ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND EDUCATION

THE IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS IN GREECE ON THE PROFESSIONAL LIVES AND TEACHING PRACTICES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: A CRITICAL PEDAGOGY APPROACH

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A thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Anglia Ruskin University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Submitted: January 2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my deep gratitude to my UK supervisor, Emeritus Professor Dave Hill, for his enthusiasm, motivation and precious guidance. He was the one who believed in me, gave me the opportunity to apply for and finally get the PhD studentship that made this study possible. During the years I spent as a student in a foreign country, he introduced me to precious theoretical and practical fields of academic work and has been above all a friend and a companion.

I would also like to express my deep gratitude to my Greek supervisor, Professor Kostas Skordoulis, for being a mentor, a trusted friend and a constant source of inspiration. He guided me through my MA making use of our common background in physics and introduced me to Critical Pedagogy and Marxist research. Over the course of my academic life, he has guided and supported me always being available to hear my research concerns.

I would like to thank my second supervisor, Dr Alpesh Maisuria for his constructive comments and suggestions. Being half-way through his doctoral thesis, he was more of a colleague who was there to offer daily practical advice.

I would also like to thank Anglia Ruskin University and especially the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education for supporting financially this study with a PhD stipend studentship during the first three years and with two more tuition-free years. I should not forget to thank all my mentors including among them Professors George Grollios and Panagiota Gounari and Assistant Professor Periklis Pavlidis.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to the participating teachers. This thesis would have never been completed without them and without the precious help of my sister and my brother-in-law or without the support and understanding of precious friends.
Last but not least, I would like to thank my mother for her moral and financial support throughout my studies.

In loving memory of my father

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

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THE IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS IN GREECE ON THE PROFESSIONAL LIVES AND TEACHING PRACTICES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: A CRITICAL PEDAGOGY APPROACH

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This study presents a discussion of the ramifications of the economic crisis ravaging Greece since 2009 on the professional lives and the teaching practices of Greek primary school teachers. Placed in the general framework of a global attempt to reform education by making it comply with neoconservative and neoliberal directions, my thesis discusses the particular case of Greece and investigates the possibility of an international educational paradigm seeking to impose a market reasoning on school culture and create a disciplined privatised educational sector in pursuit of profit.

The issue is approached through the Critical Pedagogy Approach and thus, uses Marxist analytical tools and places the whole thinking within the philosophical framework of dialectical materialism. This is an attempt to fully understand and interpret the causes and nature of the crisis, along with its impact. For this reason, a holistic approach is employed based on both empirical evidence and a coherent theoretical and philosophical framework that examines schools and education in an economic, social, political and ideological context.

The analysis of the data shows that all aspects relevant to the educational process have been severely affected in terms of infrastructure, relationships, personal development and quality of teaching and learning. Due to the nature of their profession, teachers proved a rich source of data regarding all aspects of the crisis and its repercussions on themselves, their students and Greek society as a whole.

The findings confirmed the initial assumption that was formulated at the beginning of this thesis, that a critical and radical approach of the crisis is needed in order to fully comprehend its real causes and unmask the attempts to implement the complete neoliberal transformation of education.

Key words: dialectical materialism, critical pedagogy, Greece, teachers, crisis, Marxism

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction: A Requiem for the End of Great Narratives in the Era of the Crisis

> ***Greece is the bad sheep of Europe. That's its virtue. Good thing there are black sheep like Greece to mix things up, to refuse a certain Germano-French standardisation, etc. So, continue being black sheep and we'll get along just fine...***
>
> (Guattari, 1992. In an Interview on Greek television)

1.1. Introduction

This study presents a discussion of the ramifications of the economic crisis ravaging Greece (Sakellaropoulos, 2014) since 2009, on the professional lives and, consequently, on the teaching practices of Greek primary school teachers. Placed in the general framework of a global attempt to reform education by making it comply with neoconservative and neoliberal directions, my thesis discusses the particular case of Greece and investigates the possibility of an international educational paradigm seeking to impose a market reasoning on school culture and create a disciplined privatised educational sector in pursuit of profit (Cole (ed.), 2012; Siani-Davies, 2017).

Within the focus that I have outlined, this case study approaches the issue of the Greek financial crisis as a 'Trojan Horse' for a technocratic turn in education, through applying the Critical Pedagogy Approach and thus, using Marxist analytical tools (Rotenstreich, 1965; J. Mepham and D-H. Ruben (eds.), 1979; Matthews, 1980; Harris, 1982; Krapivin, 1985; Price, 1986; Allman, 2007; Molyneux, 2012; Agostinone-Wilson, 2013; Stephenson Malott and Ford, 2015; Grollios and Gounari, 2016) and placing the whole thinking within the philosophical framework of dialectical materialism.

Hence, the application of the Critical Pedagogy Approach in this research is an attempt to fully understand and interpret the causes and nature of the crisis, along with its impact. For this reason, a holistic approach is attempted based on both empirical evidence and a coherent theoretical and philosophical framework that examines schools and education in an economic, social, political and ideological context.

The purposes of this introductory chapter are the following:

i. To introduce the research questions;
ii. To explain the aims and purposes of this study;
iii. To describe the research methodology;
iv. To reflect on the roles of teachers and intellectuals;
v. To present my philosophical stance;
vi. To outline the structure of the thesis

1.2. Education at the point of no return

In view of the global capitalist crisis, it seems necessary to re-evaluate the directions, expectations, and prospects of pedagogical theory. In the name of reform and rationalisation and following directives issued by the European Union (EU), the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and other international organisations and agencies, the corporatisation of education has become a priority at a global level.

The neoconservative and neoliberal storm which has been raging, though unequally, through the educational sphere in both developed and developing countries for over three decades, aims to further subjugate education to the capitalist interests, transforming thus the post-war educational settlement (Robertson, 2007). In other words, this tectonic shift, similar to shifting continents as Bourdieu characterises it (1998, p.1), daily forges the school of the new status quo: a 'class-based', fragmented, cheap and flexible school (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, pp. 9-14).

The plans for restructuring imposed under the pretence of the inevitability of neoliberal management, but also the attempt to apply education policies aiming to quantify and mechanise the education process have changed the conditions of knowledge production, the frame encompassing the education process and functions, as well as the spaces and positions from which pedagogical theoretical thought is expressed (Robertson, 2007; Grollios and Gounari, 2016).

As a result, in predictable or unpredictable ways, we are led to conditions of "educational necrophilia" (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, p. 10) and mechanisms of governance of the educational sector, which are part of a larger class capitalist plan. The ways in which the latter political plan manifests itself, "rooted locally, but extending globally" (Santos, 2004; Robertson, 2007), aiming to produce flexible, effective future workers, adaptable to the needs of businesses and the global competitive economy, are located, among others, in the following: abandoning physical infrastructure; underfunding education and introducing private-sector logic; returning to Medieval working conditions for teachers; and equating the educational process with a mechanistic transmission of fragmentary knowledge and skills measured by national and international tests (i.e. PISA).

1.3. The 'manufactured' crisis and educational reforms in the era of a market-driven society

Ten years after its outbreak, the economic crisis of capitalism that started with the 2007 banking crisis in the United States, with the so-called real estate bubble and the Lehman Brothers' bankruptcy, continues to leave its mark on a global scale. Bringing radical changes in all domains of human activity, it caused a limitless social and humanitarian crisis. With Greece as a typical example (Gounari, 2014, p. 298), it created a chain reaction of consequences that, dramatic as they may be, soon become outdated by new data (Theodorikakou, Alamanou and Katsadoros, 2013, p. 208).

This direction is nothing new since it is the 'Chile recipe', well-known since the 70s[1], however in this particular instance a matter of great political importance emerges: it is the first time that these policies are applied with such intensity in a country of the first world and specifically in a Eurozone country. While there has been almost a year since celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome in 1957 and the party thrown by

[1] The 'Chile recipe' can be summed up in the following three axes: salary compression and deregulation of labour legislation, with the intention of maximising private profit; mass transfer of resources from the public to the private sector, through privatising public companies and publicising bank losses; and finally, the monetarist policy of austerity, focusing on the dramatic reduction of public expenses, particularly social ones.

member-states, an assortment of problems casts a shadow on the European structure (Antitetradia tis Ekpaidefsis (*Counter-notebooks of Education*), 2017, p. 5). The European Union (EU), in the midst of its worst existential crisis after the ongoing crisis of 2008[2], can no longer base itself on the deceptive narratives of prosperity, democracy and common European market. Perhaps it has always had its neoliberal foundations, but these currently incarnate the commitment to austerity. Moreover, the relatively latent policies and pre-crisis economic relations have now become clear in form. As Ken Jones (2017, p. 16) aptly observes in an interview for the Greek educational journal *Selidodeiktis* (*Bookmark*)[3]:

> The EU is a disproportionate system […] which intends to impose budgetary austerity and structural reforms throughout the continent. Europeanisation in this context is indelibly marked by relations of dominance/subordination […]. Particularly in the European South, economies have been put in a perpetual depression.
>
> (Jones, 2017, pp. 16-17)

Hence, it seems that the working of the system has been given priority over people's lives (McNally, 2011b; Gindin, 2014). Specifically in Greece, after eight consecutive years of applying policies of internal devaluation and controlled bankruptcy, and with the crisis unhindered to this day, there is a new *status quo* which comprises the catastrophic characteristics of policies of intensive and expansionary austerity that have been applied. In other words, what we are witnessing in Greece today can be described as the "downsizing of a country" (Sotiris, 2012) that brings fundamental transformations to its economic and social tissue, state apparatus, and human and material resources.

Naturally, in a generalised war on the public good, public education could not possibly evade the neoliberal storm. Without exception, as I will attempt to show in the course of this doctoral thesis, the governments of the period 2010-2018, in close collaboration

[2] For a number of reasons, increasingly serious since the beginning of 2017 when the global environment changed radically. In 2016, the United Kingdom had voted to leave the EU and the United States had elected Donald J. Trump, who had publicly signalled his reluctance to intervene in any resumption of the Greek debt crisis, while he was also not particularly warm to the idea of the EU itself, greatly differentiating from the Cold War period. In the meantime, the influx of immigrants is steadily rising as well as the trends of reinforcement of the Nationalist Right (Siani-Davies, 2017, p. 334).

[3] For more information on the journal, c.f. Chapter 4.

with international imperialist powers and the local bourgeoisie, have set clear and definite prospects for education as a whole (Grollios and Gounari, 2016).These prospects intend to bring inter alia not only the degradation, marketisation, commodification, managerialisation and privatisation /preprivatisation of public services (Giroux, 2004; Harvey, 2005; Hill and Kumar, 2009; Hill and Rosskam, 2009; Hill, Lewis, Maisuria, Yanker and Carr, 2015), but also a regression into neo-conservatism. In doing so, neoliberalism eliminates all fundamental achievements of the workers in the era of industrial capitalism, sweeping away labour relations, incomes, and democratic rights (Polychroniou, 2013).

At the same time, along with the changes that are altering the core public mission, goals and meaning of education, sacrificed at the altar of a market-driven society (Gounari and Grollios, 2012, p. 303), the hardship and deprivation of people involved in the educational process are daily becoming greater and greater. Adverse living conditions become more prevalent, lifestyle is subverted and child poverty increases. Combined with the number of the employed poor, unemployment reaches a record high, taxation becomes exhausting and national depression emerges at an alarming rate. Along these lines, the educational landscape in Greece, as it emerges from reforms in all levels of education, is being radically transformed and constructed upon changes that remorselessly espouse the neoliberal dogma.

These changes consider knowledge important only if it is ‘useful’, in terms of skills and abilities closely connected with the needs of industry and employers. In this light, quality, efficiency and excellence are only excuses for the commercialisation of knowledge, the redefinition of students as clients, the transformation of educational institutions into standardised, corporate entities, the mighty push towards the application of more business-like strategies and privatisation of educational processes, projects and responsibilities. Even more, they serve as an excuse for the redefinition of the concept of education itself.

However, it is no coincidence that the educational reform in Greece, concerning the primary, secondary and tertiary education in equal measure, is wrapped up in the language of 'improvement', 'reorganisation', 'restructuring', 'streamlining' and 'cleaning up' of a dysfunctional system. These are terms routinely cited in many official statements on education in recent years as a conscious attempt on the part of international agencies, world bodies and organisations to package educational reforms that have been built on a neoliberal political philosophy so as to hide the fact that the mobilisation of neoliberal ideas in education is a class project with specific aims. Let me note here, that along the same lines, the same terminology is taken up strategically by any discourse, and, at the same time, given strong endorsement by any government that espouses the neoliberal dogma, in order to legitimise the destruction and privatisation of a given national economy (Gounari and Grollios, 2012).

1.4. Outlining the argument

1.4.1. Restructuring education as a consequence of the crisis or the crisis as an excuse for restructuring education?

Applying this reasoning more extensively, it can be supported that this neoliberal and neoconservative restructuring of education is not an unprecedented historical phenomenon. On the contrary, it had already profoundly influenced education worldwide well before the financial crisis became decisively entrenched in this equation. In this line, it should be emphasised that, for three decades, a central feature of global educational policy has been the application and etching of a neoconservative system of values subjected to the control and the influence of ruling parts of capitalist authority. In this way, even before the crisis, education could hardly be understood without recognising a large part of implemented educational policies, practices and programmes

as responses shaped by an increasingly integrated international economy aiming to maximise the profits of the capital (Grollios, Liambas and Pavlidis, 2015)[4].

Even in Greece, the unapologetic and radical turn to neoliberal policies, corresponding with an 'international educational paradigm', has been one of the main concerns of governing political parties since the 90s (Chrysochou, Katsiampoura and Skordoulis, 2014). However, this had only partially been achieved until the emergence of the crisis and the decision to opt for the memorandums; researching the causes of this is of vital importance in the current circumstances.

To put it differently, what is extremely important, at least to those who do not limit their views and actions to the horizon of neoliberal, neoconservative and technocratic dogmas, is comprehending the reasons for, and ways in which, the economic crisis in Greece has served, among others, as a platform for the much anticipated technocratic turn in education and all its by-products. I believe that our first step in that direction should be the realisation that neoliberalism was not born in a vacuum.

1.4.2. The dark tradition of the 'good-old recipe': neoliberalism

Neoliberalism and its economic, social and political formulas did not arise unexpectedly from the darkest depths of history, nor have they prevailed as a result of the subjective intentions of some 'apprentice magicians' and a single cast of politicians. On the contrary, a review of recent history, taking us back to the bloody experiment of Chile[5]

[4] Regarding Higher Education, the Bologna Process and Lisbon Strategy in Europe are the clearest examples of an international engagement at this level, which have stimulated profound changes in a steadily increasing number of participating countries since 1999.

[5] Neoliberalism's first opportunity, that is, to be socially implemented as an economic theory. I am referring to the society of Chile following the military coup which overthrew the Salvador Allende's Popular Unity government on the 11th of September 1973, ending Democracy, the reforms of the welfare state, the union movement and political freedom. The Chicago Boys took it upon themselves to support Pinochet's dictatorship with a view to restructuring the society of Chile based on the powers of the market and the minimised state (Teeple, 1995, p. 2). The experiment was extended to include other Latin American countries, with the US-supported junta in Brazil, Uruguay after the military coup in 1973, and the Argentinian junta in 1976, when Isabel Perón was overthrown and the Argentinian 'Chicago Boys' took over critical ministries. I should mention at this point that in all four countries, military imposition played a dominant role (torture, abductions, disappearances of civilians) (c.f. Klein, 2010, pp. 104-121).

and the election of Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain in 1979 and Ronald Reagan in the USA in 1980, easily reveals that neoliberalism is something much more than that (Grollios, Liampas and Pavlidis, 2015).

At this point, before I attempt a periodisation of the policy implementation of the neoliberal era, I would like to emphasise that, as a process, it is neither easy nor absolute. In fact, for the purposes of this doctoral thesis, the implementation of neoliberalism is perceived as a full-scale attack of the global forces of the capital, aiming to radically transform power relations and turn them against forces of labour (Ioakeimoglou, 1986; Grollios, 2004).

In this view, as it will be further clarified below, the crisis and neoliberal restructuring are inseparably linked. As John Milios, professor of economic theory, aptly points out:

> … Behind the crisis of the extensive production of capital (behind the overaccumulation of capital) lies more than a 'simple' systematically acting cause; it is the evolving class correlation of power, the totality of conflicts and internal causal relationships that pervade the capitalist production. This is the reason why the remedy for the crisis promoted by capitalists and governments (…) is not limited to the depreciation of inadequately exploited individual capital but takes the form of an overt social war on forces of labour.
>
> (Milios, 1997b, pp. 197-198)

Naturally, this is not a single-natured transformation, but on the contrary, one which presents differences in every social formation, depending on the forms it takes in each case. The latter ones cannot in any case remain unaffected by the particular characteristics displayed by any given crisis (which triggered the neoliberal reforms) in any social formation, nor by the national particularities in terms of political system as well as cultural tradition.

I consider the year 1973 as a critical turning point which signals the transition from the 'thirty glorious years'[6] of post-war capitalist evolution to the neoliberal reform[7]; it is the

[6] I should briefly note here that by this term I am referring to the 1940-1965 or 1940-1970 cycle and to the achievements of post-war capitalism in contrast to what Mandel names neo-capitalism (c.f. Ernest

year when the crisis which broke out in the 70s became evident. The crisis becomes the central issue and the social consensus that existed up to that point dissolves. From a political point of view, we observe a new tendency which expresses a return to the fundamental western bourgeois political values8, along with a rise of the New Right as a reaction to the squandering of public wealth (George and Wilding, 1993; Leonard, 1997; Grollios, 2004, pp. 21-41).

Thus, as it has already been mentioned above, in the early 80s the governments of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan are hailed as international models of neoliberal policy enactment, endeavouring to put an end to post-war interventionist and welfare state policies. The dominant rhetoric flourishing unchallenged since the 80s and still

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Mandel's book Late Capitalism (1978) for a detailed explanation of post-war history of the capitalist mode of production in terms of the laws of motion of capitalism discovered by Marx in Capital). This was particularly true in the 50s and 60s, when western countries had accepted state intervention as a positive thing economically as well as socially. Methods of implementation may have been different from one country to another (c.f. there were differences in application of ideas about social and economic transformations between the USA, the UK and Sweden) but there was a wide consensus between the dominant social classes and political formations of the West based on progress, improved opportunities and civil liberties through state intervention. In the post-war period, therefore, on both sides of the Atlantic, there was a prevalent conviction concerning the need to transition to a new age of progressive changes that would arise through restructuring the relationship between the state and the society. As a consequence, for the first time within the capitalist system, in a period which is essentially characterised by a shift in perception of capitalism and economic development theoretically grounded in Keynesianism (Hobsbawn, 1994), the working class acquires the basis of its reproduction, through the improvement of income, of social security, of access to educational processes and union activity. This is also the time that the concept of 'welfare state' is created as a term which expressed the effort to strengthen economic development through promoting state accountability and minimisation of social dangers. For a variety of definitions, but also regarding the history of the term 'welfare state', c.f. Flora and Heidenheimer, 1990. Before I bring this footnote to a close, however, I would like to emphasise that the reduction of inequalities in the post-war period should by no means be perceived as the product of the generosity of a 'compassionate' post-war capitalism. On the contrary, it should be seen as a social relationship of different forces reflecting the spirit of an era of geopolitical and qualitative reformation of capitalism directly related to a series of events, including the war, the resistance, the big economic crash of 1929 which cast doubt on the foundations of the economic dogma of the neoclassical economic theory and the fear that the dominant class was experiencing in the 1930s.

7 By the term neoliberal reform, as I have already explained in the main body of the text a little further above, I mean the social and political process which aimed for the creation of conditions of sufficiency to deal with the overaccumulation crisis and the intensification of competition, mainly between the most powerful poles of capitalism. Its main characteristics are, among others: 1) limiting the social, political and investing interventions of the state, 2) changing the form of productive/social relations and organising production in the direction of flexibility, and finally, 3) creating and strengthening supranational organisations (Grollios, 2004, p.22).

