectors. In reaction to the great student strike of 1929, the university authorities encouraged the establishment of the National Student Association, a conservative student body that came into systematic conflict with left organisations and later leaned towards fascism.³⁴ At the same time many professors would summon students to their office to advise them against communist ideas. This mentality did not only reflect the conservative ideology of the teaching and the administrative staff of the university, but also their multifaceted close contact with the state apparatus.

If paternalism was one side of the coin, control and repression through the establishment of the disciplinary board was the other. In this regard, the university and state were close accomplices. Moreover, 1929, when the reinstatement of the disciplinary board was decided, was also a milestone year for anti-communist policies in Greece. In June 1929, MPs voted in Law 4229/1929. Known as the *Ιδιώνυμο*; the law not only deemed communist actions, but also communist ideology, as criminal deeds that constituted a particularly dangerous *internal enemy*.³⁵

³¹ “Εκστρατεία κατά του κομμουνισμού. Μέτρα του Υπουργείου της Παιδείας,” *Ριζοσπάστης*, 23 March 1927.

³² Simos Menardos, *Έκθεσις των επί της Πρυτανείας αυτού κατά το έτος 1925–1926 πεπραγμένων* (Athens: s.n., 1930), 11.

³³ “Η νέα επιστήμη,” *Ριζοσπάστης*, 2 October 1927. Fessopoulos was a retired army major general who had served as director of the Special Security Agency.

³⁴ For the National Students Association, see Giorgos Giannaris, *Φοιτητικά κινήματα και ελληνική παιδεία*, vol. 1 (Athens: Pontiki, 1993), 424 and passim.

³⁵ See Neni Panourgia, *Dangerous Citizens: The Greek Left and the Terror of the State* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009).

How extensive was the phenomenon of communist activity and its repression? The general archive of the University of Athens³⁶ for the period 1922–1932 contains written reports, complaints and official correspondence concerning 84 male and female students who were members of 6 different student unions suspected of communist ideas. Most of them were referred to the senate at least once; 7 male students and 1 female student were suspended for a specific time period, while 8 male students and 1 female student were permanently expelled.

The appearance of *subversive* ideas and the way they were treated constituted a new phenomenon in higher education and concerned university authorities in a systematic way in the 1920s. Yet, in everyday life there were other incidents of “disobedience” that disturbed the “good order” of the university which activated its supervisory mechanisms. In addition to the incidents of student offences and inappropriate conduct of individual students³⁷ that were also present in the previous period, a new phenomenon emerged: the collective prosecution and punishment in response to growing and increasingly dynamic student unionisation. This is due to two main reasons: on the one hand student movements in the 1920s became more demanding and had the support of the emerging left-wing unionism. These demands arose because of the inability of the university to provide the required infrastructure for the increasing number of students. On the other hand, there was an upsurge in the number of student unions (departmental, local, scientific, cultural, etc., as well as political groups), some of which operated on the fringes of the law as set by the university regulation. Whenever needed, the disciplinary mechanisms dealt with this new phenomenon of a multifaceted student presence and student demands with mass appeal: the university authorities issued notices to the governing boards of student unions to answer charges against them either on the basis that they did not have an approved charter or that they deviated from their original goal; notices were also delivered to members of strike committees for organising mass

³⁶ The Protocol Archive, preserved in the HA NKUA, contains all departmental correspondence with other institutions and persons as well as the interdepartmental correspondence of the university along with applications, annotations reports, essays, decisions of bodies, etc.

³⁷ On the basis of the documents preserved in the HA NKUA we infer that university authorities dealt with the cases of 73 students. They concerned educational wrongdoings and inappropriate conduct within the university premises. From what we can tell, the most serious of these offences (identity fraud, forgery of documents) were punished with suspension for 1 or 2 years (4 students), while lighter offences (disrespectful conduct towards a professor or a fellow student, disruption of class, smoking, etc) ended in a reprimand.

movements and to students who played a leading role in demonstrations. In order to control the collegial student bodies, university authorities found allies outside the university.