8 I will briefly mention here, among others, the forces of the market in contrast with the bureaucratic insanity of the expanded state and economic reinforcement, the moral superiority of personal choice against the 'tyranny' of collectivity and the need for a powerful state in the name of law and order.

echoing today is that of a 'diseased' society. In this framework, the economic sphere acquires autonomy at the expense of society, government expansion becomes the main issue, manageable through policies of restriction of its economic and social intervention and reinforcement of its suppressive activity, while the theoretical frameworks developed to interpret the crisis (c.f. Theory of Overburdened Government) are based on ideological and political arguments that aim to conceal the actual socio-political goals.

The state, thus, now seems neutral; the decisions of state authority appear to be the result of pressure exerted under the "There is no Alternative" philosophy, while exploited classes are made responsible for the economic and social crisis, thus paving the way for the reassignment of the responsibility of finding solutions to the labour market itself (Fitoussi, 1995; Grollios, 2004, pp. 21-43). It is no accident that in analyses and at a theoretical level, the concept of social class, as defined by specific productive and social classes, is eliminated. Oppressed and dominant classes are therefore presented as equal, with the former named responsible for the economic and social crisis.

During the late 1980s, and while the neoliberal reform had already affected powerful European unions (c.f. British coal miners, Italian Fiat, German IG Metalli), we witnessed the climax of neoliberalism as an ideology as well as a political agenda. The dissolution of the Soviet Union, the end of the cold war period and the German unification were the peak of what I call –following George Grollios' classification- "first generation" neoliberalism (Grollios, 2004, p. 31), as well as of the reforms it brought about all the way into the early 90s. It was of course a natural consequence that ideologies of emancipation and scientific approaches such as Marxism also became history. The Maastricht Treaty9, on 7th February 1992, can be said to have been the first

[9] A treaty for the European Union (E.U.) which stipulated the creation of an Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the political unification of E.U. through the establishment of a European federal political system that would implement common policies in matters of foreign relations and security.

clear turn to neoliberalism in Europe; the first essentially complete alignment of European policies with the principles of the Washington Consensus10 (Krugman, 2012). However, as I pointed out at the beginning of this subsection, neoliberal reform as a political and social process does not progress linearly. There are doubts, tensions, even direct clashes, mostly coming from the labour forces, but also from institutions of the capital itself in conditions of intense competition, imposing thus what George Grollios (2004, p. 33) calls a "rift in the continuum" for neoliberal perceptions.

Therefore, there may be a climax of "first generation" neoliberalism in Europe in the period 1989-1993, but it doesn't take long to fade. The economic and social crisis that has basically never been overcome, despite the temporary improvement during the second half of the 1980s, slowly becomes evident in all domains. The "first generation" neoliberal perceptions are submitted to theoretical re-evaluation in an attempt to re-boost the neoliberal reform modifying its content, while consensus surrounding their 'unshakeable' correctness is called into question.

Social restlessness is expressed in mass mobilisations of labourers (c.f. France) and protests in referendums over the ratification of the E.U.'s founding treaty. Faced with the threat of disruption of social cohesion, the need for a reorientation arises, a need reflected in the political scenery with the election victories of the Democrats in the USA, the labour party in the UK, the socialists in France, and the Olive Tree coalition in Italy (Grollios, 2004, p. 32).

From this effort to re-boost the neoliberal reform arises what I call "second generation" neoliberalism (Grollios, 2004, p. 40). In line with George Grollios' periodisation (2004,

[10] At this point, I am referring to the term first coined in 1989 by the American economist and World Bank executive John Williamson, when he suggested that the basic theses of neoliberal economists be summarised and coded in a ten-point list which would constitute the minimum requirement to ensure economic health (c.f. Klein, 2010). This happened immediately afterwards when all the reforms suggested by Williamson were instituted as preconditions that every government had to comply with in order for them to be accepted into the international community. The basic principles of the Washington Consensus can be summed up in the following ten: 1) fiscal discipline; 2) redefinition of the priorities of public expenditure; 3) tax reform; 4) liberalisation of interest rates and financial liberalisation; 5) exchange rate; 6) liberalisation of international trade; 7) foreign direct investment; 8) privatisation; 9) deregulation; 10) property rights (Williamson, 1990).

pp. 21-43), I view the period following 1993 as a rift in the continuum of neoliberalism. The turn that is observed from this period onwards is:

> … a humane neoliberalism, promoting the values of social integration, citizenship, cooperation and social contract.
>
> (Grollios, 2004, p. 37)

"Second generation" neoliberalism changes the priorities based on the achievements of "first generation" neoliberalists without subverting the main elements of the neoliberal reform. Its most prominent characteristic is an upgrade of the role of the state, in terms of exploiting it to aid economic development, without of course returning to the 1945-1975 faith in the necessity of the welfare state. From the perspective of "second generation" neoliberalism, the state and the market are expected to complement each other.

In view of the above, it might be useful to explore the possibility that the current crisis constitutes a new rift within neoliberalism. Perhaps we are witnessing a "third generation" neoliberalism whose keystone is "austerity policies". This consideration is of course well beyond the scope of this doctoral thesis, in the sense that the exploration and substantiation of such a claim would be a thesis in its own right.

What would, however, be very important to point out before this subsection is brought to a close, is that, in the course of the current global economic crisis, those domains not as yet privatised, such as public education, become ideal targets for the overaccumulation of capital which remains stagnant in international markets and cannot be reinvested profitably (Gounari, 2014).

In this sense, what I maintain in this doctoral thesis is that the Greek governments, having signed the memorandum and in line with the directives and "good practices" of the EU, as well as international organisations[11], are following the typical neoliberal

[11] Such as the OECD and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

strategy of what David Harvey calls "creative destruction" (Harvey, 2005). By the latter, I mean allowing for the degradation of public services in order to prove that the market and private business know best.

On a daily basis, on the pretext of the crisis and the memorandum, of reducing public deficit, serving public financial benefit and 'saving the country', Greek governments and creditors methodically launch a generalised attack. They take advantage of unemployment, social automatism, the fragmentation of the workforce, the fear of bankruptcy and collective accountability for leverage in order to attack the welfare state, the public good and the working world, sweeping away labour relations, rights and incomes.

1.4.3. Can we speak of an international educational paradigm?

Historical eras, local particularities of policy making and policy enactment, domestic state capacities, national systems, the social and educational movements and the generated struggles cast the processes of globalisation in education in different lights. However, general patterns and convergences of educational policies across localities can be traced throughout the world (c.f. Weiss, 1997; Ball, 1998; Whitty and Edwards, 1998). Thus, bearing in mind what Harvey (1996) called "globaloney"[12], I shall return to commonalities that are clearly evident within and between borrowed educational policies.

These similarities, led by the same neoliberal, neoconservative and managerial logic, cut across geographical borders (Apple, 2010), concern all levels of education and lead to international educational policies which favour "choice, competition, performance management, individual accountability and risk management" (Apple, Ball and Gandin,

[12] The issue of globalisation cannot be thoroughly examined in this particular thesis. I will briefly state that the term "globaloney" (or the equivalent terms 'global babble' and 'glob-blah-blah', c.f. Rosenberg, 2001; Scholte, 2002) is used at this point to show the tendency to generalise results/examples which may not necessarily be representative of overall trends. That is, the tendency to use 'globalisation' as a buzzword in order to explain almost everything and anything that is vaguely associated with it. For a general review of whether globalisation actually exists, one could refer, among others, to the studies of Weiss, 1998; Hirt and Thompson, 2000; Sakellaropoulos, 2004.

2010). Education now becomes an internationally traded commodity on the basis of supply and demand, cost and profit, while at the same time, its function, organisation and educational result and quality is only measured in money (Grollios, Liambas and Pavlidis, 2015, p. viii).

Differently put, without attributing all the educational reforms that are to be applied, or have already been applied, to an 'international educational paradigm' and with no intention of disregarding the complexity of responses to globalisation made by different countries, as well as the complexity of the relations between state and education, I cannot, however, ignore the international prevalence of a political discourse on education.

This discourse displays homogenised theoretical and ideological characteristics and common goals. These goals, as expressed in the neoliberal and neoconservative educational policies, are none other than regrouping the whole of school culture[13] based on market reasoning, downgrading the work of educators and shaping the personalities of pupils, students and educators along the lines of corporate logic and values. To be more specific, these are policies that promote the mechanisation of the educational process and the fragmentation and quantification of knowledge, impose management and accountability with the sole objectives of efficiency, success and discipline, reinforce the separation of teaching into perception and execution thus deepening and

[13] The concept of culture is complex and multifaceted, and, in relevant literature, it is often confused with other concepts, such as the atmosphere. In this doctoral thesis, the concept is defined in terms of critical pedagogy. Complementing its definition as a sum of practices, ideological principles and values on which different social groups draw in order to interpret the world, I would add that culture is also linked with the structure of social relations within class, age or social gender groups, which produce forms of oppression and interdependence. More than just a way of life, culture in critical pedagogy is understood as a form of production through which different groups in their dominant or dominated social relations realise their expectations through unequal power relations. Finally, culture is considered a field of struggle in which production, legitimisation and dissemination of certain forms of knowledge and experience constitute basic matters of conflict. Consequently, the concept of culture, considered fundamental in understanding critical pedagogy, aids the understanding of who holds the power, as well as how it is expressed and perpetuated in social relations connecting education with a wider social hierarchy. Therefore, the school culture mentioned above encompasses among others the pedagogical practices, school knowledge, analytical curricula, behaviours, thoughts, customs, spoken and unspoken rules, relations of authority, hierarchy and power, the school regulations and the requirements and design of the school building (c.f. McLaren, 2007, p.198; Grollios, Liambas and Pavlidis, 2015, p. xiii).

systematising a performative and procedural role of educators and finally promote the competition between institutions, educators and students (Grollios, Liambas and Pavlidis, 2015, pp. ix-xi).

1.5. The starting point of the debate

1.5.1. In Greece today: a nation at risk and the educational reform

Concerning public education in Greece, in particular[14], it takes little more than one look at legislation regulating education and at the official public discourse, as illustrated in government documentation and public announcements, in order to see there is pressure for a different kind of education in all levels, one that promotes "selection, fierce competition, performance management, individual accountability and risk management" (Apple, Ball and Gandin, 2010; Pavlidis, 2013). In this new framework, education is no longer considered a social right; its democratic and critical characteristics have shrunk, and it looks more and more like a market commodity on the basis of supply and demand, cost and profit. At the same time, a 'new' type of school emerges, characterised by a series of overt or covert privatisations that touch on its every aspect[15]. This school is staffed by teachers largely trapped in flexible forms of work, whose work becomes clearly executive and performative.

We see, therefore, as mentioned above, an educational landscape that promotes the mechanisation of the educational process and the fragmentation and quantification of knowledge, while the whole school culture is reformed based on marketing logic (Gounari and Grollios, 2012; Grollios, Liampas and Pavlidis, 2015; Gounari, 2014). Given the greed and aggression with which the neoliberal and neoconservative transformations are applied in education, terms, to which I have already referred previously, such as 'improvement', 'reorganisation', 'restructuring', 'streamlining' and

[14] For a historical overview of the public education in Greece, and a more specific analysis of the reforms c.f. Chapter 6

[15] For instance, among others, its curriculum, infrastructure, services, educational activities and processes, teaching aids and technologies, responsibilities.

'cleaning up' of a dysfunctional system, are used in the official discourse as a conscious attempt to hide the fact that the mobilisation of neoliberal ideas in education has a precise class orientation (Gounari and Grollios, 2012).

Along with the changes that are altering the core public mission, goals and meaning (Gounari and Grollios, 2012, p. 303) of education, the ongoing economic crisis, depression, austerity and drastic cuts in government spending have had dramatic repercussions in the field of education. Viewed holistically, a new condition has formed in Greek education that could be summed up in the following points: shrinking budgets; grossly underpaid teachers; bankrupt school committees; donations replacing state funding; schools merging or closing; inability to staff supportive structures; dismissals and suspensions in secondary education; virtually no hiring; transfers of educational staff members; apprenticeship in technical education; decaying physical infrastructure; modified labour relations; and aggressive propaganda against educators by government officials and systemic media.

All the above reveal that the continuing economic crisis has delivered a hard blow to the institution of education as well as the people involved in the educational process, whose hardships and deprivation are growing daily to gigantic proportions (Gounari, 2014). Eight years after the financial markets' assault in late 2009, and while the threat to global economy is far from eliminated[16] Greece is still experiencing the "biggest structural crisis in its recent history" (Karamessini, 2015, p. 239).

In its course, the applied policies of internal devaluation and controlled bankruptcy and the application of austerity measures have kept the country at a low level of production, investments, national demand and work productivity. At the same time, in proportion to

[16] Take for example, the Shanghai stock market collapse in the summer of 2015, the continuing stagnation in Europe and emerging markets, as well as the most recent example (15 January 2018) of the collapse of the giant British multinational facilities management and construction services company, Carillion, (UK's second biggest construction company involved in major projects and provision of services in schools, hospitals and prisons among others), after the talks between the firm, the lenders and the government failed to reach consensus. At the time of writing, it remains unknown how many people will lose their jobs out of the 43,000 employed by the company worldwide, 20,000 of whom are in Great Britain.

the universal blow administered to the function of the economy, the country's social tissue, state apparatus and human and material resources have been undergoing radical transformations. Salaries and pensions have been cut up to forty per cent[17] and taxation has become exhausting, especially for lower and middle classes, widening thus the existing pre-crisis inequalities.

Let me note here that the Greek society is not one of petit-bourgeois households with limited social inequalities and intense forms of social rising mobility. In the past, but more so since the emergence of the crisis, Greece has always been a country of deep inequalities[18] (Sakellaropoulos, 2004). Moreover, unemployment is reaching record highs[19] and there is virtually no hiring in the public sector.

All this has contributed to a socially unprecedented increase of phenomena of food insecurity, deprivation, poverty, from moderate to extreme, and social exclusion. There has also been a notable rise in depression, mental disorders and of course, suicides (Economou, et al., 2013; Simou and Koutsogeorgou, 2014). Children are the tragic victims in this situation with daily news reports revealing the impact the crisis has had on them, reporting malnutrition and fainting in schools, phobias, anxiety and cutting

[17] I would like to briefly mention here, mainly in order to prepare the reader, that, while this thesis was being written, the government of the Coalition of the Radical Left (Syriza)-Independent Greeks (ANEL) essentially signed a fourth Memorandum in the spring of 2017, without even the funding which was the pretext behind the three previous ones. The latest one is to last until 2021 (with the third Memorandum expired in the beginning of 2018). The Bill initiates a new harsh set of measures designed to economise 4.92 billion euros, with several changes in social security and pensions (awaiting further cuts), a reduction of the tax threshold, the abolition of allowances, specifically those of the poor and the unemployed, and further aggravation of labour conditions. Ever since 2010, therefore, each new Memorandum is harsher than the last one, constituting a continuation and intensification of all previous ones. It is noteworthy that a particularly important fact regarding the sort of democracy that each new Memorandum leaves behind is that the above agreement with the EU is extended beyond the end of the current Parliament's tenure (2019). Thus, irrespective of the will of the people, the Memorandum is to go on. All the people can do is choose the next 'handler' of the Memorandum.

[18] I will return to that in the historical review of social stratification in Greece, c.f. Chapter 6.

[19] What must be stressed at this point is that the majority of the unemployed belong in the category of long-term unemployment, with seven in every ten being long-term unemployed (Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL-STAT) 3rd trimester 2013). This dimension is particularly alarming since it means that the increase in unemployment during the crisis mostly translates as structural unemployment with permanent characteristics. I should add here, to elucidate the dire conditions in the labour market, that flexible forms of work are for the first time predominant in the labour market and the percentage of forced part-time work is exceptionally high, reaching up to seventy per cent of all part-time occupation.

down on extracurricular activities (Fatourou, 2010; Magaliou and Chaniotakis, 2014).

1.5.2. What about the teachers' role?

Teachers, themselves affected by the crisis professionally, personally and emotionally, have to pedagogically deal with all the social and familial crises their students experience, and they have to do so under the most adverse circumstances (Magaliou, 2016). Their work is, without a doubt, exceptionally challenging. Contrary to the popular belief that teaching is a vocation that can be performed by devoted teachers under any circumstances whatsoever, it seems unarguable[20] that only educators that are happy with their work and their personal development in it can effectively contribute to their students' self-development (Pavlidis, 2013; Grollios, 2015).

However, despite the adversities, teachers, whose role, at least in terms of critical pedagogy, is "inherently and by definition interventionist" (Gounari, 2014), cannot ignore the impact of the crisis or turn a blind eye to the reality experienced by their students. Students ask questions and express their concerns and teachers must heed their voice, especially in the current economic, social and political circumstance. Defying dominant pedagogy, teachers need to encourage the development of their student's critical thinking, so as to enable them to approach their experiences, as well as the causes, the nature, the various aspects and the multiple consequences of the crisis, with a critical eye. Taking this into consideration, it is easy to comprehend why, in conditions of intense economic, social and political crises, the role of educators is tested to a far greater extent (Gounari, 2014, pp. 299-300): their role is not limited to the classroom.

[20] To clarify, I am referring to the idea of teacher-intellectual which emerged from the movement of critical pedagogy. I will indicatively mention here that the idea of the intellectual teacher works in conjunction with the need of education employees to achieve self-realisation within their educational work and is founded on the perception that teaching must be linked with the struggle to reform schools and society itself. In other words, I am referring to the particularity of educational work in this context, which, in order to be creative and effective, requires teachers who bear a high intellectual culture that they can fully and variously activate in their work. It is exclusively teachers with a highly developed social consciousness, a deep understanding of the importance of their social work and a relentless attitude towards those who manipulate and distort it, who can offer knowledge to their students necessary for the latter to be able to function as critical subjects contributing to the emancipation of the whole of society (Pavlidis, 2012, pp. 237-242).

Educators, as historical subjects, belong in their eras and are led to actions and choices defined by the concrete, existential and objective conditions of their time. These conditions, combined with the whole of teachers' personalities, conscience and levels of critical reflection, as well as the overall conditions of the class struggle, will ultimately define what can be practiced and achieved[21] (Harris, 1982, p. 153).

1.5.3. What about the role of the intellectuals?

Giorgos Rousis (2005) in his book *Modern Revolutionary Intellectuals* reflects on the role of revolutionary intellectuals in our time, with good reason. It is a time when the majority of these intellectuals do not identify, class-wise, with the dominant bourgeois class. It is also a time when the intellectuals do not function exclusively at the level of superstructure and ideology but at the level of the base as well, while a big portion borders on, if not belong in, the working class[22].

In this light, Roussis reasonably wonders on the role the revolutionary intellectuals are called to play at a time when scientific knowledge has almost replaced direct manual labour under the form of a "general intellect", while material labour is complemented by immaterial (Roussis, 2005, pp. 21-22).

As Vasilis Liosis (2014) points out, intellectuals did not maintain a constant form through social evolution. During the pre-capitalist period and the non-monopoly stage of capitalism, it had a different form and played a different role than in the following monopoly stage. Thus, while it started as a stratum representative of the ideology of the

[21] Because there are so many approaches to critical pedagogy, but also because the term has often been used as an umbrella, with my last comment I would like to illustrate my interpretation of critical pedagogy. It is definitely not a postmodern view, which fetishizes difference and identities thus breaking up the concept of social unity and rejecting the great narratives. It is also not a view in the sense of progressive education (c.f. Dewey) for which moral reconstruction is a pillar, without, however, taking into account the material circumstances, which in the end, through social struggle, lead to social transformation. Finally, it is not characterised by an idealised magnification of teachers' reformative capabilities. On the contrary, it is a view defined by a clear theoretical background, namely a Marxist one, on the basis of which there is a specific analysis of the formation of political conditions, of the intensification of social conflicts and the mass political radicalisation of employees, aiming to design a specific strategy towards socio-political transformation (Pavlidis, 2013, p. 40; Grollios and Gounari, 2016, p. 158-162).

[22] For a more holistic analysis, c.f. also Chapter 6.

dominant class, through the rapid capitalisation of the economy, it turned into a cross-class stratum with bourgeois, middleclass and proletarian components.
However, beside the Marxist view of intellectuals (c.f. Gramsci's and Zetkin's approaches), there were other, bourgeois theoretical schemata, philosophically based on pragmatism (equating truth with utility in the service of profit)[23]. During the 60s, more radical-looking views appeared; Daniel Cohn-Bendit, in his book *Obsolete Communism: The Left-Wing Alternative*[24] (1968)[25] and Roger Garaudy in *The Turning Point of Socialism,* (Garaudy, 1969) rejected Marxist theories and submitted themselves to bourgeois ideology.

1.5.3.1. Making teachers the enemy: where does it lead?

Even if we accept that educational institutions are indeed the most fertile ground for the reproduction of dominant ideology, it is unreasonable to assume that the fault lies with teachers instead of systemic institutions. To put it differently, it seems more likely that the textbooks, the curricula and the general orientation of education carry the blame. There is nothing "Marxist" in views that set the working class against the intellectuals of education, who are viewed overall as carriers of reactionary ideas, even though a significant part of these intellectuals belongs in the working class.

According to Liosis (2014), these notions are nothing but "a linear, one-sided, blunt and non-dialectical view of society". Undoubtedly, there are teachers who are bearers of the dominant ideology, some of whom indeed perform their "duties" with ardour. However, this phenomenon can also be encountered within the working class, and certainly in a segment that has nothing to do with the intellectuals; as I have already stated above, there can never be a "one-to-one" correlation between class and ideology.

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[23] c.f. John Kenneth Galbraith (1967) *The new industrial state;* Jean Fourastié (1957); James Burnham (1941) *The Managerial Revolution; What is happening in the World* and for a more contemporary version of the above c.f. Alvin Toffer (1980) *The Third Wave* and Jeremy Rifcin (1995) *The End of Work: The Decline of Global Labor Force and the Dawn of the Post-Market Era*.
[24] Original title in French: *Le Gauchisme, remède à la maladie senile du communisme*, Paris, Seuil, 1969 (avec Gabriel Cohn-Bendit).
[25] Daniel Cohn-Bendit based his thinking on Herbert Marcuse's *One Dimensional Man*, (1964)

Following the above line of thinking and if we choose to perceive teachers as the enemies of the working class, I cannot begin to imagine which ally the working class will be able to find, so as to help shape the consciousness of the young. Who else could be persuaded, inside schools and universities, to subvert all the bourgeois ideological constructions? As a consequence, if we target teachers as "battering rams" of the bourgeois class (Liosis, 2014), then we just hand them over to the opposing class.

The above anti-intellectual thesis can also be found in Poulantzas' thinking when he states that:

> [...] a social class is defined by its place in the ensemble of social practices, i.e. by its place in the social division of labour as a whole. This includes political and ideological relations.
>
> (Poulantzas, 1975, p.14)

This thesis, however, dramatically shrinks the working class, places ideological criteria for its definition and, consequently, sets a vast majority of labourers against a very small minority of pioneers.

In the evolution of capitalism, we could detect three types of workers and intellectuals in succession. During the first capitalist period, we find a type of worker who still maintains elements of the professional manual worker, thus a worker who still has intellectual functions, while the intellectuals are still outside production. In the second period of mass mechanisation, we find the mass-worker who performs unskilled labour, while a section of the intellectuals joins the production. During the third period, the era of "general intellect" (Rousis, 2005, pp. 84-88) and generalised commercialisation, an important part of the working class becomes specialised, performs less manual and more mental labour, while a large portion of the intellectuals become integrated in production, not as complete scientists, but as "specialised technocrats" (Rousis, 2005, pp. 84-88).

1.5.3.2. Reflecting on the distinction between manual and mental labour

From all the above, an important question arises, one of the most popular bourgeois ideologisms in recent years: Could it be that the prime importance we assign to mental

labour "dematerialises" labour and marks the end of the working class? Even more, would it be possible to claim that, with the end of the working class, a large part of the intellectuals is not ultimately included in it? If we continue down this path, we see that, nowadays, the intellectuals are assigned a double role. The first one derives from their class position, since the majority belong in the working class.

On the other hand, Lenin's proposition to import the revolutionary consciousness "from outside the class" still hangs heavily over the heads of the intellectuals. The aforementioned line of thinking not only does not subvert Lenin's observation, but makes it even stronger, because the role of the "importer" of consciousness is not attributed to an external factor, but someone inside the working class. At the same time, and in order to avoid embellishments of any kind, we should not forget that parts of the intellectuals, bourgeois or petit bourgeois, can and do play the above described role.

Marx himself, in his *11th thesis on Feuerbach*, mentions: "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point however is to *change* it" (Marx, [1888 first publication], 1998, p. 574). At this point, Marx, and history itself, shakes the deeply conservative argument of theorists such as Friedrich Hayek (c.f. *The Intellectuals and Socialism*, [1949], 2010), who claim that no revolution ever derived from the people, and that it has always been a product of the intellectuals (Rousis, 2005, p. 91).

In his *1st thesis on Feuerbach*, Marx discusses the limits of idealism, which does incorporate the "active side", but only "abstractly", as a mental activity. On the contrary, Marx treats "the active side" as a "revolutionary, practical-critical activity", by tearing down the boundary between the tangible and the imaginary, between experience and knowledge (Marx, [1888], 1998, p. 574). Thus, Marx not only rejects the classic distinction between the undervalued, "dirty" practice and the "higher", "clean" theoretical inspection, but he also goes one step further; by upgrading the first and by dethroning the latter from the skies of "true intellect", of the "Idea", of "God", he dialectically unifies them, by introducing a new relation between theoretical knowledge and practical experience (Rousis, 2005, p. 93)

Subsequently, we face the following question: is this upgraded practical knowledge adequate? Or, to put it differently, does the practical experience of the working class suffice for the construction of a clear image of reality? Marx answers that question negatively because the working class, by being obliged to look at the capitalist reality through the warped lens that capitalist production itself creates and places between itself and reality, only gets a distorted image of reality. Thus, Marx writes in *Capital,* Volume 1:

> The advance of capitalist production develops a working class which by education tradition and habit looks upon the requirements of that mode of production as self-evident natural laws […]. The silent compulsion of economic relations sets the seal on the domination of the capitalist over the worker. Direct extra-economic force is still of course used, but only in exceptional cases. In the ordinary run of things, the worker can be left to the "natural laws of production" […].
>
> (Marx, [1867] 1976, p. 899)

In other words, Marx supports that the working class has the natural tendency to accept the existing line of things as natural, without attempting to discover its real content and to subvert it. Marx explains the main reason behind this as follows:

> Reflection on the forms of human life, hence also scientific analysis of those forms, takes a course directly opposite to their real development. Reflection begins *post festum,* and therefore with the results of the process of development ready to hand. The forms which stamp products as commodities and which are therefore the preliminary requirements for the circulation of commodities, already possess the fixed quality of natural forms of social life before man seeks to give an account, not of their historical character, for in his eyes they are immutable, but of their content and meaning.
>
> (Marx, [1867] 1976, p. 168)

Hence, Marx supports that both empirical knowledge and the resulting social consciousness are not enough to convey the essence of things on their own. If we stop at this level, we will only have a reproduction of dominant ideology. The labour movement makes its way through practical experience: "it is the task of theory to clear this way, to see to it that the movement does not bog down or commit costly errors" (Lefebvre, *The Sociology of Marx,* 1968, p.122). But this is a revolutionary theory "[…] in no way

based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer". It involves "[…] in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes" (Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party,* [1848] 2008, p. 24).

1.5.3.3. Uniting theory and practice

This should be the foundation of the unity of practice and theory, of working class and revolutionary intellectuals. And that is exactly where the need for their unification stems from. According to Marx, the role of the intellectuals is to assist in the creation of a higher type of knowledge, on the basis of the social practice of the working class and in collaboration with it. A theoretical knowledge that will allow the conception of reality as it truly is, not in its distorted version; a knowledge that, after its assimilation by the masses, will be transformed in material power. Quoting Marx and Engels from their book *Collected works,* Volume 3 (March 1843- August 1844):

> The weapon of criticism cannot, of course replace criticism by weapons, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses. Theory is capable of gripping the masses as soon as it demonstrates *ad hominem*, and it demonstrates *ad hominem* as soon as it becomes radical. To be radical is to grasp the root of the matter. But for man the root is man himself.
>
> (Marx and Engels, [1927] 2010, p.182)

Already, in his doctoral thesis (1902, *The Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature)*, Marx introduces the issue of intellectuals and proletariat, and then returns to it in the *Introduction* of the *Contribution to Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law:*

> As philosophy finds its *material* weapons in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its *spiritual* weapon in philosophy […]. The *head* of this emancipation is *philosophy*, its *heart* is the *proletariat*. Philosophy cannot be made a *reality* without the abolition of the proletariat; the proletariat cannot be abolished without philosophy being made a reality.
>
> (Marx and Engels, [1927] 2010, p.187 – emphasis in the original).

What is made clear from the above quotation is the need for interdependence, for cooperation and for "organic unity" between the revolutionary intellectuals and the working class in order for the revolutionary change of society to happen. The realisation of this social revolutionary change will mean the end of the proletariat as such and the practical implementation of the revolutionary theory. The one separated from the other cannot attain this goal which can only come from their unity.

As Krapivin (1985, p.10) notes:

> Marx and Engels turned philosophy into a science, into a highly effective method of the revolutionary transformation of the world in general and the society in particular. Hence the new social role of philosophy.

Therefore, Marxism accepts and demands the notion of practice as a fundamental component of theoretical knowledge, which, in turn, becomes meaningful only to the extent it aims at a practical intervention. In assessing the historic importance of dialectical and historical materialism created by Marx and Engels, Lenin wrote: "Marx's philosophy is a consummate philosophical materialism which has provided mankind, and especially the working class, with powerful instruments of knowledge" (Lenin, *Collected Works: Volume 19 (March-December 1913)* [1913] 1963, p.25).

As John Molyneux (2012) puts it, one certainly needs not be a connoisseur of philosophy to be able to take part in a demonstration, a strike or a revolutionary uprising. But the constant battle for a better world is not confined to moments of "direct confrontation". There is a daily battle of ideas, a constant ideological struggle against the ruling class and their world view and, more than that, the work needed to organise, to form a political party, to establish and maintain a union. And that is where philosophy enters the picture, as a "world outlook" (Krapivin, 1985, p. 17), defined as "the totality of principles, views and convictions which determine man's attitude to reality and to himself, the direction of the activity of every individual, social group, class or the society as a whole".

In our time, the process of proletarisation of intellectuals grants the possibility to broaden this circle of intellectuals originating from the working class. In any case, however, we cannot expect this broadening to be in proportion with the number of intellectuals joining the working class (Roussis, 2005, p. 316). Therefore, in our time, these intellectuals bearing theoretical revolutionary knowledge are as necessary to the revolutionary movement as they were in its first steps.

Even though revolutionary intellectuals have always held a crucial role in the exposure of distorted consciousness and in the revolutionary awakening of the masses, nowadays, at a time when alienation and bourgeois ideological hegemony are the pillars that support and reproduce barbarity, they have an even more significant role to play. Capitalism's modernisation leads to a new age of darkness and this makes the need for revolutionary intellectuals even more imperative. Their presence is even more vital, because, in our time, despite the intensified class conflict, the spontaneous movement of the traditional working class, when not lured towards the extreme right by populist saviours[26], seems "numb". Detached and paralysed, the working class limits its goal setting to the preservation -not even conquering new- bourgeois democratic acquired rights.

On the other hand, the relatively new spontaneous movement of the modern working class, although viewed as "cultured", is still in the process of creation without clear, subverting, anticapitalist goals and the organised, political, revolutionary subjects are either absent or marginalised.

It goes without saying that revolutionary theory needs to be renewed in order to meet the needs of the new era. Given the new world order, the level of the working movement, the absence of revolutionary parties in most developed countries and the organisational and ideological regression of the working class, we come before a new situation on a

[26] Namely Umberto Bossi (Italy), Marine Le Pen (France), Nigel Paul Farage (UK), Geert Wilders (Holland), Heinz-Christian Strache (Austria), Jörg Meuthen (Germany) and recently Josep Anglada (Catalonia).

global level; a situation where many theoretical issues need to be re-examined under the light of this new reality and the historical experience acquired so far.

But even if we were at a time when the mass movement was flourishing, which is not the case, then again, the role of the theory and the intellectuals would not be limited. As Lenin stresses: "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement" (Lenin [1902] 1996, p. 6), and a few pages further on: "The mass movement places before us new theoretical, political and organisational tasks, far more complicated than those that might have satisfied us in the period before the rise of the mass movement" (Lenin [1902] 1996, p. 27).

Under these circumstances we find that Marx's previous quote "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point however is to *change* it"[27] is always valid, but I have to add that before we change the world, it is imperative that we have previously understood it and that we have realised the need for this change (Rousis, 2005). Lenin himself had stressed that the revolutionary movement presupposes the revolutionary theory, but this theory and revolutionary consciousness cannot spontaneously derive from the oppressed.

On the other hand, he pointed out that "[...] revolutionary theory, which in its turn is not a dogma [...] assumes final shape only in close connection with the practical activity of a truly mass and truly revolutionary movement" (Lenin, *Collected Works, Volume 31: April-December 1920),* [1920], 1966, p. 25*)*. And this vicious circle can only break through the organic unity of practice and theory, of labour movement and revolutionary intellectuals and through intellectuals consciously accepting the role of the working class and vice the versa (Rousis, 2005, pp. 385-386).

[27] Marx, *11th thesis on Feuerbach* [1888], 1998, p. 574 – emphasis in the original.

1.5.3.4. Characteristics of the revolutionary intellectual

As we move forward an important question must be answered: "In what aspect do revolutionary intellectuals differ from generally progressive ones?", and I will go on to present five important points in which the two differ.

The first important element of a revolutionary intellectual is his/her nonconformist, unconventional thinking, his/her questioning of the dominant ideology and values. A revolutionary intellectual can never fall back to believing that the current situation should be taken for granted without attempting to bring change. In this direction I have to quote Bertolt Brecht in his play *The Life of Galileo*, known also as *Galileo*:

> "[...] science's sole aim must be to lighten the burden of human existence. If the scientists, brought to heel by self-interested rulers, limit themselves to piling up knowledge for knowledge's sake, then science can be crippled and your new machines will need to nothing but new impositions. You may in due course discover all that there is to discover, and your progress will nonetheless be nothing but a progress away from mankind. The gap between you and it may one day become so wide that your cry of triumph at some new achievement will be echoed by a universal cry of horror [...]. As things are, the best that can be hoped for is a race of inventive dwarfs who can be hired for any purpose".
>
> (Brecht, 1939, *socialiststories.com,* Scene 14, pp. 108-109).

A second defining element of a revolutionary intellectual is his/her battle against stereotypes. He/she must be a visionary, a dreamer of a dream that is directly connected to life, a dream that can be brought to life. Moreover, a revolutionary intellectual cannot be isolated, absorbed in his/her specialised knowledge. Then again, he/she cannot remain neutral in front of great or less important conflicts of his time, in the name of a so-called "universality", which under present circumstances equals non-interference and thus complicity with the dominant status quo. The revolutionary intellectual's position is not in theorising, away from any particular engagement, nor in practicism of the type of non-governmental organisations, which try to soften the wounds of the system without questioning the system itself, resorting to charity and taking inequality for granted (Rousis, 2005, p. 343).

A fourth point that should be made is the intellectual's constant struggle for a society with no violence and no exploitation. But when this violence is massively inflicted by the rulers, as it is today, when state terrorism is the foundation of their imposition, then the revolutionary intellectual cannot condemn violence vaguely and equate the offender with the victim.

Last but not least, the revolutionary intellectual should discard any intellectualistic narcissism. He /she should not think of himself/herself as the saviour of those in need. The intellectual who is engaged in the working class' struggles should feed himself/herself on the past and present struggles of the labour movement, on its valuable experience and on the spontaneity of the masses. We should not forget what Marx and Engels pointed out in *German Ideology*: "The existence of revolutionary ideas in a particular period presupposes the existence of a revolutionary class" (Marx and Engels, [1888] 1998, p.68).

Hence, the role of the revolutionary intellectual is to contribute in the revolutionising process; to uplift the insufficient spontaneous labour consciousness to the level of revolutionary consciousness and to transform the working class from a potential to an actual revolutionary force. Experience alone cannot lead the masses to revolt. However, this does not mean that it should be replaced by the elitism of the intellectuals. As wrong as it may be to consider the objective misery as the only revolutionary motive, it is equally wrong to believe that the intellectual sensitivity is the only way to realise the need for a revolutionary transformation.

Therefore, in accordance with Rousis (2005, pp. 345-346), I believe that the modern revolutionary intellectual should primarily function as a practical theoretician, attempting to comprehend modern reality in order to ultimately change it. A practical theoretician must take active part in the grassroots movement. Only through the unification of experience and theory, of the reflecting humanity that is in distress and the repressed humanity that reflects, of the working class and the intellectuals can the revolutionary consciousness, necessary for the radical transformation of society, emerge.

In conclusion, to answer the aforementioned question, the revolutionary intellectual must engage in all conflicts of their time, against the dominant class and ideology. As Antonio Tabucchi replied to Giuliano Ferrara, the editor of Berlusconi's daily centre-right newspaper *Il Foglio*, which began a violent attack against him in 2003:

> I speak, because I exist. When my mouth is filled with dirt, I will cease to speak. So, silence will exist. An eternity of silence awaits. But before the eternal silence arrives, I want to use my voice. My speech.
>
> (Grangeray, 2006)

1.6. Framing the study: The research problem, questions and purpose of this study

The main purpose of this research project is to investigate the ramifications of the economic crisis in Greece on the professional and, by extension social/personal life of primary education teachers, as well as its impact on educational practices and overall quality of the education process. More specifically, the aim is to inspect the changes the economic crisis brought in teaching conditions, which educators experience on a daily practical basis in their schools, as well as general possible consequences on the organisation, structure and experience of teachers' work and the web of practices and relationships permeating the edifice of education.

To begin with, the following questions driving my research need to be developed:

1. How do teachers see the organisation, structure and experience of their work being affected by the economic crisis? Do other factors appear to contribute?
2. Which practices and professional, interpersonal relationships that constitute schooling do teachers see as being affected by the economic crisis?

Simultaneously, and for an exhaustive research result a series of pertaining sub-questions have to be addressed:

1. How do teachers perceive their personal lives, along with the lives of their pupils and their families being affected by the economic crisis?
2. How do teachers feel about the quality of the learning and teaching conditions?

3. How do teachers cope with the crisis at a local school level and what are the teachers' responses (processes/strategies/tools/tactics) teachers use to cope with the crisis?
4. Do regional and provincial variations have an influence on the severity of the effects?

Considering that economic, social and political changes, which are not confined to the microcosm of schools, (Levin and Riffel, 2000) most powerfully affect the nature of schooling and the work of teachers in the long run, I decided to seek primary education teachers' opinions on the effects of the current economic, social and political circumstances outside the schools. Beyond the obvious reasons that necessitate this connection between economic phenomena and human consequences, there is an additional reason, which must be sought in the spearheads of neoliberal ideology: presenting all the transformations as "natural" or "inevitable" tends to suppress the connection between economic decisions and "human cost" (Gounari, 2006, p. 81; 2014, p. 194). Or, to put more aptly: 'Whose loss, whose gain'?