The interwar period witnessed an intensification of the exchange of information with the state apparatus (police, ministries, courts and the army) regarding student conduct and actions. For example, in November 1928 the rector submitted a request to the public prosecutor's office requesting that he be notified about any criminal charges or indictments against students so that the university could take the necessary disciplinary measures.³⁸ Even though there is insufficient data for the 1922–1932 period regarding the outcome in all cases, nevertheless there are reports and denunciations for 22 incidents that the rector and senate had to deal with: unapproved student gatherings, instances of violence during strikes, and violations of unions. Concerning the latter a characteristic example is the referral to the disciplinary board of the entire governing body of the Students' Community (Φοιτητική Συντροφιά), which, established in 1910, was the first student association to support the use of the demotic language. The rationale behind its referral was that its charter had not been approved by the rector. In reality its indictment was due to its support for demotic, as the early demotic movement at the time was considered to be linked to communism.

Finally, the university's disciplinary mechanisms also monitored student offences that had to do with moral issues and decent conduct outside the university. A total of 21 such cases were registered, following complaints from citizens; they involved 31 male students and may be characterised as "misdemeanours" (improper conduct, financial debts, clashes, disturbing the peace, card playing, drinking); some, however, were more serious (harassment, seduction, robbery, burglary and embezzlement). The usual practice on the part of the university authorities was to summon the students in order to issue them with some advice and a reprimand and, depending on the severity of the offence and the student's repentance, to apply the foreseen penalties. In the process of monitoring and punishing students, the university authorities took the charges into serious consideration, especially when they were came from the state authorities. At the same time, however, they sought to protect the prestige of their institution. On 9 April 1928 the rector filed a complaint to the chief of police that four students who had been arrested by a police lieutenant for disturbing the peace were detained for 24 hours, having previously been humiliated in the street by the lieutenant. The rector considered that this treatment of students was not appropriate since, in the civilised world, students should enjoy the high esteem

³⁸ HA NKUA, Protocol Archive, file 474.4.

of society and the authorities. He maintained that the lieutenant should have simply reported the incident to the university authorities because disciplinary punishment would have been more effective than public humiliation. Finally, the students were summoned to appear before the general secretariat of the university and a few days later the city police department issued a circular to police stations instructing them that when students were arrested for minor misdemeanours they should not be brought to court but rather be reported to the university authorities.³⁹

In 1926, a few years after the annexation of Macedonia by the Greek state following the Balkan Wars, the country's second university was established in Thessaloniki. The spate of student movements that emerged following its foundation led the rector and senate to adopt equally strict disciplinary measures to those implemented in the University of Athens, namely the imposition of very austere penalties ranging from suspension to expulsion.⁴⁰ After 1929, university legislation at the University of Thessaloniki foresaw specific procedures for the organisation of students, their representation, the establishment of student unions, the holding of student assemblies, the invitation to events, etc.; all these could only take place upon prior approval of the rector and fell under his supervision. At the same time a very austere penalty system was imposed, which ranged from a simple reprimand to expulsion from the university. In addition, a personnel file was kept on every single student.⁴¹

1932–1940: From Reinstitution to World War II

The University of Athens disciplinary board was legally reconstituted in accordance with the 1932 regulation, which determined the structure and operation of the university for the following 50 years. Its reinstitution was due to the Venizelos government, which introduced legislation for universities as it had done in 1911. The new university body differed from its predecessors in three ways. The first was in terms of its composition: it consisted of five full professors, who served a three-year term, and one elected professor from each school. The rector no longer participated, while the most senior professor chaired the board. The board convened in the senate hall, thus bestowing additional weight on the disciplinary process. Its nature was the second differing characteristic: for

³⁹ HA NKUA, Protocol Archive, file 470.4.

⁴⁰ Dimitris Mavroskoufis, *Τα “Προοδευτικά Ζιζάνια” του Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης: Από τον αντικομμουνισμό του Μεσοπολέμου στον μακαρθισμό του Εμφυλίου* (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 2021), 75.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 74–76.

the first time there was a specific procedure, which resembled a court trial. The meetings of the meetings demonstrate that legal terminology was used at them. Depending on the case, there were provisions for questioning by the rapporteur, the presentation of evidence, the presence of witnesses and lawyers (they attended in five cases) and the use of information from the “personal file” of the student. The third difference was that the aim of the board changed: in accordance with the new university regulation new indictments and sentences were established in cooperation with the state apparatus. According to Article 121, students could be permanently expelled from the university following a definite conviction in the criminal courts or on the basis of the *Ιδιώνυμο* law of 1929. The inclusion of the *Ιδιώνυμο* in the provisions of the disciplinary board enabled the university authorities to apply in full the anti-communist practices, which democratic-liberal professors sometimes opposed. These new regulations gave a new meaning to the notions of *improper conduct* and *disobedience*⁴² and put the disciplinary practices that were already in use from the 1920s on a legal footing. The treatment of what could be termed a political offence became gradually harsher and reached a peak under Metaxas; a dictatorship of a clearly anti-communist nature⁴³ that was in ideological conversation with the interwar Fascist and Nazi regimes.

From 1932 to 1940, the disciplinary board was renewed three times, each serving a three-year term, and dealt with over 200 cases involving about 340 students of both sexes, either in single or multiple meetings. A total of 25 female students appeared before the board. While this number may seem small, female representation in higher education was very low. Taking into account that 7 of the 25 female students were accused of communist activity inside the university, it becomes clear that women had a dynamic presence in student movements.

A central target of the disciplinary board were incidents of infringement of university laws or of *not paying due respect to university authorities and the teaching staff*. The board dealt with cases of lesser or greater importance in every session. In 64 cases, 48 were individual infringements involving 67 students of both sexes. The incidents mostly related to wrongdoings during the course of classes and exams, and also to improper conduct towards the teaching or

⁴² According to article 120 of the regulation, a disciplinary penalty is imposed on students if “he behaves in a way that offends the founding principles of the state”.

⁴³ During the dictatorship arrests and prosecutions of communist citizens, including university students, were systematically published in daily newspapers; the statements of repentance were also published. See, for example, the articles in *Ελεύθερον Βήμα* (5 and 6 May 1938), relating to the arrest of leading communist members and of seven male students and one female student who were members of the Anti-Dictatorship Youth Front.

administrative staff or towards their fellow students. Typical for wrongdoings of this sort was for the case to be referred quickly and for there to be an immediate decision, usually taken in one meeting. It is likely that the board considered such incidents to be “internal” affairs; professors, being members of the board, were experienced in dealing with student issues and did not have to gather evidence and proof from outside sources, thus making the whole process very expeditious. Under the Metaxas dictatorship there was a slight increase in similar cases⁴⁴ while the penalties became stricter. As we shall see below, this differentiation can be viewed as a small sample of the overall turn of the board towards a more austere policy that was influenced by political conditions of the time.

During this period the disciplinary board was called upon to deal with infringements that took place outside the university premises that damaged the image of the *honour and decency of the student*. They mostly involved individual incidents relating to matters of honour, financial debts, breach of promise, harassment, improper conduct towards fellow citizens, card playing, etc. These cases were brought before the disciplinary board on the strength of complaints and some also ended up before the courts. The punishment inflicted by such an important institution in the eyes of Greek society offered justice to the offended citizens. Moreover, even though the university considered the students to be adults, there was, nevertheless, a paternalistic mentality stemming from their perception that their wrongdoings within the institution could damage its prestige. However, the disciplinary board found it difficult to deal with such incidents as they took place outside the university and often there was not enough proof to support the charges. Thus, in half of the relevant cases of the period (15 out of 30) the students were acquitted or freed of the charge due to insufficient evidence. In 1938, when there were a series of charges from hotel and restaurant owners about student debts, the board decided to hand over the reports to the chairman of the board of directors of the University Club in order for him to summon the students and advise them to pay off what they owed; this was probably done in order to relieve the disciplinary board of some pressure.⁴⁵ The club had its own disciplinary apparatus. A year later, in 1939, the board changed tactics: it decided that in cases of debt it did not have any jurisdiction to prosecute students if the charge did not include a transgression against student decency and duties.

⁴⁴ There were 35 referrals, as opposed to 29 in the previous period (1932–1936).

⁴⁵ HA NKUA, Proceedings of the Disciplinary Board of Students [1932–1940], meetings of 1 and 29 October 1938.

During the same period, in addition to the usual student misdemeanours, the board had to deal with 95 incidents related either to group or individual charges of communist activity. A total of 137 students were brought before the body more than once and the frequency of these cases rose during the Metaxas dictatorship. In 11 cases the students were cleared of the charge or acquitted due to doubts, 9 students received disciplinary punishment of the first degree or their case was reassessed and were reprimanded by the senate; in 117 cases suspensions were imposed ranging from 15 days to 2 academic years, 4 students were permanently expelled while 3 students who were initially expelled later had their punishment reduced. In its fight against the “internal enemy” the university had the state apparatus at its side: the Ministry of Public Security, local prefectures, military units and, during the Metaxas dictatorship, the Directorate of Special Security⁴⁶ sent reports to the university concerning the activity of suspect students.