1.7. Methodology

1.7.1. The drive for this research: My research 'lenses'

It goes without saying that the international economic, social and political crisis of capitalism and its particular manifestation in Greece affect the roles that both education and pedagogy are called to play, since it readjusts the features of state pedagogy and redefines the role of school and educators in relation to the institutional framework (Magaliou and Chaniotakis, 2014; Grollios, Liampas and Pavlidis, 2015).

Given the above, it is of vital importance today that all those who oppose the dominant pedagogy and seek alternative pedagogies and emancipating prospects for education carefully consider the crisis (Grollios, Liampas and Pavlidis, 2015). At a time when the two poles of neoliberalism and neo-conservatism are promoted as the only alternative on

a global scale, making use of empirical international movements targeted at educational and social reform can and should contribute in the development of a new internationalism, in theory and in practice, with the primary goal of radically transforming society, educators and pedagogical practices (Grollios, 2003, p.86). In this direction, the case of Greece could provide valuable insights about the ongoing assault and the radical changes in public education and in teacher labour market. These changes should be seen in the framework of "developing a market society in a country where the public good was left to deteriorate beyond repair so it can be easily transferred to the hands of the private sector" (Gounari and Grollios, 2012, p. 305).

At the same time, as George Grollios and Panagiota Gounari (2016, p.14) very aptly point out, the work on critical and liberating critical education in a country where applied policies have completely eradicated the social, political and educational rights of the exploited and oppressed social classes, the need to combine "the expansion and deepening of the debate with the formation, organisation and systematic operation of a strong liberating movement" is more evident than ever. As the two critical educators underline, this movement has to be "the business" of a large enough number of teachers so that it could contribute to multifaceted and effectual struggles ultimately aiming to radically transform education and society itself.

We should keep in mind that every capitalist crisis, serving as a ground for new conflicts, apart from negative repercussions, also paves the way to question and subvert capitalism. It is more imperative than ever, therefore, that all critical educators and the whole movement of critical pedagogy re-evaluate their positions, practice and propositions in light of this crisis (Grollios, 2012; Magaliou, 2016). For this to happen, however, we all need to deeply comprehend the causes and nature of the crisis, as well as the ways in which it affects education and the impact it has[28].

[28] The need to define the crisis, as well as the interpretation on which this doctoral thesis is based, are dealt with in detail in Chapter 3.

1.7.2. Reclaiming objectives

It is my firm belief, therefore, that in current circumstances a critical and radical view of the crisis is more necessary than ever. This view would inevitably transcend the dominant austerity narrative and, bypassing the politics of the mainstream media and bourgeois ideology, would kaleidoscopically approach the crisis, its roots and consequently its causes, and its repercussions. It would also consider alternative ways of overcoming it.

This ambitious practice will hopefully contribute to the discussion of how critical pedagogy should not remain silent in the face of a phenomenon that is not temporary. I hope it will contribute in a direction of a revolutionary confrontation of a current and multifaceted social phenomenon – a phenomenon I consider to be not only inextricably connected to schooling and the educational processes developed in its frame, but also a formative element of modern societies and definitive for the lives of students, scholars and educators (Grollios, 2013; 2015).

1.7.3. Reclaiming a research educational agenda in times of crisis: my philosophical stance

The relationship between society and education is not mechanical. It is historical, dialectical and controversial, the product of social, political and ideological conflicts, within and outside education (Shor and Freire, 1987; Giroux and McLaren, 1994; Grollios, 2015).Consequently, any discussion and analysis of the effects the capitalist crisis has had on education should be approached holistically, providing a clearer picture of its economic, social and political dimensions, along with its causes and its immense diversity of aspects; only such an approach can demonstrate its real depth and extent. This is essential, since, as Gounari observes (2014, pp. 309-310) for a nation to be able to recognise that there are ways to change the situation, it is not enough to experience its tragedy intensely. On the contrary, it should properly and wholly understand the causes. And sadly, she notes, the sombre reality, combined with the official bourgeois interpretations, have deprived Greeks of this exact capability: the ability to try to understand.

Therefore, what is needed is a twofold understanding that will use empirical evidence from research studies as a means to determine the significance of changes in education "over and against and in relation to" the financial crisis (Ball, 2011, p. x; Cole, 2011, p. xii), and, on the other hand, place schooling in its economic, social, political and cultural context. It is my firm belief that focusing on these conditions, to which education has a dialectical and significantly perplexing set of relations (Anyon, 2005), is a definitive step in the direction of mapping the economic, social and political landscape over which the potential struggle of educational and social movements will take place (Ball, 2011).

In light of the above, it becomes possible for me to clarify my position regarding the question I posed earlier as to the existence or not of an international educational paradigm and how it should be exploited: what is essentially required is to maintain a balance between the general patterns and convergences of educational policies across the world and local particularities of policy making and policy enactment. Despite the commonalities, which cut across geographical borders, domestic state capacities, national systems, we should not forget that the social and educational movements and the generated struggles can 'paint' the same neoliberal, neoconservative and managerial logic in different colours (Apple, 2010).

Summing up, this doctoral thesis is part of the endeavour presented above and is theoretically grounded in the Marxist tradition of a critical pedagogy approach, as it has already been stated and will be made even clearer in the Chapters to follow. As such, it adopts Marxist tools for approaching 'reality' analytically, while it simultaneously draws on liberating critical pedagogy and revolutionary critical pedagogy[29]. Its philosophical framework is that of dialectical materialism[30].

[29] I will briefly note here that by the term 'liberating critical pedagogy' I am referring to a pedagogy whose basic theoretical foundations lie in the Marxist tradition and which, on the one hand, draws on the proposition put forward by G. Grollios and p. Gounari (2016) in their latest book *Liberating and Critical Pedagogy in Greece: Historical Paths and Prospects* (which is essentially the first complete proposition based on the study of the historical paths of these two pedagogical theories in Greece), and on the other hand, it is grounded in P. Freire's liberating pedagogy, (without embracing the whole of Freire's work, but making use of his general theoretical perspective which we will show to be generally considered constructive for a number of reasons) while also exploiting elements of 1980's critical pedagogy, shaped in the USA mainly by H. Giroux, M. Apple, P. McLaren and S. Aronowitz (c.f. Grollios and Gounari,

1.7.4. Rationale of my philosophical approach

The central theoretical core of my approach is the conception that considers class struggle[31] the primary problem when it comes to interpreting each different social 'reality'. The class struggle, as the driving force behind the historical formation of societies, is exactly what brings developments and changes the world; it is what shapes power relations and what transforms, or even subverts, social relations (Milios, 1997a; Grollios and Gounari, 2016)[32]. But this process of class struggle is not abstract and extratemporal. On the contrary, it develops on the grounds of particular historic-economic and political conditions, rendering a historical inspection necessary (Katsikas and Kavvadias, 1998).

Nevertheless, it should be highlighted here that my approach, in direct contrast to that of ruling social classes or one that emerges from a dogmatic interpretation of Marxism, opposes mechanistic and vulgar materialism[33] as well as a mechanistic-deterministic

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2016; Gounari and Grollios, 2010). Concerning the influence liberating pedagogy had on critical pedagogy c.f. McLaren, 2007, p. 195. By the term 'revolutionary critical pedagogy' I am referring to the pedagogical theory developed by McLaren (2000) through a shift towards the basic principles of Marxism as a response to the postmodern shift of 'critical pedagogy' and the continuous and mostly successful process of its manipulation and weakening (c.f. Grollios and Kaskaris, 1997; McLaren, 2000; 2007; Skordoulis, 2009; 2013; Skordoulis and Hill, 2012; 2014).

[30] It is worth noting at this point that although the validity of the term 'dialectical materialism' has been contested on grounds that Marx himself did not use it and it was used by Stalin (in a very dogmatic and mechanical fashion), Marx's philosophy was materialist and it was dialectical. There will be a discussion at Chapter 6 but it would be helpful, even briefly, at this point, to sum up, in a manner which is by no means exhaustive the fundamental elements of Marxist philosophy, as follows: the basic dialectical idea that everything, including human nature, is changing, but that there is a continuity within that change; the materialist proposition of 'social being determining consciousness', thus presenting social conditions, and most of all, production, as factors shaping human nature; that human nature as experienced under capitalism is in essence a separation from true human nature; and finally, that the basic assumption that human nature is fundamentally greedy or aggressive is a key element in ruling class ideology, which takes it upon itself to defend and justify capitalism by recasting its social relations as eternal and 'natural' (Molyneux, 2012).

[31] At every level: political, economic, social and ideological.

[32] In: *The Communist Manifesto*, in 1848, K. Marx and F. Engels wrote: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (Marx and Engels, [1848] 1998, p.34).

[33] I should emphasise here that I am referring to version of materialism that prevailed in the 18th century (though it continues to exist in a version of the theoretical tradition of the Left) and was significantly different from Marx's version. That materialism, as J. Molyneux (2012) points out, was linked with the rising bourgeoisie, and viewed human behaviour in a mechanistic manner, seeing it as the product of external conditions and failing to consider the active role of humans in shaping historical developments. Marx's critique of this materialism is well-known. In his *3rd thesis on Feuerbach*, in 1845, Marx wrote: "The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore,

perception of history[34]. In other words, future developments are not seen as predetermined, but as the variable result of historical evolution. They are the product of a specific model of economy and society organisation that is defined by shaping class relations and by the ability to crystallise political subjects and practices[35] (Milios, 1997a; Katsikas and Kavvadias, 1998). In conjunction with this, human nature is not seen as a constant essence[36], but as the variable result of historical evolution; the product of social relations in the framework of a specific mode of production which are subject to transformations and reversals within the class struggle[37] (Milios, 1997a, p. 16).

At the same time, it is a view which opposes subjectivity and the individualistic approach to empowerment[38], while it recognizes the active role of human beings in

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changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that men themselves change circumstances and that the educator himself must be educated" (Marx, [1845] 1976, p. 62).

[34] In fact, Marx may not have been the first materialist, but he was the first dialectical materialist. This signifies that, for Marx, even though the driving forces of history were material forces and interests rather than ideas, this change did not happen smoothly, gradually, mechanically or automatically (Molyneux, 2012).

[35] It should be pointed out here that throughout this doctoral study, wherever it is deemed necessary, a historical review complements my analysis, beginning with a brief economic, social, political and educational survey of each period. My periodisation boundaries were not randomly selected. On the contrary, they are connected with important international and local political events which have had defining consequences for the power relation at every level (political, economic, social and ideological).

[36] It is worth noting that this argument clashes with essentialist approaches which isolate one or more elements empirically perceived as "human behaviour" and present them as "the essence of humanity" (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, p.32). The use of psychological terms is grounded in these same approaches, and, by obscuring social and political conflicts, it either leads to naïve interpretations or to erroneous assumptions which can only be answered arbitrarily. G. Milios' critique of essentialist philosophy and ideology is particularly illuminating: "The conclusions drawn by essentialist approaches constitute by definition ahistorical 'manifestations' of the arbitrarily assumed 'essence' of humanity and lead, in all cases, to logical contradictions and new arbitrary assumptions when they are faced with the new 'evidence' collected through empirical observation" (Milios, 1997, p. 62).

[37] In his *6th thesis on Feuerbach*, in 1845, Marx wrote: "But the essence of man is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In reality, it is the ensemble of the social relations" (Marx, [1845] 1976, p.63).

[38] It could be added here that, while I do consider the approach to education from an emancipating perspective more necessary than ever, especially in current circumstances, it is nevertheless impossible to imagine the liberation of people from alienating relations as merely a result of education. My conviction is that any pedagogy which does not realise that the school is part of the construct of the whole of productive forces and relations (and therefore cannot transform any given society on its own) cultivates the liberal myth of the "omnipotence of education" (Grollios and Gounari, 2016). As Pavlidis accurately underlines (2006), society does not change by instilling in individuals 'good' knowledge and pure ideals (as the Enlightenment proclaimed, pursuing the ideal of spiritual emancipation and continuous progress through liberated though, c.f. Kant, 1967). On the contrary, I maintain that education is able to contribute to social emancipation only on condition that the individuals themselves deliberately seek social change. For the latter to exist, we need an education (that of dialectical thought) which will free the individual from the restraints of spontaneous and experiential perception of the world and will render it capable of critically examining the deeper social contradictions that define historical evolution, and, as a result, detect

making their own history, in contrast to both the postmodern belief that the individual is an arbitrary construct of social structures or power, and distorted interpretations of Marxism[39]. To put it differently, I approach the individual as historically specific, the product of the dialectical interaction between social circumstances and collective meaningful activity, co-authoring itself and the social circumstances[40].

1.7.5. Public education in capitalism: a Marxist perspective

My basic conviction regarding education is that, in capitalism, it is shaped by the material relations of power between society and state and the socio-political structure and function that serve the interests of ruling classes. But this shaping is not only realised through the passive acceptance of ruling ideology, it is also historic and contradictory[41]. In this sense, education is the issue at stake in the global class struggle, which is ever-present in every educational institution, in every classroom, shaping, to some or other degree, both the school knowledge and the pedagogical practices used (Grollios, 1997; 2002; Grollios and Gounari, 2016).

Therefore, in light of the above, the pedagogical process is not neutral. On the contrary, it is an issue surrounded by conflicting and socially defined political opinions and practices (Katsikas and Kavvadias, 1998). In this framework, the conflict between social classes becomes the dominant tool for the interpretation of educational - social

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possibilities for deliberate change and improvement, ultimately aiming to deal with great social problems (Usher and Edwards, 1994, p. 204).

[39] It is worth noting that, despite being one of the commonest arguments against Marxism, this view permeates the whole of Marx and Engels' work. In fact, in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1884*, Marx writes that "the entire so-called history of the world is nothing but the creation of man through labour" (Marx, [1884] 1963, p. 166). While in *The Holy Family,* in 1844, Marx and Engels insist that: 'History does *nothing*, it "possesses *no* immense wealth", it "wages *no* battles". It is *man*, real, living man who does all that, who possesses and fights; "history" is not, as it were, a person apart, using man as a means to achieve *its own aims*; history is *nothing but* the activity of man pursuing his aims (Marx and Engels, [1844] 1956 - emphasis in the original).

[40] Here, I mean that subject that was referred to by Marx in 1852, when he wrote in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past" (Marx, [1852] 1995).

[41] In the sense that economic, social, political and ideological contradictions of capitalism permeate education.

transformations and for defining the limits of pedagogical and political action in any given circumstance[42].

1.7.6. Research methods and axes

The data of this study comes from a research project conducted from November to December 2014[43]. The main study was carried out in 24 public schools of different types in the prefectures of Attica and Magnesia. In all, 102 primary education teachers participated. Viewing teaching as an occupational community (Van Maanen and Barley, 1984), and being interested in the collective meaning of teachers' work, rather than individual career trajectories, (Allman, 2001; Sprague, 1992, p. 184; Little, 2007; Agostinone-Wilson, 2013) the data-collection method used in this study featured face-to-face focus groups and mini focus groups.

The interviews were semi-structured, typically lasted from forty-five to seventy minutes and were organised on the following six research axes:

1. Teaching conditions[44]
2. Employment issues[45]
3. Household income and social/personal lives
4. Effects on students
5. Initiatives and coping strategies
6. Professional organisations and teachers' collective activity[46]

[42] That is why, in conjunction with what G. Grollios (2004) underlines in his book, I maintain that the study of the perception and use of pedagogical views is interconnected with understanding the social, political and ideological framework formed in any given social structure.
[43] Pilot runs, and a pilot study preceded. For a better overview c.f. Methodology Chapter 7.
[44] This included questions about the general running of the school, funding, staff sufficiency, teacher/student ratio per class, school unit management and the ambiance of the school/offices/classrooms and the evaluation process among others.
[45] These were questions about labour relations, working hours, remuneration, access to professional development and self-education opportunities among others.
[46] Meaning by that, teachers' collective action and their participation in unions, assemblies and strikes; attitude of their union, the Teachers Federation of Greece (DOE).

1.7.7. Beyond education and empowerment as a social act: personal research stance

However, for clarity's sake, before concluding the Methodology section, it is deemed appropriate to outline my positionality statement. Strongly believing that research is always conducted from a specific point of view and that biases (i.e. researcher's beliefs, attitudes, positions) always exist, rather than ignoring them, I have continuously questioned them throughout my whole research process[47] (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013, pp. 69-73; 479).

Therefore, with full intention, to help the reader clearly see, from the very beginning, where I have located myself as a researcher, I declare that this doctoral study, coherently and resolutely opposes versions of the dominant public discourse regarding the global and local capitalist crisis[48], as well as versions of the dominant pedagogical theoretical

[47] I will refer once again in the Methodology Chapter 7 to the importance of the 'positionality statement' as a means of ensuring the 'validity' and 'reliability' of a qualitative research, always with an understanding of the two terms outside the constraints of positivism and the 'dominance' of quantitative research.

[48] My basic contention, briefly mentioned here to be extensively analysed in Chapter 3, is that, despite its significant Greek particularities, the local crisis ought to be examined in light of the international economic crisis and associated with the state of the global capitalist economy (c.f. Vatikiotis, et al., 2010; Maniatis, 2010; 2011; 2013a; 2013b; Milios, 2001; 2014; Marxist Research Group, 2013; Sakellaropoulos, 2014). In practice, thus, and drawing from the radical and Marxist political economy, my approach in this doctoral thesis is that the actual problem of the Greek capitalist economy cannot be pinpointed in circumstantial mistakes. Neither can it be found in choices and actions of isolated factors, which distorted the otherwise 'proper functioning' of the system, as misplaced as they may have been. It is therefore an approach in direct contrast with the one adopted by dominant circles, which disconnects the Greek, as well as the European, crisis from the deep, global, structural crisis of capitalism. Even though the dominant approach with regard to the Greek crisis is presented much more analytically in Chapter 3, I would like at this point to make a general overview by quoting what I consider a representative sample. The following excerpt comes from a research conducted by the American Studies Association and management consulting McKinsey & Company (2011, p.11) between December 2010 and November 2012 (*Greece 10 Years Ahead*) on behalf of the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV) and the Hellenic Bank Association: "It became clear from the debt crisis that Greece had a flawed economic model. Chronic overconsumption in the public sector spilled over into the private sector, revealing major structural gaps in competitiveness and productivity. Greece's burgeoning private and public spending between 2000 and 2008 (97% of the cumulative GDP growth was driven by consumption), created a deteriorating trade balance, as demand could not be met by foreign and domestic investment…'' Without questioning some aspects of this line of argumentation, I believe that such interpretations, as I clearly explain in subsection 3.1.4.2 of this doctoral thesis, can only lead to explanations that, deliberately or not, aim to conceal the innate structural problems of the capitalist system. Before I complete this footnote, I would like to mention that all narratives of accountability by Greek and European mass media which flourished in the period 2010-2012 and paved the way for the prevalence of an explanatory framework of the global capitalist crisis built on racist stereotypes, were based on this dominant bourgeois interpretation (c.f. my Chapter 3 for further analysis) (Gounari, 2014; Ovenden, 2015).

thought and conservative pedagogy[49]. The clear socio-political purpose permeating this whole endeavour, is education functioning as a contributory factor to social transformation. As such, it does not simply move in a reformist direction. Quite the contrary, it takes a radical anticapitalist stance which aims to abolish exploitation and oppression at every level.

1.8. Conclusion: where do I start?

As a result of the above, in my analysis, I chose to not limit myself to merely recording the direct consequences[50] or to reviewing the changes individually, but to solidly integrate them in a general framework, understanding them on the basis of socio-political circumstances that boil down their essence[51]. For this reason, therefore, I view the endeavour to reform the educational process in Greece as one with global dimensions, correlated with the need to manage the capitalist reform and to shape a new type of worker in accordance with the requirements of the capital for human resources.

Education policy is not a deterministic, neutral or objective process, but a process marked by class characteristics that needs to be analysed in light of the class struggle. Educational reforms are class reforms through which the political authority attempts to overcome the crisis. Whether they will be applied or not is not 'predetermined', but it depends on the correlations between social and political powers, the general political and ideological framework, and the level of development of social movements (Katsikas and Kavvadias, 1998).