The university disciplinary mechanism functioned both independently of and in parallel with the state authorities. It should be noted that its disciplinary board had been instituted to deal exclusively with transgressive student behaviour related to the institution. Thus in 1934, in a report submitted by the Education Ministry and the Gendarmerie headquarters on communist students, the disciplinary board ruled that it could not proceed with any disciplinary prosecution since the students had not violated any university rules.⁴⁷ On the basis of the numbers mentioned above, it is clear that in a university which numbered 8,000–10,000 students, those prosecuted for their communist ideas were very few in number, representing a small minority indeed. In view of these figures, what was the reason for this great fear, which was not confined to the university? The enactment of the *Ιδιώνυμο* law, especially given that the liberal Venizelos government was behind it, demonstrated the fear the emerging student movement, which had as its point of reference the October Revolution and the establishment of the USSR and which addressed not only students but also the working class and the peasantry, could generate. From the 1930s, anti-communism became the state ideology and led to the establishment of related control and repressive mechanisms. The university undertook a central role in this anti-communist campaign. This was not an exclusively Greek phenomenon. A survey of Europe in the interwar period shows that this also occurred elsewhere. At the height of the first “Red Scare” (1919–1939), anti-communist discourse argued that any member of a communist party was actually

⁴⁶ The Directorate of Special Security was a special division of the Hellenic Gendarmerie originally established in 1929 in order to break up communist organisations. During the German occupation, it collaborated with the Nazis and remained active until 1944.

⁴⁷ Proceedings of the Disciplinary Board, 22nd session, 22 June 1934.

a disciplined agent of the USSR, under the direction of the Comintern, which advocated revolutionary violence. In Fascist Italy in the 1920s, the political supervision of universities was marked by previously unknown sanctions against left-wing students, who in various ways had shown their hostility to the regime. However, it was mostly Jewish students who were expelled and banned from any academic or cultural institution after the racial laws of 1938.⁴⁸ After the Nazi seizure of power in Germany in 1933, all communist students were expelled from university institutes during the purge of alleged Marxist student leaders.⁴⁹ In Spain, from the beginning of the civil war (1936–1939) and also after the victory of the monarchists, many communist and liberal students were forced to drop out of colleges.⁵⁰ In Poland, in 1937 and 1938, police and government actions targeted left-wing students.⁵¹ And in the United States becoming a communist, or a political radical of any type, was a risky business throughout the interwar period. Communist students in US universities were not completely secure and there were a number of expulsions during the 1930s.⁵² By the 1940s, men and women who belonged to the communist party were no longer welcome in US universities.⁵³

In the Greek case, the influence of communist students was far greater than their actual numbers. It was mainly these students, and not the official collegiate organisations, who mobilised in support of student demands. University authorities feared a potential increase in their influence in a period when there were many changes in the profile of the university. The significant rise in the number of registered students (8,000–10,000) during the interwar period and the multiple problems that existed due to the high cost of studies and the lack of the necessary infrastructure, but also problems relating to living conditions and future employment opportunities, as well as students' young age, increased the

⁴⁸ Ruth Ben-Ghiat, "Italian Universities under Fascism," in *Universities Under Dictatorship*, ed. John Connelly and Michael Grütner (University Park: Penn State Press, 2005), 67.

⁴⁹ Giles Geoffrey, *Students and National Socialism in Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 149.

⁵⁰ Miguel Ángel Ruiz Carnicer, "Spanish Universities Under Franco," in Connelly and Grütner, *Universities Under Dictatorship*, 189; Sergio Rodríguez Tejada, "The Anti-Franco Student Movement's Contribution to the Return of Democracy in Spain," *Espacio, Tiempo y Educación* 2, no. 2 (2015): 81.

⁵¹ Lieve Gevers and Louis Vos, "Student Movements," in *A History of the University in Europe*, vol. 3, *Universities in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries (1800–1945)*, ed. Walter Rüegg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 352.

⁵² Ellen Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 74.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 24.

fear of the university authorities and of the state that the communist Left would recruit masses of students. The imposition of penalties on communist students had a double aim: to expel those involved and to set an example for the rest.

From 1938 to 1940 in particular, students were exiled by the regime and were also punished by the disciplinary board, by being either suspended for a year or expelled outright. Students penalised with expulsion for subversive pro-communist activity could avoid the penalty by signing a written declaration of repentance, in other words, a document renouncing communist ideas. The Metaxas regime used these repentance forms widely. Yet, even before the 4 August dictatorship, the university's disciplinary mechanisms used an early version of a repentance form so students could reduce or even avoid their penalty; this form may be considered an early version of the declaration of repentance.⁵⁴ Students who declared their repentance declaration could return to their studies while those who refused to do so were permanently expelled. Although the *Ιδιώνυμο* law equipped the disciplinary board with powers to expel students who were involved in subversive ideas, it appears that it did not seek to expel students permanently from the academic community but rather to reform them.

On the whole, the presence and the attitude of the students in question were decisive for the outcome of their case. In cases that were heard in absentia, the penalties imposed were heavier, probably because the absence of the student was considered an act of disrespect for the disciplinary procedure. In those cases where the defendant was present, showed repentance and pleaded for leniency, the penalty was lighter than that provided for. The presence of defence witnesses, especially if they enjoyed some social prestige, contributed to a more favourable decision. In a 1937 case involving a student who was charged with communist activity by the Directorate of Special Security, an archimandrite showed up in his defence, testifying that he was a good Christian and a communicant.

In general, rectorate authorities feared collective protests because they considered that they empowered left-wing students and because they generally disturbed the good order of the university. The undertaking of collective initiatives for student matters on the part of students (protests, strikes, etc.) was considered a serious disciplinary matter. For this reason, in many instances the disciplinary board took into account the political dimension of the cases brought before it or investigated whether these cases reflected any such activity. For the period from 1932 to 1936, there are records for 11 such cases, where 32 male and

⁵⁴ The General Archive (HA NKUA Protocol Archive) contains many applications from students from the beginning of the 1930s who had been expelled for pro-communist activity and returned to submit a repentance statement asking for the restoration of their student status.

one female student were accused of participating in a student strike, encouraging class interruptions and walk outs, damaging university property, distributing leaflets, clashing with other students, participating in non-approved unions, etc. The majority of these cases were related to a large student strike that took place in March 1936.⁵⁵ A few months after the imposition of the 4 August dictatorship, the new regime banned student unionism and no more cases related to student unionism were brought before the disciplinary board, which convened for the last time on 13 June 1940, a year before its term ended in June 1941.

The Disciplinary Board: A New Punishment Body

The establishment of the disciplinary board in 1911 was a new link in an old chain. Its creation came to reshape the entire field regarding the control and discipline of students, the imposition of normative prototypes and the definition of the boundaries within which students could operate. This body would undertake the role of *chastiser* of the offender upon identifying his or her action as offensive.

To take things from the very start. According to the principles of the foundation of the University of Athens, as reflected in its first regulation, the monitoring of the student body was in the hands of university authorities, especially the rector and senate. At the same time, however, it was also the duty of the entire staff of the university, both teaching and administrative: professors, porters and clerks, the secretariat, teaching assistants and laboratory curators. These were the people who supervised the daily life of students within the university premises and had the authority to report any deviating behaviour to the rectorate. In cases of minor misdemeanours, other university administrative bodies could take action.

The supervision of student conduct was not limited to the boundaries of the university. In the nineteenth century, social expectations and the image of a virtuous university student, who was considered part of a small elite that would shape the future of the country, resulted in the supervision of students even when outside the university grounds. To this end a web of entities, including private citizens, formed an established a channel of information that secured the

⁵⁵ During the strike of March 1936, the disciplinary board held five special meetings (3, 4, 6, 9 and 13 March) to deal with six cases related to the strike. Twenty-four male students and one female student were brought before the board on the charge that “they psychologically supported the strikers”. The charges against sixteen students were dismissed due to a lack of evidence. Five students were reprimanded and one student was reprimanded in a stricter way while three students were expelled; this latter decision was re-examined.

supervision of students in areas beyond the control of the university authorities. From the early twentieth century, it was self-evident that for whatever offence committed by students, be it of a public or private nature, the university had to be informed as it was the competent authority to deal with transgressions. Even though university legislation considered students to be legal adults, university authorities took on a paternalistic role in treating students as minors who needed supervision.