[49] By that I mean the pedagogy which is a blend of traditional and technocratic conceptions and practices.
[50] Something I consider necessary, all the same.
[51] I completely agree with Grollios (1997) that "the inability to compile a systematic study between the economic crisis and the neoliberal politics and ideologies prevents critical educators from interpreting social theories in the social and political terms of their birth, resorting this way to a "naive reformism" (emphasis in the original).

1.9. The structure of the thesis

This doctoral thesis, which is a case study on Greece, is developed over eight chapters. Chapter One is the introduction that introduces the reader to the main aim of the study which is to investigate the impact of the economic crisis in Greece on the professional lives and teaching practices of primary school teachers. It outlines my basic argument that the Greek crisis is not a local phenomenon but a structural problem of capitalism itself. It also exposes the use of the crisis as an excuse for the implementation of neoliberal practices on society in general and education in particular. It examines the role of teachers in circumstances. It reflects these new, exceptionally adverse on the distinction between mental and manual labour and the role that revolutionary intellectuals are called to play in inciting resistance and change. I proceed with framing my study and presenting the research questions which led to the development of my interview protocol. In this chapter, I also explain my philosophical view of the individual as historically specific and how this philosophy leads to a critical and radical approach of the crisis from a Marxist perspective. Finally, I briefly refer to my methodology and research axes, to be thoroughly analysed in Chapter Seven.

Chapter Two aims to present my theoretical framework. Contrary to previous ahistorical, depoliticised and positivist approaches to the sociology of education, which left no room for the discussion of class characteristics, I choose to adopt a Marxist view. In order for the reader to fully understand my theoretical stance, I analytically present the limitations of empiricist and rationalist approaches and explain my choice. Finally, this chapter outlines my proposition to move for a factual theory of education that will combine theory and praxis ultimately leading to solutions for actual and objective problems.

Chapter Three provides a brief historical overview of the course of capitalism and Marxism while arguing that the severity of the crisis had an unexpected by-product, that of more and more people becoming aware of the economic problems. However, it contests the idea that their discontent stems from an understanding of the real causes and explains the failure of many rebellious protests and reactionary movements.

Furthermore, I argue for the need to explore the 'economic common sense' making as a critical educator, because I consider of vital importance an in depth theoretical discussion which will end the unobstructed propagation of dominant ideology. Chapter Three reflects on the notions of capitalism and crisis and stresses the need for a Scientific discourse that will contribute to a deeper understanding and will unmask the unseen generating mechanisms. Finally, it explicitly outlines my interpretation of the Greek crisis in contrast to all dominant narratives.

Chapter Four provides an analysis of some key notions, related to schooling, teaching and education. It pinpoints the paradox entailed in the job of teaching, in the sense that authorities have extremely high demands out of teachers who find themselves confined working in a devalued and intensified profession; a paradox particularly deepened due to the ongoing crisis and the subsequent educational reforms. It concludes with an overview of the legacy of critical scholarship and traces the 'journey' of this tradition in the Greek society.

Chapter Five adopts a critical historical perspective drawing from the discourse of 'crisis and disaster' and accounts for the vicious circle of failed educational reforms. Despite their local particularities, they are all penetrated by the same notion of a global paradigm grounded in the neoliberal ideology of economic success and a conservative 'back to the basics' mentality. Furthermore, Chapter Five assesses the implications of the epidemic of educational reforms and challenges the factors inhibiting effective change in education, with Greece proving an interesting case study. Finally, in contrast with the dominant narrative, this thesis is grounded on the belief that despite undergoing changes, labour remains a key element of the capitalist system always in need of collective representation. Thus, rather than accepting the notion of trade unionism arriving at a dead end, this thesis calls for a critical appraisal and reflection.

Chapter Six contains an overview of the theory of social classes and explains its importance for my holistic approach. After exposing the complexity of the term 'social class', it concludes on the use of Lenin's definition as the most complete. It goes on to

reflect on the distinction between the concepts of productive and unproductive labour and rejects the use of the latter as an analytical tool for social classification as it may lead to theoretical errors. Based on my conclusions, I provide a historical overview of the evolution of social classes in Greece in order to explain why Greek society cannot be considered predominantly petit bourgeois. This very analysis exposes the attempt of successive Greek governments to gradually introduce neoliberal reforms in education and the forms of resistance by teachers.

Chapter Seven outlines my research methodology and justifies the adoption of dialectical materialism as a philosophical position. Since it is not an ordinary step-by-step methodological approach, I feel there is a need to comprehensively describe its basic principles and notions and provide the key tenets of Marxist epistemology. With my methodology firmly grounded, I justify my selection of semi-structured focus group interviews as a method of data collection. Chapter Seven also includes my personal stance and positionality statement as well as ethical considerations arising from the nature of my study. Furthermore, it explains my choice of time, sites and sample used in research. Finally, it presents the coding methods I employed in analysing my data.

Finally, Chapter Eight presents my findings from the analysis of the data and discusses the possible implications. It shows how my research questions were answered by the analysis of the data and provides ample support with extracts from the recorded and transcribed interviews. I reflect on the limitations of my thesis and conclude by suggesting areas for further research.

CHAPTER 2: Theoretical Framework

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I explain my Marxist theoretical framework. I draw a contrast with previous ahistorical, depoliticised and positivist approaches to the sociology of education, which left no room for the discussion of class characteristics. In order for the reader to fully understand my theoretical stance, I analytically present the limitations of empiricist and rationalist approaches and move for a factual theory of education that will combine theory and praxis ultimately leading to solutions for actual and objective problems.

2.2. Is there a place for a theory of knowledge in education?

At the very beginning of this section, I must stress that my main interest is not a philosophical enquiry concerned with knowledge itself, nor an attempt to explicitly define the philosophical premises of the intellectual movements of rationalism and empiricism. Rather, it is an attempt to briefly review two strong candidates that account for truth, rationality and certain knowledge along with their approaches and methodologies for gaining knowledge of the world.

I will also argue that a theory of knowledge is of great value in an educational theory, because, explicitly or implicitly, every practical conduct of education, every proposal and analysis, every account of the practices and relations in which teachers and students are engaged, is imbued, in one form or another, with the presupposition of a theory of knowledge.

Schooling literature has been inundated with a wide variety of positivistic, ahistorical and depoliticised analyses, applied by both liberal and conservative approaches, arguing for an "objective" and politically "neutral" education and learning process, removed from the concepts of power, politics, history and context (McLaren, 2007). In this

respect, immediate and inadequate conceptualisations of schooling have been forced and a plethora of educational theories have been produced that fail to provide adequate accounts of the practices and relations that constitute schooling (Matthews, 1980, pp. 1-10).

2.3. The sociology of education: birth and evolution

In general, questions of educational character have been raised by various kinds of intellectual work and practice. However, great responsibility for the former argument can be attributed to the conventional works within the traditional sociology of education and its positivist approach which has been based in more general terms on the positivist model of social science.

The sociology of education originated in the concerns of the classical sociology of Karl Marx (1818-1883), Émile Durkheim (1858–1917), and Max Weber (1864-1920), during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and was influenced throughout the years by different theoretical perspectives, such as symbolic interactionism, social phenomenology, radical theories, Marxist theory, postmodernism, critical theory, cultural theories and so on; this is a fact that undoubtedly reflects the larger theoretical debates and controversies in social science.

Since the end of the 19th century, the growth of compulsory elementary schooling has generated, both in Europe and the United States, a growing belief in education, as well as a general optimism about the role of education in modern society; optimism which was also shared by sociologists until the 1960s. Sociologists in the 1950s and 1960s were strongly influenced by the meritocratic tradition; they would view meritocracy positively and would abide by the functionalist paradigm in the sociology of education.

In practice, this would mean that they held the view that inequality can be abolished through education and that in a just society the most talented are chosen and promoted on the basis of their personal achievements and on individual merit. Sociologists within

this democratic-liberal functionalist perspective argued that hard work and talent should determine the allocation of status and power among individuals and for that reason education was considered to be the key institution that would ensure the continual movement towards social mobility.

Being strongly concerned with the function of schooling as a means for maintaining social order, these sociologists tended to assume that, although inequality existed, there was a possibility for a well-functioning, democratic and just society within the capitalist socialist structure, in which schools could operate in the interest of the majority of citizens. That is to say that they called for a reform that would ensure the equality of opportunity but would sustain at the same time the social order of the capitalist and technocratic society (Sadovnik, 2007, pp. 3-6).

Therefore, we can conclude that, during those decades, the notion of schooling was not only unchallenged, but it was also legitimised and represented as a "site of equal opportunity for all" (Harris, 1982, p. 110). School was to provide students with the necessary skills, means and training for future employment, select and allocate them into the division of labour and socialise them into the behaviours, norms and values of the capitalist society.

At this point, before briefly discussing this model of social science in the educational context and juxtaposing it to alternative approaches, it is important that we recognise what is entailed in the controversies at the heart of social inquiry in general. To begin with, I must recognise that when approaching social reality, the researcher must first choose from a large variety of available research approaches. To do so, he/she must necessarily adopt a theoretic stance himself/herself. This means that the initial difficult choice of the appropriate approach should not merely be based on practical grounds, such as research methods, procedures and strategies.

On the contrary, my main argument is based on the assumption that it is absolutely necessary for the researcher to decide based both on ontological[52] and epistemological grounds. He/she should reflect on both the underpinning philosophical ideas on the very nature of the world and existence and on the nature and acquisition of knowledge, on which researchers base explicitly or implicitly the methods they adopt.

Indeed, there was a time when the prevailing research in the sociology of education was preoccupied with such concerns as equality of educational opportunity, social mobility, school organisation, social selection and educational failure (Sarup, 1987, p. 23) and the explanations given were in terms of the dominant positivist paradigm. Attempts were made to identify the causes of educational problems rooted in the child's family background and their faulty or inadequate socialisation, and to determine the success of working class children only in terms of upward social mobility and so on.

In much the same way and within the framework of positivist sociology a great deal of the conducted research was concerned with teachers and their social-class origins and status (Harris, 1982, pp. 30-33). The explanations provided by such studies were mainly

[52] Trying to approach the ontological pair of Idealism/Materialism, I must underline that in Idealism, the role of the real world is minimised, as it does not exist apart from the subject, and the real knowledge is basically contemplative and an "objectless production of the mind" (Harris, 1979, p. 4). In this schema, throughout the Western tradition dating back to Plato in ancient Greece and proceeding in various forms down through to modern idealism and philosophers such as Leibnitz, Kant, Berkeley, et al., the object is merged with the subject. Thus, although one should attribute to the idealist tradition the fact that it recognised the place of human beings in the construction of history and knowledge, in general I must say that it generated certainty about knowledge, but scepticism about a world independent of thought. In Idealism, everything is the product of mind, but knowledge does not produce its own objects. We don't choose our perceptions, but they result from the activity of conscious agents and are caused by "the spirit of God" (Collier, 1979, pp.39-40). Kant's theory of knowledge on the other hand, is characterised by his attempt to bring together elements of both the empiricist and the rational tradition. For Kant, our ideas are the result, the joint product of the existence of two worlds: the "noumenal" one, the real world, which is independent of our minds, signifying the "things in themselves" of which we do not have knowledge, and the "phenomenal" one, the world we perceive and that is not real, signifying the "things in themselves" of which we do have knowledge (Kitcher, 1996). This distinction generates tension between materialism and idealism, between subjective and objective knowledge, a tension that has been well expressed by Lenin in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, when he stated that: "when Kant assumes that something outside us, a thing-in-itself, corresponds to our ideas, he is a materialist. When he declares this thing-in-itself to be unknowable, transcendental, other-sided, he is an idealist" (Lenin, 1908, p. 232). The former Kantian scheme, which has been severely criticised both by consistent materialists and consistent idealists, has dominated post-Kantian European philosophy and his innovations in philosophy may be considered as the beginning of the epistemological turn to postmodernism (Hicks, 2004, p. 28).

based on observable and measurable economic differentials and were not well suited to reveal the dynamics of the real social relations functioning within a social formation.

It must be stressed that, in the above mentioned categorisation there was no room for questioning neither the place nor the function of the classified group in maintaining and reproducing the overall mode of production. In addition to that, it must be stressed out that the entire emphasis of those analyses following the traditional sociology of education, was merely put on "relative economic privilege". Simultaneously, they tended to play down the implicit connotations of far more general characteristics than the income factor that create class labels in the contemporary class structure. In a capitalist society, the identification of class location depends on many more factors than the economic differentials and thus, it turns out to be a much more complex matter than originally assumed (Harris, 1982, pp. 30-43).

Hence, we realise that, although in various cases important educational issues were raised within the traditional sociology of education, these were never investigated with thoroughness and rigour. On the contrary, what is implicit throughout this tradition is that "reality exists unproblematically" (Sarup, 1978, p. 3) and that knowledge and notions such as education and rationality are objective, absolute conceptions, consensually agreed on and as such they ought to be taken for granted. The same line of thinking was adopted for educational problems as well and many prior assumptions, on which a large part of the research was based, were left unaccounted for. In this sense, there was a lack of inquiry and questioning regarding granted assumptions and justifications, which consequently lead to some questions but not others, to some answers but not to alternative ones.

The positivist model that the sociology of education followed, was strongly connected with empiricist epistemology and the positivist methodology, entailing thus statistics and numerical measurements, clinging to conceptions of knowledge with a deterministic view of a passive subject with a fixed and pre-determined identity and a neutral, objective and "value-free" researcher (Sarup, 1978, p. 22).The logical implications of

the application of positivism as a method in social sciences seemed irresistible: the inactive subject, stripped of his/her rights to form his/her own views and reflect on his/her own rationality "is cognitively dominated" by a neutral and "expert" observer who imposes a view of education, mainly as a means of socialisation.

Teachers are involved in a non-negotiable process through which, pupils as passive learners, are trained to develop the technical skills required by society in order to get integrated into the norms and values of the dominant culture (Sarup, 1978, pp. 69-70). Overall, the persistent view that emerges from the implicit positivist methodological basis in traditional sociology of education is a functionalist, conservative and elitist view of knowledge and of educational categories serving to legitimatise unquestionably accepted practices. To put it more simply, the uncritical acceptance of dominant views, values and practices, as well as the reluctance to grasp their relation in totality within the social reality, has been used in order to legitimise the existing political order against those who seek radical educational and therefore social and political change (Sarup, 1978, p.19).

However, in the 70s, the legitimacy of positivism in social research was finally subjected to severe criticism and the dominant conception of sociology of education was debated. The most influential criticism on objectivism and positivism came from sociologists highly interested in the work of anthropologists and ethnographers. In addition to this criticism, a new interpretative approach in the sociology of education, the phenomenological approach, challenged the dominant traditional sociology of education and, consequently, its emphasis on objectivity, certainty and exactness. More specifically, within the interpretative model of social science, concerns were raised in relation to whether it is appropriate to unquestionably accept notions such as rationality, education and knowledge, as well as educational categories such as ability and intelligence.

In contrast with the traditional "social construction" thesis (Sarup, 1978, p.7), the need to understand social categorisation and knowledge in their historical context as man-

made social constructions was stressed. Furthermore, a highly critical stance was taken against dominant conceptions of an "unsituated and context-free knowledge" (Sarup, 1978, p. 31) and of neutral research methods consisting of a passive actor and an objective researcher. One of the most important features of the phenomenological stance[53] in the sociology of education was that it shifted the focus to what was really happening in the classrooms by making the interrelationship between teachers, pupils and knowledge the centre of the research interest.

2.4. Empiricism, rationalism and explanation in the human and natural sciences

Marx was not a systematic philosopher of knowledge and from the many volumes of his collected works with Engels there are only few texts which are originally concerned with education. However, this is not meant to underestimate the vital part that education played in the Marxist theory of society. For Marx and Engels, education, as a living part of the totality of social structure, could never be treated in isolation from other economic, social and political phenomena. Given this, I can suggest that the need for a new form of education and the dialectical relationship between education and social consciousness, as well as between education and the mode of production and distribution of material products pervaded a large part of their whole theory (Castles and Wüstenberg, 1979, p. 32).

Although Marx himself does not provide us with a complete theory of knowledge, he outlines an epistemological research programme which was developed over the years, using sources both from inside and outside the Marxist tradition. His early philosophical writings, particularly the *1884 Manuscripts* and the *Theses on Feuerbach* contain implications of a theory of knowledge that is in contrast with both empiricist and rationalist epistemologies. The main core of Marx's epistemology was translated into pedagogical practice through the epistemology proposed by Paulo Freire (Matthews, 1980, p. 78).

[53] From a Marxist point of view, however, a phenomenological approach has idealistic shortcomings, as it neglects issues such as ideology and material conditions, faces problems of relativisation of knowledge and its micro-research needs to be integrated with a macro-approach.

Contrary to the subject-centred epistemology of British empiricists and most Continental rationalists that focuses on the beliefs, reasons and convictions of individuals, Marxist epistemology maintains an objectivist account of knowledge, irrespective of subjective wishes, hopes, beliefs, opinions and mind states. Of course, it can hardly be denied that the process of coming to know the world, must indispensably involve both a subject and an object. It would thus be taken as such, with no further argumentation, that a prerequisite for the attainment and production of knowledge is a relationship between the knower or potential knower, defined as the subject, and the known, the world to be known, defined as the object.

What remains as a pivotal question, difficult to resolve throughout the history of epistemological analysis, is the nature of this relationship. This issue, although it pervaded Western philosophy since the time of the ancient Greeks, finally took the form of a systematic critique as late as the 16th and 17th century, when it attacked traditional forms of knowledge and their credentials, targeting mainly the ideas of the Middle Ages.

This new movement in philosophy must be interpreted in close relation to the massive changes and innovations in the scientific field of the time and close attention must be paid to its intellectual, social and political implications. If we take into account that all thought has to be situated in its time, the "intellectual radicalism" in philosophical thought of that period, applied by both radical political and conservative political philosophers, must be interpreted as an effort to overthrow the established political and intellectual order of the Middle Ages.

According to Ted Benton, questioning the doctrines of the Church, apart from a direct challenge to its intellectual authority, also constituted a challenge to an institution with tremendous political power and, consequently, a challenge to a monarchical government that was ideologically supported by the Church (Benton, 1977, pp. 19-20). 16th and 17th century philosophers who set out to defend the claims of the new science as a source of genuine and universal knowledge, produced theories of knowledge that pointed to two main alternatives as foundations and sources of knowledge: reason and experience.

Thus, it would be no exaggeration to claim that the history of Western philosophy is characterised by this dualism of reason and experience, trying to decide whether one or the other is the fundamental source of knowledge. Both rationalism and empiricism[54] as main traditions in the theory of knowledge were dominated by discussions in terms of how subject and object interact with each other in order for an individual to lay claim to knowledge of the world. It must be noted, however briefly, that the result was mainly a failure to maintain a distinction between the knower and the known. This incompetency inevitably led to the removal of either the object or the subject from the process and, depending on the case, one of them collapsed into the other.