The institution of the disciplinary board did not change this situation, at least in theory. Control and supervision were exercised by all, with the rector playing a decisive role. Following the identification of a violation through university control mechanisms or outside reports, the disciplinary board was called to judge and impose penalties. Its role as an administrator of justice inside the institution was also illustrated in its procedures.

Procedures

Under the original plan of the disciplinary board in 1911, the rector played a central role in its operation and implementation since he presided over the body. Although the rector lost this role under the 1932 regulation – under which the university schools appointed its members – he still held a pivotal position. The disciplinary procedure could only be initiated on the order of the rector, after his office had received a complaint about a student. The criteria by which every School appointed a professor as a member of the disciplinary board are not clear and the minutes of school meetings contain no clear information in this regard. In a male-dominated university, the body generally consisted of a group of men with conservative beliefs.

Regarding the procedure itself, the defendant was summoned in writing to answer the charges on a specified meeting date. If he did not show up, he was summoned again with his subpoena posted publicly; otherwise he was judged in absentia. During the procedure the defendant submitted either an oral or written statement and answered questions posed by the board. In some cases witnesses were called to testify while in others the prosecutor himself was asked to attend. The 1932 regulation included a provision whereby a student had the right to appear with an advocate. In those cases where the penalty of permanent expulsion was imposed, the student had the right to appeal to the senate within a maximum of 10 days after the disclosure of the penalty. The senate, acting as an appeal body, made the final decision and could lower the penalty. All disciplinary punishments were announced by the rector and was noted in the student's report card, while his parents or legal guardians were officially informed by mail. This particular procedure aimed to ensure the legality and validity of the

university. In 1929, the General Statistical Service of Greece began publishing university disciplinary penalties by number and type of penalty as part of its series pertaining to higher education.⁵⁶

From 1932 the disciplinary board operated practically as a court of justice and even used legal terminology (court hearing, plaintiff/defendant, indictment, interrogation, recurring offence, review of the substance of the case, motion to set aside judgment, precedent/*res judicata*). In view of this, the presence of Law School professors was deemed important since they could ensure the legality of the proceedings and also safeguard the decision of the board on the basis of jurisprudence and their judicial knowledge. What kind of action did the board consider as an offence worthy of punishment, and what exactly needed control and discipline?

The Offence

With the exception of the 1836 regulation, which was never implemented, there was no clear definition of what constituted a student offence except for issues that were related to the operation of student associations and assemblies as well as the *Ιδιώνυμο* law. This ambiguity does not only pertain to university legislation; even the official language of university authorities was elusive. In the context of a deliberate ambiguity, there is only a mere reference to the *good order* of the university, the *good conduct* of the students and their *dignified demeanour*. The word *dignity*, which was systematically used to define a code of student conduct, was deliberately not defined. In the majority of cases that were brought before the disciplinary board, the most frequent accusation was that the students had broken the rule of due respect to university authorities and exhibited a *conduct inconsistent with student dignity*. By taking advantage of the ambiguity of the term *inconsistent*, the university disciplinary mechanisms were free to use this term for whatever they considered a violation of rules.

If the university enjoyed relative autonomy in defining an offence occurring *within its premises*, this was not the case for other instances. It was not just university legislation that defined what was considered an offence regarding political or moral behaviour. Institutions like the judicial authority, the security authorities and the army were in constant communication with the university in order to co-define what was considered an offensive act and how it should be punished.

⁵⁶ Statistics for higher education for the years 1929–1938 and 1955–1970 may be found in the digital library of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (<http://dlib.statistics.gr/>).

There were four categories of offences which resulted in the activation of disciplinary procedures. In the first category, which constituted the majority of the offences, covered incidents relating to student activities in the university premises, both inside and outside lecture halls: disruption of class, copying during exams, improper conduct towards teaching and administrative staff or towards other students, forging the signature of professors, forging state documents, identity fraud during exams, etc.

The second category covered the life and conduct of students outside the university and included violations ranging from offences punishable by criminal law to civil or moral issues such as debts to restaurant owners and landlords, fraud, quarrels, drunken behaviour, adultery, breach of marriage promises, etc. These cases were brought before the disciplinary board on the foot of complaints from private citizens or institutions. In most such cases, the university, due to its inability to verify the incident, played the role of arbitrator or remained uninvolved, on the grounds that it lacked jurisdiction.