Of course, the adoption of sensory evidence as the cornerstone of knowledge dates back to Aristotelian natural philosophy. However, following the empiricist tradition down to philosophers such as Bacon, Locke and Hume, and in order to grasp their perception of science, it is imperative for us to consider both the massive changes in science of their time, as well as the general foundations of tradition in scientific methodology. Given

[54] In contrast with the rationalist claim that the ultimate starting point for all knowledge is reason, the empiricist tradition sees the foundation of sure and true knowledge in the senses. Although it cannot be denied that empiricism, throughout its long history, has had a profound influence on philosophy, science, culture and education, it is however difficult, because of the variability of this doctrine, to provide generalisations on its historical significance. The main sources of variation in empiricist theories of knowledge, as illustrated in the writings of key figures in the empiricist tradition, can be summed up in the following two points. The first source of variation, which has generated much debate within the empiricist tradition, is about the existence or not of statements whose truth or falsity is independent of experience. In this context, the majority of empiricists have accepted the existence of at least one class of statements that were not "factual" statements and consequently their value as knowledge or not, could not be tested through experience. Throughout the long empiricist tradition, these statements have been variously called "analytic truths", "relations of ideas" or "conceptual" statements and they were contrasted with the factual ones whose truth or falsity was experience-based. The second point to stress concerning the variability within the empiricist doctrine has to do with the framework used to explain the links between experience and the derived knowledge. Despite the many variants of this schema, there are some basic common principles. The basic core assumption of empiricism, held by all its variant forms, is the existence of a "given non-theoretical knowledge" (Harris, 1979, p. 7) that is lying out there in the world waiting to be discovered and eventually known. Knowledge in this schema is neither created, nor mediated by theory, on the contrary, it is a knowledge simply given by the world which depends on experience and can be attained through the senses. Central to this account of knowledge is experimentation and observation, both considered as crucial for the advances in science (Benton, 1977). Thus, within this framework, prior to theorising and making generalisations, the empiricist researcher must observe, collect and record in an objective and non-selective manner his data and facts. At a next level, a prerequisite for understanding the given facts is the analysis of the collected data, conducted by the researcher with no underlying hypotheses at all. The former analysis will lead the investigator to extract relations between the collected facts and eventually to understand them through inductive generalisations.

this, I should emphasise that the rejection of essentialism and the construction of an alternative schema were prerequisites for the Scientific Revolution. The fathers of the empiricist tradition, fascinated by the new science and determined to defend it, tried to base their epistemology upon an understanding of science. However, despite their shared appreciation of scientific practice, they misunderstood the methodology of science and failed to adequately grasp and conceptualise what was going on during the Scientific Revolution (Matthews, 1980, pp. 27-38).

Bacon, Locke and Hume all agreed upon the belief that experience should play a fundamental role in the success of the new science. The early empiricist Francis Bacon (1561-1626), known mainly for his methodological impact on modern science, is closely connected with inductivism[55], as method for discovering what counts as knowledge. Years later Locke endorsed the Baconian inductivist view of the growth of knowledge and he took it one step further with his blank sheet, "tabula rasa" account of the human mind, according to which, the mind must receive all its knowledge from external sources. He treated the question of the content of mind, "ideas", as a psychological one and he concluded that there are no innate ideas and the mind is empty with no capacities and powers of its own. Against that consideration, he suggests that "ideas" that exist in individual's mind, being a blank sheet at the beginning, start from the observable phenomena of consciousness and it is experience that covers the blank sheet.

This conception of knowledge as a "picture etched in the mind by sensory inputs" (Matthews, 1980, p. 28), that is founded upon and derives from experience, is the cornerstone of the educational practice and the kind of education advocated in Locke's educational writings. The classical empiricism of Locke and his account of knowledge had a great influence on educational theory and practice and his "tabula rasa" theory of

[55] The main principle underlying this thesis about the context of discovery is that knowledge is justified in individual experiences and guaranteed through the quality and accuracy of the observations. Bacon in his *Novum Organum* (1620), not only provided us with a conception of what counts as science, but also suggested a methodology for discovering knowledge and proceeding to scientific generalisations. It was a scientific method with specific features, the application of which, according to Bacon, could provide "not pretty and probable conjectures, but certain and demonstrable knowledge" (Anderson, 1960, p. 36) and consequently uncover all the secrets and causal relations of Nature.

mind has guided many pedagogues throughout the years. The latter has found expression in the dominant Western teaching model consisting of a teacher who is the "depositor" and of students who are the "depositories", restricted to simply patiently receiving, memorising, repeating and storing all the deposits made by the teacher.

This narrative concept of education that Paulo Freire described in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) as the "banking" concept of education fails to recognise the importance of practical involvement in the learning process and overestimates the freedom of teacher by mystifying the fact that "those who posit are themselves posited" (Matthews, 1980, p. 151). Because, teachers, who within that model are theoretically charged with the task and responsibility of fashioning children, are also themselves fashioned.

In general terms, the classical empiricism of Locke has found contemporary expressions in the first separate entity of the "philosophy of education" that emerged in the early 20th century. The emergence of that distinct from just philosophy or just education entity was, according to Matthews (1980, p. 157), the result of both the industrialisation and the implementation of compulsory mass education, which have provided the required material necessities for its development, such as institutions, journals, finance and power. The precursors of that tradition in the philosophy of education, known as analytic philosophy of education, appeared in the 40s and 50s and have long since dominated all English-speaking countries. Hume's sceptical empiricism went much further than the one adopted by Locke and Hume, drawing the basic distinction between experience and our thoughts of experience, between senses and ideas (Matthews, 1980, p. 29) and making use of that distinction in his theory of meaning.

Taking all the above into account, we understand that throughout the years there have been many inadequate conceptualisations of schooling, education and teacher's professionalism that have inevitably ignored anomalies and affected the research conducted upon them, such as liberal-rationalist accounts of schooling and sociological analyses of teachers within an empiricist and positivist framework.

On this ground, I am now in a position to outline that this work aims to provide a theory of knowledge that will underpin a factual study of schooling and that will be useful in the understanding and appraisal of influential assertions and practical recommendations of empiricism and rationalism in epistemology, in educational theory and practice. Inevitably, a tendency to a suspicious attitude will be a fundamental prerequisite of an epistemology and an educational theory that intends to support much of the current criticism of schooling and of teachers.

However, at this point I should note that it is of course one thing to make such assertions and quite another thing to provide convincing arguments for them. Vital in providing the required kind of support for the aforementioned claims would be to identify and counter the educational representatives and implications of the empiricist and rationalist theory and methodology that are constitutive of general worldviews with political, economic, historical, ideological and cultural implementations. Explicitly stated or not, it is hardly deniable that all intellectual movements have a framework of premises within which they situate thoughts, accounts and actions. Consequently, before advancing the proposed epistemology, it was imperative under this schema to understand what this epistemology sees itself as rejecting and moving beyond.

2.5. Limitations of empiricist and rationalist epistemologies

The following analysis deals in a more detailed way, with the problems and enigmas inherent in both empiricist and rationalist epistemologies. While I will be mainly focusing on the empiricist-inductivist approach and methodology for gaining knowledge, the outlines of a different epistemology alongside with its solutions to the problems faced by the orthodox traditions will emerge. I shall begin with the role assigned to observation by empiricists and turn to the history and philosophy of science in order to reinforce our argument that the role that observation has played in numerous major breakthroughs in science was far from central[56].

[56] Galileo's (1564-1642) and Newton's (1642-1727) achievements in physics were mainly based on simplified, abstracted and theoretical models with recourse to idealisations rather than to observations.

The first anti-empiricist position can be traced back to Plato (427-347 BCE) and his *Theaetetus* which, according to Chappell (2005), constitutes extensive proof of the difficulties of empiricism. Mainly preoccupied with defining knowledge, Plato, in his great work on epistemology, argues against the claim that knowledge is nothing but perception. In his dialogue, after Socrates has posed the question of whether it 'is more correct to say that we see and hear with our eyes and ears or through them" (Plato, 1935, 184C, p. 103), the final disproof of that claim comes; and Theaetetus, Socrates' interlocutor, is finally convinced that knowledge and perception are different things (Plato, 186E, p. 107).

The following discussion is preoccupied with the analysis of the possibility of false judgements, that according to Cline (2007, p. 9) and contrary to the interpretations of other commentators, such as Cornford's (1935) and Chappell's (2005), is a natural progression and a step forward from the previous analysis. At this stage it is important to note that Plato has also dealt extensively with educational theoretical as well as practical matters, both in *Republic* and in *Laws*. He shows the way from ignorance to knowledge as a "slow dialectical process of the mind", with the clearest form of that interpretation being illustrated in his famous allegory of the cave, presented in *Republic* (Book VII, 514a- 521d, pp. 193-200).

In the allegory, Plato compares people who mistake appearance for 'reality' with prisoners chained in a cave looking at shadows on the wall of the cave cast by men outside and mistaking the shadow world for the real world. The prisoners, completely unaware of the real causes of the shadows, treat the shadows on the wall as real, until

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Indeed, Newton's law of planetary motion was formulated on the basis of theoretical arguments and Galileo had more confidence in his heliocentric theory of the solar system, firstly proposed by Copernicus in 1543, than on the astronomical observations which conflicted with his theory. In the same direction, Copernicus (1473-1543), according to Alexander Koyré's account (Elkana, 1987) without having new and more accurate observations which demanded the overthrow of the old Ptolemaic theory, formulated his theory of a heliocentric system despite the lack of observable star parallax which was necessarily implied by the Earth's motion. To put it more simply, the inability to observe the back and forth wobbling of the positions of the stars, their apparent angular displacement, in response to an observation of the sky from a constantly moving position, implied by the Earth's motion around the Sun, has been used as the scientific argument against Copernicus's system. Despite those arguments, Copernicus ignored observations that were contrary to his theory.

that moment that one escapes into the outside world and finally looks at the producers of the shadows and the sun itself. It is only then that he realises that his previous certainties were “certainties of ignorance” (Mathews, 1980, p. 21) and he returns back to the cave to try and convince his previous companions to leave the shadow world.

In his analysis of the cave, Allan Bloom states that we don’t see things as they really are but ‘through the opinions we are taught about them”; by focusing on the things that constitute our own world and give meaning to our individual and particular existence, we remain attached to the illusions. In addition to that, the liberation of the man does not result from his own efforts but it’s rather an effect brought about by a teacher who induces him to “turn to the light” (Bloom, 1991, pp. 403-406).

For Plato, the real world is not as it immediately appears to be but on the contrary, it’s always a mixture of nature and convention. Immediacy and obviousness as criteria of knowledge are disputed and the same goes for the senses when used on their own as the main instruments for the creation of knowledge. In light of the latter claim, and since my discussion has so far not focused on the problematic knowledge deriving from the central place of sensory experience and data about the world, it is important to grasp in more detail some fundamental points, before proceeding further. What I want to argue is that in all situations, whether they are natural ones or goal-directed, what is sensed or seen, in the sense of having stimulation of sense organs, and what is known or perceived, in the sense of interpretation of sensations, are two different things.

Having now introduced the major issue, I should underline that my main purpose is not to engage in a large discussion concerning the complex ways of interaction but rather to just recognise that there is always an “element of filtration” (Harris, 1979, p. 19) that mediates between the knower and the known. Issues concerned with sensations and perceptions are the main focus of cognitive and learning sciences and bind researchers from diverse fields such as psychology, neuroscience, linguistics, philosophy and so on. With that in mind I shall try to indicate very briefly some of the mechanisms that operate either as mechanisms of “filtration” or as mechanisms of “selective noticing”

(Harris, 1979, p. 25) throughout the process of interpreting and accommodating our sensory experiences and which determine what we shall perceive and how we shall perceive it[57].

Apart from these, there is also a perceptual expectancy involved in our sensory experiences, which is determined to a large extent by our prior knowledge, our preconceptions and our prejudices and which influences the way we look at things. Having knowledge of something may allow us in various cases to perceive what others, who have no awareness of what they are seeing, are likely to not perceive at all. Prejudice on the other hand, a mechanism that is strongly based on theory, may work in two directions. Always acting as a notion of pre-judging, prejudice can either lead us to perceive things that are not present at the sensory level, and thus to make claims based on insufficient data, or to activate our "selective noticing" from the whole range of stimuli that reach us.

Finally, I would like to pause at the last filtration mechanism which affects our perception, our "linguistic categories" (Harris, 1979, p. 23), defined as those categories of language that allow us to express what we sense in words. Our sensory experiences are conceptualised in language and from the moment that what has been sensed is formalised and described through language, the sensory data on its own is not important any more. And given the fact that knowledge statements are expressed through discourse, by using the formulated conceptualisations of our sensory experiences, we may conclude that knowledge, rather than being treated simply as the product of sensory experience, should be considered as the product of sensory experience that has been "filtered through conceptual schemes" (Harris, 1979, p. 24). This claim has been strongly neglected by the empiricist tradition, which, by emphasising on the sensory

[57]There are myriad examples of instances, drawn from everyday life, in which mechanisms and factors (theory-dependent or not), intervene between us and the world and influence what we perceive and distinct it from what we sense. "Seeing" an object is not just a matter of an unconscious stimulation of the eye, but also a matter of "seeing" something as a thing of a certain sort. There are basic selective mechanisms, influenced by our motives, that tell us what to look for and what to fail to notice, on the basis of what seems important and what seems irrelevant. Not to mention at that point, the simple illusions, that in a much more basic and less complex level may lead to inaccurate information.

experience as the foundation of knowledge, has completely overlooked the fact that experience is conceptualised in language.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that all these mechanisms, as well as other factors like group and social pressure, but also more complex ones, like the personal adaptations to the world that individuals make, known as "defence mechanisms" in Freudian theory, are sufficient to force the rejection of the empiricist assertions that there is an objective sensory language (Harris, 1979, pp. 18-27).

Given this context, I am in a position to proceed to completing my arguments against the empiricist epistemology by challenging another crucial principle, that of gaining knowledge from the world. As I have noted in a previous section, for empiricists, facts are independent of theory and the non-theoretical knowledge that can be attained entirely through the senses lies in the world waiting to be discovered through observation. But this thesis is neither tenable nor feasible and in the following discussion I will try to argue sufficiently against it.

Let us consider first that all perception has a theoretical component and that there is no way to operate upon an object without first having a concept of that object or a theory of what this object is. Furthermore, it should be clear by now from my previous discussion that our perception is essentially determined by filtration mechanisms and factors. All these interacting together make up the whole theoretical framework upon which our data is selected and interpreted.

Karl Popper (1902-1994), as well as other prominent figures in the philosophy of science, such as Russell Hanson (1924-1967), Thomas Kuhn (1922-1996) and Paul Feyerabend (1924-1994), have all defended the view that observation is theory-dependent in their anti- empiricist works. Popper in his *Objective Knowledge* (1972) has emphasised the active role of the observer in the observation, while at the same time he stressed that "an observation is always preceded by a particular interest, a questioner, a problem" (1972, p. 342). Moreover, the theory-dependence of all investigations has also

methodological implications as it is only on the condition of the conceptualisation of an object that a methodology can be applied and the aims of the investigation can be set. In light of the above discussion, the data gathered from an investigation, contrary to empiricist assumptions, depend on theory and are methodologically influenced.

In contrast to the empiricist view, challenging our immediate perceptions and convictions and questioning the everyday experience are stressed as the prerequisite of knowledge, alongside the necessity for an overall understanding within a historical perspective. This urge towards the notion of historicity that points towards the disclosure of the history of an object, circumstance and institution under examination, has been one of the key elements of historical materialism. The latter, defined as a larger research programme, is the framework in which a Marxist interpretation of knowledge can develop.

What I shall argue in the elaboration of a factual theory of knowledge, is that appearances and subjective understandings are indeed part of 'reality' and as such they should not be ignored, but rather, as Matthews proposes, examined simultaneously with the process through which an object, circumstance and institution came to be what it is, as well as the circumstances at the moment of its creation. In contrast to classical-inductivist theory, there is no such thing as a virgin perception and a starting point from which all human knowledge is constructed, but rather all perceptions have a theoretical component. In coming to know, the individual does not recollect something that was already in the mind and that he or she once knew, as it is stressed in Plato's doctrine of *Anamnesis* (Klein, 1965, p. 108).

With that in mind and although the doubting of the immediate that Socrates advances in the episode of "teaching and learning" contained in Plato's *Meno* (82 b 9-85 b 7) is endorsed, the interpretation of the event by Plato is rejected. The whole episode, very briefly given, consists of a dialogical exchange between Socrates and an ignorant slave

boy, in which Socrates[58] tries to elicit the Pythagorean Theorem from the ignorant slave boy. The whole idea behind that method of challenging views through engagement in a dialogue which aims to challenge established convictions and consequently to refine views is that knowledge and truth are already latent in every human being. But this is not the case and this position is not tenable.

Individuals do not acquire knowledge through anamnesis of what they once knew, but on the contrary, they acquire a "predating" knowledge which has been known in society prior to their individual process of coming to know. There is a close affinity between the latter view and Karl Popper's (1902- 1994) epistemology which has served as the main opposition to logical empiricism, inductivism and later logical positivism of the Vienna Circle, as a variant of empiricism, since the beginning of the 20th century.

Since the very beginning of his work, Karl Popper has stressed the inconsistency between the doctrine of empiricism, positivism and scientific achievement. In his book *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (1934), he provided, two centuries after the first introduction of the problem of induction by David Hume, the most notable and influential response to that problem. In Popper's terms, the disputability of a statement, theory or system is the same as testability and therefore, according to him, it can be used as a demarcation criterion for the distinction of science from non-science (Matthews, 1980, p. 46). Within that framework, the whole essence of Popper's falsificationism could generally be described as the view that rationality consists of not having beliefs against which there is evidence.

Crucial in his general theory and his scientific epistemology is his belief that neither rationalism and its inherent belief in the power of the intellect, nor empiricism and its inherent belief on the power of sensory perception could lead to proven theories and knowledge (Harris, 1979, p. 36).Within that framework, he challenged the view, held by

[58] With his reputedly used "maieutic" method (maieftiki, the Greek word for "midwifery") (Theaetetus, 1881, 210b, p. 93), a dialectical method of inquiry and debate with a straight question- answer pattern (Klein, 1965 p. 102) intending to facilitate the birth of insights and to stimulate critical thinking.

both empiricists and rationalists, that each man carries the sources of knowledge in himself, either in his "sense-perception" or in his "intellectual intuition", and contrary to the epistemological traditions of empiricism and rationalism, he insisted on the existence of an objective theory (Popper, 1962, p.5). In light of the above discussion, we can thus conclude that for Popper the "a priori" knowledge of an individual is the "a posteriori" knowledge of a human society which, in advance to his/her process of coming to know, has already developed a series of both practical and intellectual attainments.

In the realm of epistemology, one of the main contributions of Popper is his clear distinction between subjective and objective knowledge. Although he recognised the human factor in the intellectual production of knowledge, at the same time he stressed its objective existence "independently of the process of its creation and of its creators" (Matthews, 1980, p. 54). To make sense of the latter, he introduced his three worlds and he drew the following distinction: "world 1"is the physical world of material objects, events and processes, "world 2" is the mental or psychological world, the world of subjective human experiences, perceptions, thoughts, wishes, beliefs and dreams, while "world 3" is the world of the products of the human mind, the world of theories, the contents of beliefs, the propositions and claims (Popper, 1972; 1978).

In the objectivist terms of Popper, his main point regarding the third world is that, despite its interaction with the other two worlds and especially with the second one, it is to a considerable extent autonomous. The third world objects, defined as the "abstract products of human thought" (Popper, 1978, p. 5), are created by us but, at the same time, they are in a sense independent of us.

Hence, for Popper, the theory or knowledge in the objective sense should not be reduced to the state of a mental process or experience of those who hold it; rather, it should be treated as an objectively existing object which is a "product"' of "thought-processes" (Popper, 1966, p. 14); an object we can study, but it may never be fully understood, and all its inherent possibilities may never be grasped, even by its creator. A failure to treat it as such signifies, according to Popper, the inability to grasp the clear and sharp

distinction between the world of "thought-processes", which are concrete objects that happen at a certain place and time and to certain people on certain occasions (world 2), and the world of "thought-contents" (Popper, 1978, p. 20) which are abstract and can stand in logical relationships (world 3).

To sum up, I can conclude that for Popper, the existence of subjective knowledge or thought is linked to biological dispositions and it is only when this thought is formulated in a language that it becomes a third world object. It is only then that a thought can exist independently of its own creator and can be shared and criticised. Thus, once a thought is formulated and a theory proposed, there is room for questions, for criticism and for critical examination.

In this respect, the whole scope of the application of theories is involved in a larger ensemble that has its own objective problems which exist regardless of whether scientists recognise them or not. These objectives third world problems generate the second world events of scientists trying to subjectively grasp the implications of theories, forming hypotheses and having beliefs which are going to be used as instruments of change upon the physical environment (world 1) (Popper, 1962; 1966; 1972; 1978).