The third category related to cases of student unionism and their movements: gathering or holding a meeting without the permission of the rector; participating in a student union that had no official approval; organising a protest or a march; and, finally, going on strike. There were many such instances and usually the disciplinary mechanism was activated against those who were accused of being “instigators”. It is worth repeating that the great student strike of 1929 led to calls for the disciplinary board to be reconstituted.

Finally, the fourth category concerned political beliefs, communist ideology in particular, which in many cases were directly connected with to the previous category. The treatment of *subversive ideas* in the university and the methods of their repression in the twentieth century constitute a special chapter in the history of the institution. It should be noted, however, that disciplinary procedures against left-wing students were swift and their prosecution predated the passage of the *Ιδιώνυμο* law. A significant number of these prosecutions resulted from communications between the university and other state institutions, which attempted – sometimes successfully – to impose on the university their own rules for treating defendants. Correspondence between all involved institutions was systematic and shaped the final outcome of the case.⁵⁷ What penalties die the university impose on offenders?

⁵⁷ The Protocol Archives, where incoming mail is kept, and the files of students indicted by the Disciplinary Board, both kept in the HA NKUA, contain informative correspondence and documents from various official sources indicting students for their activity outside the university. These sources include the City Police, the Gendarmerie, the General and Special

Registry of Disciplinary Penalties

The types of penalties that the university could inflict changed in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. While provision existed in the early years of the University of Athens for the imprisonment of students in the university premises – there was actually a room where students could be confined for days – by the twentieth century the penalties ranged from a simple reprimand to permanent expulsion. There was no exact pairing of offence and penalty. Each case was treated as a separate incident and the penalty imposed depended on the beliefs of professors who were in charge of the disciplinary mechanisms at the time, the hearing process, the degree of repentance on the part of the accused student, the political and social circumstances, and the testimonies and mandates both from within and without the institution. For instance, while in 1972 a complaint for class disruption resulted in a recommendation or reprimand, in 1935 this same offence could result in suspension for one year.

The enactment of disciplinary procedures usually followed the same course: a complaint, a summons, a plea, sentencing and public disclosure. Even though the summons to the disciplinary board and the appearance of the pleading student was a private procedure, the imposition of penalties was not at all discreet. The disclosure of penalties, which “exposed” the punished student, functioned as a deterrent for the student body, and aimed at the compliance of all to the university value system, which was necessary for the maintenance of the good reputation of the university. Thus, we may surmise that penalties had a dual audience, one inside and one outside the university.

In any case, any student who was considered an offender did not cease to be a member of the university community. The goal of the disciplinary mechanisms was compliance and not expulsion. “Black sheep” were accepted back into the university fold provided they had repented. Even in the most extreme cases of communist students who had been permanently expelled, their readmittance to student status was possible only on the condition of active repentance and renunciation of their beliefs. From 1935, on the establishment of the declaration of repentance, this process, to the extent that it was connected to political offences, was linked to overall state policy: the public renunciation and reversal of political beliefs was part of the *state’s technology of reversal*⁵⁸ that aimed to destroy the state’s enemies and to set an example for society.

Security offices, the public prosecutor’s office, the Army Corps, the University of Thessaloniki and even high schools and associations.

⁵⁸ Polymeris Voglis, *Becoming a Subject: Political Prisoners during the Greek Civil War* (New York: Berghahn, 2002).

The Disciplinary Board and the Fear of Collective Action

The establishment of the disciplinary board under the 1911 regulation introduced a modern institution into university life. It rearranged the scope of supervision of the entire university community since similar bodies were also established for the administrative and teaching staff. In seeking to modernise university legislation through the institution of these particular bodies, the Greek university followed European prototypes; this was a continuous concern of decision-makers. Moreover, the 1911 regulation recognised for the first time the right of students to assemble. The recognition of this right, which the university and the state had denied for many decades, created a new reality in an institution which a few years earlier had been shaken by clashes (the Gospel and Oresteia riots), which had resulted in fatalities; indeed, the Gospel riots led to the collapse of the government of Georgios Theotokis. The establishment of the disciplinary board was a new weapon in the arsenal of the university to confront future student movements.