We noted in the previous section that within the tradition of Popper's scientific epistemology there is an important nexus between the objective, external knowledge and the subjective knowledge. The first one is treated as an objective product which exists irrespective of whether people happen to believe it or not, while the second one constitutes the beliefs and mind of states of humans and can be parasitic upon the objective knowledge.

2.6. Why Marxist epistemology?

Marxist epistemology argues against searching for secure foundations of knowledge and refuses to engage in the analysis of the conditions required in order for an individual to lay claim to knowledge of the world.

Consciousness is considered as the product of intellectual production, in which already theorised concepts, observation statements and theories are used as raw materials. Empiricist epistemology has had a big influence on educational theory and practice, as well as on the philosophy of education (from John Locke's "tabula rasa" theory of mind that has guided many pedagogues to the empiricist slogan "Learning by experience"). However, as Michael Matthews puts it, to say that knowledge is based on experience is like saying we ought to pursue the good life; no one really disagrees, the interesting question would be what constitutes "good life". Similarly, the controversial questions are what experience is and how knowledge is based upon it (Matthews, 1980, p. 37).

Marx, in his early writings saw clearly that human practice had to be the key element in any theory of human practice, because the truth is to be proved in practice and not in a process of intellectual abstraction.

> They are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions under which they live, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity. These premises can thus be verified in a purely empirical way.
>
> (Marx and Engels, 1845, p. 36-37)

> Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men, appear at this stage as the direct efflux of their material behaviour.
>
> (Marx and Engels, 1845, p. 42)

This model of consciousness and of intellectual conceptions enables us to pinpoint where ideology enters public knowledge, the raw materials, the productive process, the products or the productive relations governing the process. It is a catholic not a sectarian epistemology; the kernel of historical materialism contained in Marx and Engels' works can be elaborated in research inside and outside the Marxist tradition. But catholicity and tolerance are not to be confused with vacuity. A confused and faulty

conceptualisation prevents the resolution of anomalies, while at the same time it inhibits or misdirects research.

Plato poses the problem of knowledge in individualist terms and many others, such as David Hume, John Locke, Rene Descartes and others, contributed to this asocial tradition in epistemology. For Descartes and Locke, as for Mach and Russell, the problem is how each individual can arrive at any well-founded, even certain, knowledge about the world (Toulmin, 1999, p. 54). Unfortunately, I have to disagree with this formulation. Knowledge necessarily has a social dimension. Focusing upon the individual and asking questions in order to test valid ideas and truths, has distracted attention from the social character of knowledge.

Stephen Toulmin stressed that point when he argued about the social practices that give rise to knowledge, and the relationship between the way we come to know and the socially mediated processes of knowledge creation (Toulmin, 1999). In his late thinking, Wittgenstein, provides us with the basic reason why the theory of knowledge cannot treat knowledge as individual possession: all meanings are created in the public domain in the context of collective situations and activities. Along with him, Karl Marx in the 1844 Manuscripts states that "The individual is the social being…his life, is therefore an expression and confirmation of social life" (Marx, 1844, p. 138).

To sum up, I will provide the main "attractive features" of Marxist epistemology as cited by Michael Matthews in his book *The Marxist Theory of Schooling* (1980): i) The investigation does not focus on individual beliefs but seeks to provide an objective account of knowledge; ii) Knowledge is placed in an environment reminiscent of Popper's "third world", but this world is not separate from 'reality' and it offers a valid explanation of the source of knowledge and the examination of its correctness; iii) theories are examined as products of specific historical processes, techniques and raw material of which and by which they are constructed; iv) it is fallibilistic in the sense that all conceptions and theories are products and can be reworked as raw materials; v) it is practical in the sense that praxis is central to every process and knowledge viewed as

such is always tested in practice; vi) it is catholic because it can be applied to the production of any theory without offering a step-by-step methodology; vii) it offers a realistic view of the internal/external history discussion; viii) it make room for productive relations within epistemology in terms of how research is organised and by whom.

2.7. Towards a 'Factual' Theory of Education

Taking into consideration that one of the main concerns of science is the examination of how evidence relates to beliefs and the production of correct accounts of the practices and relations in which people are engaged, I could suggest that a factual theory of education should be based upon an understanding of science and its practices. Moreover, it should also integrate serious considerations of its history and philosophy.

The second point to stress is that a factual theory of education will need to recognise that appearances and subjective understandings are indeed part of 'reality' and as such, they should not be ignored. Idealisation after all plays a crucial role in science, despite the empiricist failure to appreciate it. Science may be about the real objects of the world that constitute the "real objects of science" but at the same time it is also about their theoretical appropriation which signifies the objects of scientific knowledge, the "theoretical objects of science". As Matthews points out, "we cannot claim an analysis as faulty or unscientific just for being abstract and hypothetical" (1980, p. 180).

This is not meant to imply, however, that we should collapse into a relativism which claims that any analysis, theory or idea is as good and adequate as the next one. It is one thing to accept that there is no neutral standpoint and quite another to say that rival theories and analyses cannot be compared and evaluated. After all, "a good methodology leaves all cognition open to revision" (Matthews, 1980, p. 4) and the guiding criteria throughout this procedure will be the adequacy of each theory.

The latter argument leads me to a third claim concerning the practicality of a factual theory of education. Such a theory should be of practical interest and, to do so, it should be concerned with practical and objective problems that require solutions. Its adequacy and reliability should and will be tested in practice and not through processes of intellectual abstraction. This point exactly was stressed by Karl Marx in his early writings when he said that "our theorising has to relate to the world of facts not of words".

A factual theory of education is the way to create a "short-circuit", using a term firstly introduced by Étienne Balibar (1994, p.138), between theory and praxis. It is the way to bring relevance to any proposals for the practical conduct of education, as well as a way to move beyond mere analysis of concepts and search of meanings. As Popper suggests, we should concentrate on the search for truths and in doing so rival theories should be compared and evaluated.

A first key step in providing a factual theory of schooling, which will undeniably, depend upon a theory of society, is the recognition of the high complexity of the real social world. Drawing upon practice, fairly common in natural sciences, we should recognise the necessity of proceeding to simplifications in order to understand properly and conceptualise adequately the various interacting and competing features of the system. A failure to begin with a simplified theory and to expel things with little theoretical interest at this early stage would generate unnecessary arguments and sooner or later would lead to a dead end.

2.8. Summary

In this chapter, I explained my choice of theoretical approach, in contrast with earlier approaches to the sociology of education and concluded with proposing a factual theory of education. I will now proceed to justify my philosophical position of dialectical materialism in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER 3: Looking Beyond the Obvious and Examining Crucial Notions in the Discourse of Crisis and Capitalism

3.1. Introduction

In the following chapter I will provide a brief historical overview of the trajectories of capitalism and Marxism. I will argue for the need for a deep understanding of people's 'common sense making' regarding the above mentioned notions. Finally, while outlining my interpretation of Greek crisis, I propose a distinction between Scientific discourse/public discourse.

3.2. The echoes of TINA

Undoubtedly, as already mentioned in the Introductory Chapter, we are living in controversial times dominated by a negative correlation of powers, under the hegemony of totems and laws of capitalism. Few could doubt this, when this gloomy picture is illustrated daily, among others, by: the unprecedented rise of mass structural unemployment, semi-employment and the reserve army of labour; the impoverishment and intensifying economic and social destitution; the new 'dark ages' in labour which amputate and eliminate the work force both physically and morally; the enormous increase of monopolies and of surplus-value extraction[59]; the extensive and constant warfare and the over-reactive restructuring of international geopolitical relations that have spawned a horrifying tsunami of refugees, immigrants and expatriates; racism and neo-fascism; the corruption and destruction of the natural environment; the ideological and cultural emaciation; authoritarianism and state terrorism; and finally, the restriction and deconstruction of civil democracy by constantly reducing the political process to a state of "emergency" (Marxist Papers, 2016, pp. 7-10).

However, perhaps the most noteworthy element of our era is that, while it is characterised by all the above, and while we are almost ten years into a crisis that stems

[59] Both absolute and relative.

from the structural elements of the capitalist mode of production[60]whose economic and social costs still keep mounting, the popular remark "There is no alternative" (TINA) continues to be the "capital's war cry" (Krisi, 2017, p.5).

To be frank though, this is not news. Ironic as it may sound, in a world where capitalist discourses have traditionally spoken in favour of constant improvement of everything, from commodity products to oneself[61], always in the name of 'progress', capitalism, even accepting its so-called 'imperfections', always considered itself exempt from any form of improvement (Chun, 2017). In this framework, thus, we experience the emergence of those capitalist narratives that have always attempted to present capitalism as a 'natural' system of constant progress, characterised by indestructibility and permanence, instead of a specific model of production, appropriation, distribution and accompanying social relations bound with its historical context (Chun, 2017. p. 41).

3.3. The brief challenge to capitalism

In the course of the 20th century, this notion was only challenged by state-run communism, primarily manifested in the Soviet Union and Maoist China. However, since the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991 and the economic restructuring of China followed by its economic rise, capitalism has emerged more empowered than ever (Chun, 2017). It would not be an exaggeration to claim that, over the last fifty years, the capitalist economic system in many parts of the world, "has gotten a free pass in terms of both criticism and debate" (Wolff, 2012, p. 22). Thus, even though other social institutions or systems which have received harsh criticism over the years, such as marriage, education, health care, transportation and urban structure, were subjected to reform ranging from moderate to fundamental, capitalism has remained unchecked as if it were forbidden to discuss, criticize or modify it (Wolff, 2012).

In this state of affairs, where it seemed as though there was no other alternative, at least none worth our consideration, any kind of criticism to capitalism gradually learnt to

[60] Referring among others to laws of value, competition, falling tendency of average profit margin.
[61] Meaning as one's own commodity in the form of selling one's labour power.

focus only on specific forms of misconduct and particular practices on the part of capitalist enterprises. In this sense, while one could criticise monopolies, discriminations, environmental degradation and corrupt political institutions, criticising capitalism as the underlying cause of all the above was perceived as an act of disloyalty which brought dire consequences (Wolff, 2012; 2016). As Frederic Jameson (2003, p.76), eminent Marxist literary scholar and cultural critic, wrote:

> Someone once said that it is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism. We can now revise that and witness the attempt to imagine capitalism by way of imagining the end of the world.
>
> (Jameson, 2003, p. 76)

Consequently, it should not come as a surprise that, like all other social systems that were immune to criticism for a long time, capitalism gradually degenerated within its "protective wall of celebration" (Wolff, 2012, p. 23). Large companies aggressively incorporated smaller businesses, while legislation protecting labour and unions was undermined. At the same time, activists and union leaders who actively criticised capitalism, were forced out under the pretence that they were advocating 'subversive' and 'ideological' politics at the expense of the 'broader social good'. And finally, major political figures praised capitalism and denounced all alternative systems, while journalists, filmmakers, playwrights and anyone else who appeared sympathetic to critics of capitalism as a system were removed (Wolff, 2012; 2015).

Education, on the other hand, gave its own consent. Colleges and universities discriminated against anti-capitalist critique, leading to an extensive canonisation in the economics profession in the US and other countries, while at the same time, removing history and philosophy from graduate and undergraduate curricula in the US universities in the 1990s[62] deprived those at the top positions of any analytical resources to better comprehend the breakdown which ensued in the wake of the global economic crisis (Mirowski, 2010, pp. 30-31).

[62] That is, removing those fields where sceptics about the form and function of postwar American economic orthodoxy were found in greater numbers.

3.4. The degradation of Marxism

It was a time when the bourgeois world felt able to celebrate the definitive victory of capitalism and when communism was put in "ideological quarantine" (Tsadari, 2015, p. 38). The typical question that was uttered as a natural consequence was:

> Why should we continue to care about Marx in the twenty-first century more than twenty-five years after the Collapse of the Soviet Union and the abandonment of any socialist aims by the Communist Party in China?
>
> (Chun, 2017, p. 43)

Indeed, after the Berlin Wall fell and the Eastern European Communist countries dissolved, eventually including the apparently indestructible Soviet Union, all in the space of two years, many "pundits" and scholars announced the death of Communism as a practice and theory and buried it in the so-called 'dustbin of history' (Chun, 2017, p. 42).

More precisely, according to the French Marxist philosopher and militant Daniel Bensaïd (2002, p. ix), during the 1980s, Marxism was under such an attack, that even the critical rereading of Marx represented an act of resistance. Back in those times, and more precisely in 1989, the year of the fall of the Berlin Wall, and two years before the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Polish-American political scientist and statesman Zbigniew Brzezinski was arguing in his book *Grand Failure: The Birth and Death of Communism in the Twentieth Century* for the failure and collapse of Communism on a global scale.

Three years later, in the *End of History and the Last Man*, the American author and political theorist Francis Fukuyama (1992, p. 292) claimed the end of history and characterised the Marxist doctrine as "discredited" and "totally exhausted". Some years later, in 1999, the French historian François Furet, in his last book *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, characterised by an enhancement of autobiographical elements, tried to figure out how it had been possible for him and so many others to be so easily deceived by the illusion of Communism (Bensaïd, 2002, pp. ix-xvii; Walker, 2007, pp. 1-12).

3.5. At a crucial and controversial crossroads

But even though some rushed to enthusiastically declare the 'end of history' after the 'collapses' and the defeat of 'real socialist' regimes, history itself, in Greece as well as countries embodying capitalism, proved all devotees wrong. Capitalism and its crisis, its inability to ensure better living and its hostility towards the environment, peace, culture, freedom and democracy put it at odds with both basic human needs and current capabilities (Marxist Papers, 2016, pp. 7-8). We are indeed at a crossroads, standing at a crucial, but controversial point, which is of course rooted in the inherently controversial nature of the capitalist society: a society which can act as a 'womb' unfolding exceptional potential for social emancipation and alternative social evolution, but which is simultaneously dominated by the powerful, uncontrollable and disastrous economic forces it breeds (Pavlidis, 2012; Chun, 2017; Pavlidis, 2017).

In other words, I am referring to that fundamental opposition which could be articulated as follows: On the one hand, we have immense capabilities for a better life and creative work as a result of the colossal leaps of science-technology and of the accumulated material and intellectual wealth. On the other, we have the current gloomy reality unfolding right in front of us on a day-to-day basis. A reality gradually exacerbated by the capitalist crisis as well as through the strategy to overcome it selected by institutions such as the capital, the banks, the international intergovernmental organisations, the European Union and the national governments (Pavlidis, 2012).

Without a doubt, the 2008 crash affected millions of lives worldwide, eradicating incalculable amounts of wealth and personal savings and putting many countries and their people in debt, including China, Spain, Greece, Mexico and the United States. Meanwhile, 13% of global production and 20% of global commerce has been wiped out, giving rise to a depression far worse than that of the period 1929-1933, while global public debt during the crisis has increased by 57 trillion dollars, reaching in 2016 the astronomical amount of 159 trillion dollars (Gatsios, 2016, pp. 23-26). Unemployment rates in countries such as Spain and Greece, with the latter having become a "flashpoint" for a global struggle over sacrificing mass living standards to satisfy creditor's demands

(Wolff, 2016, p. 25), now exceed one quarter of the population and have become a threat to the stability of both the EU and the global economy.

In the meantime, turbulence in global economy, mostly since the beginning of 2016, but also the absence of any alternative model, prescribe the conditions for a relapse of the global capitalist crisis. Harbingers of such a possibility include: the fall in the price of oil, the rise in dollar interest rates, the drift of the yuan, the stock markets falling and the long-term deflationary cycle toward which the Eurozone seems to be moving (Gatsios, 2016, pp. 23-26).

3.6. Capitalism in trouble

However, if a more penetrating look sees through the surface and tries to decode the elements of our era, it will realise that apart from the gloomy and grey reality I have described earlier, there are new trends moving in the opposite direction. What I mean is that, even though in the theoretical sphere the bourgeois philosophy and a contemporary trend of 'American' pragmatism may be prevalent, and the neoliberal management may be well established in the political scenery[63], there are still perceivable possibilities to challenge the system (Marxist Papers, 2016, pp. 12-13).

On the level of ideology, and despite the constant and co-ordinated efforts of dogmatic permeation ultimately aiming to eliminate the concept of an alternative to capitalism even as a thought in society, the dominance of bourgeois ideology has suffered blows. Neoliberalism, reshaped as a programmed system of recurring catastrophic failures, is no longer able to support its narrative of "uninterrupted progress and self-regulation of capitalism, shrinking the state and bureaucracy, pan-social prosperity, freedom and creativity" (Mason, 2015; Marxist Papers, 2016, p. 13).

[63] Though mixed with various elements and in many forms, such as our faults and inadequacies - centre-right neoliberalism by New Democracy and socio-liberalism by SYRIZA

Thus, despite the declarations of contemporary capitalism for being omnipotent and the single worthy alternative, it is a fact that it is being rocked to its foundations by the intensity and duration of instances of crisis, its inherent and insurmountable oppositions and last but not least, by the class struggle. As Terry Eagleton (2011, p. xi) astutely pointed out in his book *Why Marx was Right* "you can tell that the capitalist system is in trouble when people start talking about capitalism".

3.7. People become aware. But of what?

In this sense, an unexpected but welcome by-product of the 2008 global capitalist crisis, might be that large groups of people have begun to realise that the economy has not been doing well for a long time, at least in comparison with the still fairly recent "good old days" (Chun, 2017, p. 46). With the outbreak of the global capitalist crisis, the people suffering its consequences voiced the question of how and why this happened to them, and demanded a simple answer to a simple question: What was different this time compared to earlier bankruptcies and shady economic deals?

However, the economists were apparently unable to provide clear answers, at least back in 2008[64] (Mirowski, 2010). In television or radio interviews, as well as in their writings, their expressed opinions remained within the boundaries of neoclassical professional orthodoxy, essentially 'ranging from a "Keynesian approach to a monetarist or Friedman one". At the same time, people's responses to the crisis have generated endless debates in the social media and online mainstream media platforms all over the world (c.f. Couldry, 2012). In light of the latter, it would not be inappropriate to claim that the amount of public debate over the global economy was unprecedented, considering how diligently the average member of the public avoided anything to do with economics before. In line of the above, the historian and philosopher of economic thought Philip Mirowski (2010, p. 30) remarked

[64] The fact that not only most eminent economists had been unable to predict the two thousand seven-two thousand eight global financial crisis but they also appeared confounded right after its outbreak (Krugman, 2009) is directly linked with the trajectory of the field of economics in the US and other countries over the past forty years (Mirowski, 2010; Chun, 2017)

> […] suddenly it seemed like everyone with a web browser harboured a quick opinion about what had gone wrong with economics and was not at all shy about broadcasting it to the world.
>
> (Mirowski, 2010, p. 30)

At the same time, mainstream media confined themselves to describing growing inequalities without ever considering or even mentioning the possibility of an alternative system, a possibility which is invariably portrayed as a vain endeavour if it is to go beyond a simple remedy. Following suit, those who influenced public opinion deliberately steered the conversation away from structural and recurring causes of the crisis related to capitalism and continued to present capitalism itself as the only obvious choice (Wolff, 2016; Chun, 2017).

The fact however, that the public did not have access to a wider range of scholarly voices through mainstream media, with views exceeding the limits of economic orthodoxy, had a profound impact on the way they framed, discussed and proposed to deal with the crisis (Mirowski, 2010; Chun, 2017)[65]. In fact, it is not even clear whether those people expressing the feeling that things are no longer what they used to, do in fact recognise capitalism as the underlying cause, or if they attribute the problem to a variety of related or unrelated issues[66]. It is a possibility that all this heated debate is rooted in simple people's rising anxieties concerning job security, unemployment, wage stagnation or reduction, growing income disparities all over the world, rising consumer, house and student debts, and the former middle-class becoming increasingly impoverished in countries such as the UK, the USA.