It is unclear why the board was discontinued under the 1922 regulation. As we have noted above, it is possible that it was due to the low number of offences brought to its attention and the unwillingness of professors to staff it. The new regulation set the prerequisites for the creation of student associations, thus opening the way for the establishment of various and disparate student organisations, especially in the interwar period. This was the beginning of student unionism, a phenomenon that generated the distrust and perhaps the fear of the rectorate and the state authorities, especially after the great strikes of the 1920s. This did not mean that there were no collective student mobilisations from the nineteenth century to the issuing of the 1922 regulation; in these cases the university enacted its own disciplinary mechanisms.⁵⁹ Throughout the nineteenth century there were numerous upheavals with the participation of many students, who were often punished with very harsh penalties. Yet, there were two significant differentiations that called for the reconstitution of the board in 1932.

The first is connected with the high rise in the student population and the operational issues that resulted from it, as well as with the development of student unionism. The second was the appearance of a new student type, the

⁵⁹ For example, file 35.1, “1868–1869: Mischief in the University”, HA NKUA, contains summons and written pleas of students to the senate; there is also a document of the Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Education titled “On repressing mischief”. This document probably includes student protests during the class of Dimitrios Vernardakis. See Lappas, *Πανεπιστήμιο και φοιτητές*, 544–49.

communist or left-wing student who was regarded as a potential agitator inside the institution. The direct connection of the 1932 regulation with the *Ιδιώνυμο* law reflected this new reality and illustrated the establishment of anticommunism as the dominant ideology that penetrated all university sectors. Despite the fact that most offences were related to student conduct, it was more than clear that the main scope of the disciplinary body was to control political and union activity of students both on an individual and a collective level.

The disciplinary board operated in two directions: on the one hand, it imposed control inside the institution by dealing, in a consistent manner, with incidents which disrupted its “internal” order or attempted to violate the university regulations. From 1932, and especially after 1950, many of these offences were connected with political issues. Yet, even in such cases the body took a condescending approach in its effort to restore interior stability. Its stance towards students aimed to promote a proper way of conduct that stemmed from the model of dignity, submission to the rules of study, respect towards the teaching staff and awareness of the value and importance of studentship. These notions assumed greater weight in the context of collective student offences since there was always the fear of the consequences of mass movements and the inability to keep them in check.

On the other hand, the idea of a university that was responsible for the life of its students both inside and outside its premises was limited to its role as a mere mandatory for the state authorities. The disciplinary board was the body which, through the rector, received complaints from the state and from other institutions and had to ensure that the students concerned were punished. Thus, while the board took care of the “good order” within the university premises by controlling every form of disobedience and violation, it also had the duty to extend the punishment to those who had either been condemned from or were deemed “suspect” or “dangerous” by the state. From 1932 onwards, the connection between court rulings on criminal offences by students cases (in most cases political) and the maintenance of student status signalled a new reality. From the nineteenth century to the interwar period, the university played a leading role in supervising the conduct and overall behaviour of students, considering it to be an internal affair. After 1932, however, the university operated as an extension of the state apparatus, which wanted to control everyone who was not on its side. This was not a self-evident process, nor did it take place without any reactions or resistances. The persistence of the members of the disciplinary board in observing legal provisions, their tendency to show lenience towards students, and especially towards those who had repented, and their effort to maintain order inside the institution through communication and agreements

with students, were characteristics that were influenced by the long tradition of the university, its prestige and its internal realities.

In many cases the idea of a university community resulted in the protection of the offenders, while the university always felt that its independence as an institution was violated by the state. In any case, the university did not feel compelled to obey state orders in disciplinary procedures. Most professors shared the ideology of the state and in many cases they were its main exponents and could also shape it. In this light, one may understand their mistrust and hostility towards whatever they considered *subversive ideology* and student *disobedience* in general. The minutes of the disciplinary board indicate the characteristic hostility with which certain members of the disciplinary board treated female students who were accused of political offences and participation in political movements; they considered that such actions violated the model of female conduct and were dangerous for professional sectors where women were predominant, such as education.

In any case, up to World War II the disciplinary board functioned mainly as a body for the control of the political behaviour of students and their collective protests. Despite the fact that the majority of cases brought before the board had to do with individual student violations, it is clear that the board monitored the political activities of students in unions, be it on an individual or a collective level, in its effort to both maintain order within its premises, but also obey the political commands of the state authorities. During this process, next to the righteous and virtuous model of the student that was shaped in the nineteenth century, there was now added the model of “national-mindedness” and anti-communism as individual characteristics. Therefore, almost a century after its establishment, the Greek university continued to remain captive to political authorities, thus sacrificing in many cases its independence in order to defend the dominant state ideology and fight the “internal enemy.”

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