As for the situation in Greece, I would like to add at this point that, even though Greece has always been a country with deep inequalities, the coming of the economic crisis and

[65] This phenomenon prevented the articulation of a Scientific Discourse that could interpret capitalism itself and its structural crisis. Although, it will be analysed further on, for clarity's sake let me note here that, following A. Dedousopoulos' (2017) distinction, I will henceforth contrast this Scientific Discourse with public Discourse.

[66] This last point that will be analysed further on, is an issue of great political significance, associated with the social movements and the contradictory and conflicting views that people who participated in those hold on society, their country and the world.

the measures taken to tackle it have accelerated social transformations. As noted by Spyros Sakellaropoulos (2014) in his book *Crisis and Social Stratification in 21st Century* Greece, since two thousand nine, in the space of barely two years, the total framework shifted through the process of social downward mobility, devastating the petit-bourgeois class and expanding the corresponding working class.

3.8. The need to understand economic "common sense making"

In this light, and at the dawn of a new millennium, it is fascinating how inevitable and recent the revision of the historic question: "communist liberation or capitalist barbarity?" has become (Marxist Papers, 2016, p. 7-8). Especially now, that the second worst crash of global capitalism in seventy-seven years continues to unfold, it is more vital than ever to open an in-depth theoretical discussion which will end the unobstructed propagation of dominant ideology.

We are living in controversial times dominated by a negative correlation of powers, under the hegemony of totems and laws of capitalism, the unprecedented constant and extensive infringement of the democratic and union liberties and rights, as well as the eradication of people's achievements in labour and education. At the same time, our era is characterized by the absence of a structured and subversive alternative, or at least an alternative put in relatively mass and collective terms. Despite the afore-mentioned dismal framework, political leadership, academia and business management insist on perpetually limiting their discourse to modest reforms regarding the degree of government intervention instead of attacking capitalism as a whole.

In this sense, rejecting this dead-end and convinced that the resolution of this crisis, at an economic, political and ideological level, remains an open and particularly burning issue, I believe there is urgent need for a critical study and in-depth analysis of the situation which should not fall for the deception of a "politically clean and 'neutral' theory" (Krisi, 2017, p. 5).For those of us who are opposed to a capitalist-organised economic system, the advancement of our understanding as regards people's "common-

sense" beliefs and their economic "common-sense" making is one of the most pressing issues to address (Chun, 2017).

It is precisely this "economic common-sense making" that leads to a reimagining of day-to-day experience as a somewhat coherent narrative which is in turn reiterated and strengthened among the people themselves and across communities through, including the news media and the social media (Chun, 2017, p. 50). Perhaps a generation of marginalisation has started to fade, and Marxian analyses in public dialogues about economy and society have begun resurfacing, but there is still a lot of work to be done in a range of scholarly fields, such as sociology, education, economics and applied linguistics among others.

3.9. Traces of a re-emergence of critical voices in academia

As I have mentioned earlier in my speech, especially today, that we are facing one of the longest and deepest crises of capitalism, critical voices have re-emerged sharper than ever. As Glenn Rikowski stresses (2017), in the last ten years or so, there has been a surge of academic writings on the Great Recession and related crises, most of which employs a Marxist, radical and leftist point of view. The efforts by the dominant ideology to suppress arguments over capitalism versus alternative economic systems during the Cold War and the period that followed nineteen eighty-nine and the collapse of the Soviet Union lasted until the "two thousand eight crash of global capitalism reopened the space for those debates to resume" (Wolff, 2016, p. x). Apparently, the powerful debates over capitalism never reached a conclusion but were simply put aside first by "anti-Communist hysteria" and then by "delusional capitalist triumphalism" (Wolff, 2016, p. xi). Meanwhile, a large portion of the public has begun to realise that they were being sold a dream completely at odds with what reality can offer. With rising criticism, there has been an equal rise in revolutionary thinking and acting (Wolff, 2012; Mason, 2015).

3.10. Why are protests not fruitful?

It is true, however, that these rebellious protests, despite their massive scale and radicalism, did not come to fruition. Many reactionary movements failed because they shied away from a systematic review of capitalism (Wolff, 2013, p. 23). In the absence of an anti-systemic anti-capitalist subversive direction, even in the case of the Occupy movement, which was the first to assert that capitalism itself can be criticised defeating the traditional taboo, the spontaneous reactions were not able to overcome the system. Clearly illustrated by the fact that these movements deflated in hopes of SYRIZA taking over in Greece and Podemos in Spain (Marxist Papers, 2016, pp. 12-13). In this framework, writing about the protest movements following Seattle nineteen ninety-nine before the September eleventh two thousand one attacks forced them to fall back, the activist British writer and cultural and political theorist Mark Fisher (2009, p.14) noted:

> since it was unable to posit a coherent alternative political-economic model to capitalism, the suspicion was that the actual aim was not to replace capitalism, but to mitigate its worst excesses
>
> Fisher (2009, p.14)

These protests, as Fisher (2009, p.14) argued, can be viewed as a "kind of carnivalesque background noise"[67] to business as usual, since any call for change, boxed within the socio-political and cultural dynamic in the US and other Western democracies, resembled more "a series of hysterical demands which didn't expect to be met [...] but were allowing for this type of dissent to function as a safety valve". Referring specifically to the Occupy movement which started in the autumn of 2011, Christian Chun (2017, p. 48) though noting the weakness located in the absence of any real power and political organisation behind the Occupiers, as well as their incoherent and contradictory elements of what the Italian philosopher and activist Antonio Gramsci (1975) called "common-sense" beliefs, he stresses that "perhaps this carnivalesque background noise is not to be dismissed that easily". Although he notes that the prevalent discourse that was adopted and repeated in the Occupy Movement was "that capitalism could be reformed and tamed", he highlights the necessity of recognising the

[67] A term borrowed from the book by Russian philosopher, literary critic, semiotician and scholar Mikhail Bakhtin (1984), *Rabelais and His World.*

possibilities embodied in all these affiliated movements around the world. In Chun's (2017, p .49) words:

> […] these movements materially demonstrated and powerfully illustrated how we can configure our social relations, which called into question both the nature and naturalising of the state of things that privilege and benefit those in power.
>
> (Chun, 2017, p .49)

Or, in other words, as Antonio Gramsci (1971) reminded us "the 'common sense' beliefs are not to be dismissed and ignored so easily, for they have material consequences".

3.11. What needs to be done?

We are living in a world plagued by climate change, social and political turmoil, a growing gap between the rich and the poor and indescribable destitution. Capitalism, facing a host of problems and dealing with repeated crises, lies at the root of all that, and this makes the search for and the realisation of objective possibilities for transition to a sort of social development not just necessary but existentially essential on a global scale (Wolff, 2012; Chun, 2017; Pavlidis, 2017, pp. 137-150).

The economic crises will not be overcome by fantasies of return to some golden age of 'pure' capitalism (Wolff, 2016); and all those who chose to perceive of the capitalist crises as the occasional random appearance of a "black swan" in an otherwise immaculate flock (Smith, 2007) are overlooking the very dynamic of the history they are trying to explain, as well as the logic of profit which condemns history to tragic repetition (Shaikh, 2017). Having said that, I will now turn to the public discourses of both capitalism and the crisis and their materialised manifestations in policies and practices, academic literature and media discussions (Chun, 2017).

But let me illustrate my reasoning. As Raymond Williams (1985) argued in the revised version of his book *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, any important

keyword, such as ‘freedom’ or ‘democracy’, and ‘crisis’ I might add are in constant dispute, with different meanings and usage employed at any given historical period. Correspondingly, it should not come as a surprise that concepts like ‘capitalism’ and ‘crisis’ which have long been contextually and ideologically mediated, mean many different things to different people. As a result, they are terms which, precisely due to their diachronic uses and adjustments of meaning, have been defined and understood quite differently by different people and groups throughout their history (Holton, 2006; Koselleck, 2006; Wolff, 2012; Chun, 2017; Dedousopoulos, 2017). This is why anyone using these terms needs to be clear and explicit about which specific definition they are using.

3.12. Discourse as means for ‘exercising political authority’

The proper use of terms is essential, since the interpretation of the crisis or capitalism, that is, the Discourse about these two notions, shapes narratives that expressly or implicitly represent, propose, affect and also construct specific versions of and perspectives on ‘reality’. In this sense, the narratives articulated as communicative stakes do not stop at the mere description of the event, thus ‘defining’ the terms, but also position causation within the temporal sequencing of events that are identified as significant, employing agents and victims and determining the ways to react and deal with it (Ricoeur, 1984; Walby, 2015; Kalerande, 2016). In other words, the way in which we choose to highlight the manifestations and prioritise their significance, meaning what we ultimately define as crisis or capitalism, constitutes “exercising political authority” (Dedousopoulos, 2017), since it shapes the political agenda and public discourse and outlines the space in which specific proposed political solutions can be sought.

3.13. Defining crisis: The political aspects of crisis discourse

The concept of crisis, as a thick concept with a broad content and multiple uses[68], is charged with interlaced conceptual difficulties. It is a term with so many diachronic uses and adjustments of meaning that it has finally lost its meaning and content. As the German historian Reinhart Koselleck (2006) aptly puts it in an article on the genealogy and diachronic usage of the term:

> […] because of its metaphorical flexibility, the concept [of crisis] gains in importance; it enters into everyday language; it becomes a central catchword (Schlagwort). In our century, there is virtually no area of life that has not been examined and interpreted through this concept with its inherent demand for decisions and choices.
>
> (Koselleck, 2006, p. 358)

He also points out that precisely due to the imprecision and vagueness of the term, it is crucial for scholars to weigh the concept very carefully before including it in their own terminology. The American anthropologist Janet Roitman, on the other hand, in her book *Anti-Crisis* (2013), goes so far as to reject the very usefulness of the term. This unavoidably brings up the question of how to reinstate the meaning of a word "that has become so massively over-inflated with rhetorical significance, as to have become de-valued in its analytical specificity" (Holton, 1987, p. 503).

This question carries great political significance, since both the manifestations of the crisis and the intertwined neoliberal restructuring devised as a socio-political response to the crisis by the capital, both evident at every level[69], have rendered the crisis the plague of our modern era. All political stratagems and tactics and all ideological conflicts cross fire over the crisis. However, even though all this underlines the urgency of taking its centrality into account, the crisis remains an abstract entity, thus rooting out discussion of causes, much less a specific political agenda aimed at overcoming it (Katsikas and Kavvadias, 1998).

[68] For instance, generalised, metaphorical.
[69] As already mentioned in Chapter 1, at the economic, social, political and ideological level.

Following Apostolos Dedousopoulos' differentiation (2017), between two dominant Discourses: a) the public Discourse[70] and b) the scientific Discourse, already mentioned above, I will try to approach the difficulties interlaced with the term 'crisis', and subsequently comprehend its meaning. The core of the differentiation between these two Discourses must primarily be sought in the inefficiency of public Discourse when it comes to revealing the causes and the mechanisms leading to the onset of the crisis one way or another. In other words, by equating the crisis with its individual occurrences and the ways in which it manifests itself in different occasions, the public Discourse in fact obscures the root causes and mechanisms at work, that is, the very essence of the crisis.

To put it differently, the causal normality that governs the reality which is directly visible, cannot be revealed without scientific analysis. That is, without an analysis which will be grounded in the distinction between manifestations and causal relations that induce them, and which will arrange empirical evidence in a web of cause and effect relations. Let me quote Marx here in Volume III of Capital:

> All science would be superfluous if the outward appearance and the essence of things directly coincided
>
> (Marx, [1984] 1974, Ch.4)

But this argument inevitably leads to a series of crucial questions: What constitutes the field of public discourse on both capitalism and its crisis at this particular moment? What are the meaning-makings associated with these public economic discourses? Is it an approach aspiring to a holistic, insightful and complex understanding? Is it an approach that poses questions regarding "what exactly is happening with the crisis, what the causes and the consequences are, how and why it emerges, why it emerges at this point in time and not a different period"? (Dedousopoulos, 2017) Why do certain ideas come to dominate social thinking among people across different classes and social groups?

[70] Meaning by that Discourse of the newspapers, the politicians and everyday life.

The absence of the above mentioned analysis, as Apostolos Dedousopoulos (2017) very accurately points out, has given rise to "a rampant and generalised crisology"[71], which, apart from not contributing towards a deeper understanding of the problems since it compartmentalises the crisis, by identifying it with individual phenomena, also legitimises the crisis through the normalisation of its phenomena and consequences. The latter refers to the temporary character attributed to the crisis through its equation with its manifestations, simultaneously concealing all those "unseen crisis generating mechanisms" which aggravate it.

This certainly does not mean that the critical and effective interpretation of the manifestations of the crisis is not absolutely necessary, but rather that when it encases and limits the whole interpretive range of the crisis, or of the capitalism I would add, a more holistic, insightful and complex understanding is systematically and significantly impeded. The absence of this approach either leads to naïve and arbitrary conclusions, such as deciding the crisis is over if the symptom ceases to exist or is moderated, or even worse, to the integration of the symptoms in "normal life", if the symptom persists, eventually leaning to live with the crisis itself.[72]

It is not difficult, thus, to discern in what has already been said, the vital significance of the predetermined frame of perception, comprehension and interpretation of the crisis in relation to the specific versions of reality proposed[73] by narratives that end up becoming dominant. If we also factor in, the aforementioned inefficiency of public Discourse to reverse the process of "normalising" the effects of the crisis[74], we come to the conclusion that the discourse on the crisis, regardless of its interpretive range[75], acquires

[71] The term 'crisology' was first coined in 1976 by E. Marin in his article *Pour une Crisology* to refer to the scientific approach of the crisis as a distinct object of study. A. Dedousopoulos (2017), on the other hand, uses the same term in a derogatory sense when referring to the public Discourse on the crisis.
[72] According to Dedousopoulos (2017), a characteristic example of such normalisation of the consequences of the crisis is the fact that European and American societies have "learnt to live" with socially, politically and economically unacceptable and unprecedented unemployment rates, as well as the proliferation of precarious jobs that are now considered a part of normal daily life.
[73] But also constructed.
[74] By equating the crisis with its manifestations or direct consequences and remaining unable to identify the durability of the unseen mechanisms and causes triggering it.
[75] For instance, an explanation is sufficient when it is convincing and not necessarily right.

a political function to the extent that it converts into "folk wisdom" or "tacit knowledge" (Roitman, 2013, p. 5; Dedousopoulos, 2017).

Therein lies the vital importance of clarifying the term 'crisis' as well as our critical view of the otherwise significant contribution of Janet Roitman's book, since she avoids addressing the following serious issue: Are the dominant narratives on the crisis sufficient? And if not, how can we ascertain this while offering a "clear and cohesive narrative"? (Dedousopoulos, 2017). To put it differently, it is essential to locate the dominant narratives on the crisis with regard to the 'reality' they describe and the interpretation of facts and situations they offer.

As it will be illustrated later in this Chapter, it is exceptionally important, in the current circumstances, to define and analyse the bourgeois interpretations[76] broadcast by international and national centres and political institutions, as well as the dominant narratives on the crisis articulated in the public sphere and Mass Media[77] (as the central channel for contemporary 'myths').

It is worth noting, only briefly, that these are narratives that demonise the people of a whole country[78], construct and deconstruct interests, seek 'scapegoats', conceals the structure of capitalism and class struggle and creates variable moral signified transforming economic, political and social issues to moral or psychological ones in arbitrary and deceptive way (Sakellaropoulos, 2014; Gounari, 2014; Ovenden, 2015; Kalerande, 2016).

The latter is directly associated with another inherent characteristic of the crisis, that of subjectivity in perception of the concept[79]. In other words, while we cannot overlook

[76] Social, political, economic and ideological.
[77] These are certainly narratives which, as I will proceed to illustrate further on, find willing ears supporting the position of "collective accountability" even within Greece (Sakellaropoulos, 2014).
[78] Also, the case for a number of countries in the region – the 'naughty', 'prodigal' children of the European South.
[79] It is at least a characteristic which cannot be exceeded in those inspections of crises which follow phenomenological approaches or on systems theory approaches (c.f. Habermas, 1976).

that as social subjects we perceive of and experience[80] the crisis in our own subjective manner[81], to be able to have an approach which will not limit itself to a mere description of phenomena and a record of direct consequences, necessary as this might be, we need to constitute a different Discourse. A Discourse which will transcend subjectivity rooting it in the class stratification of our society by approaching reality critically at macro-level and understanding phenomena and consequences on the basis of socio-political determinants.

Returning to one of the most fundamental principles of the methodological approach that permeates this doctoral thesis[82], I will state that ignoring the class struggle as a key concept and assigning priority to the specific/partial is based on a great concealment: Researchers overlook that the society we are living in is not a unified whole; instead, it is made up of social classes with conflicting interests.

When these interests are detached from the dominant relations of oppression and exploitation[83],they are reduced to contradictions in context[84] (Katsikas and Kavvadias, 1998; Dedousopoulos, 2017; Grollios and Gounari, 2016). Jürgen Habermas (1976, p. 4) in his pioneering book on the crisis of legitimisation, indicates the failure of all those approaches which are rooted in the subjectivity of the crisis, pointing out:

[80] Or even do not experience.
[81] As representative examples of the crisis being different for everyone, I quote the following: To the employee, the crisis may consist of salary cuts, work intensification, or even unemployment. To the employer, on the other hand, it could mean a loss of profit or the inability to receive funding, whereas to a banker, it is the reduced lending capacity.
[82] For a better overview c.f. Chapters 1 and 2.
[83] Which essentially constitute the main factor shaping social structure.
[84] Very briefly (since there will be an extensive analysis at another part of this doctoral thesis), it is worth mentioning here that, regarding the priority assigned to 'small localised narratives' by the postmodern tradition, we agree with G. Grollios and G. Kaskaris' conclusion (1997) that, if critical educators do not realise the need to thoroughly approach the relation between the socioeconomic crisis and the postmodern (by perceiving the establishment of postmodernism as a powerful movement, as a direct consequence of the receding powers of labour at an international level) and if they continue to incorporate elements of postmodernism in their observations, they will find themselves at a theoretical and practical impasse. For a general review of the postmodern approach, c.f. indicatively: Hill, et al., 1999; McLaren, 2010a; 2010b; McLaren and Farahmandpur, 2013.

> A society does not plunge into crisis when, and only when, its members so identify the situation. How could we distinguish such crisis ideologies from valid experiences of crisis is social crises could be determined only on the basis of conscious phenomena?
>
> (Habermas, 1976, p. 4)

Under the scope of all the above, it has already been made clear that the three interlaced conceptual difficulties I have already referred to[85] promote the dominance of public Discourse at the expense of another Discourse which will be solely based on a scientific approach. A purely scientific Discourse which will revolve around the following three axes: 1) the distinction between phenomena and causal relationships that create them, locating thus the crisis generating mechanisms and transcending the inherent conceptual subjectivity of the term; 2) a critical understanding and analysis of non-evident causes mechanisms 'generating' crises which will subvert its perception as a temporary phenomenon and will eliminate the process of normalising its effects; and 3) formation of a coherent crisis narrative, insightful and established in a general framework, which will effectively and sufficiently explain the manifestations and consequences of the crisis, creating thus the appropriate conditions for collective action and effective resistance (Dedousopoulos, 2017; Grollios and Gounari, 2016).

As Giorgos Milios (1997a, p. 17) notes, the basic thesis that emerged from Marx's clash with empiricism is that the causal normality that governs the reality which is directly visible cannot be revealed without scientific analysis. That is without an analysis which will be grounded in the distinction between manifestations and causal relations that induce them, and which will arrange empirical evidence in a web of cause and effect relations in order to "illuminate what is hidden beneath a thick layer of phenomena" (Ioakeimoglou, 1994, p.8).

Such an analysis will have to pose relevant questions and have a clear theoretical background and methodological documentation and soundness.

[85] Normalisation of manifestations and consequences of the crisis; subjectivity of the crisis; and political function of the discourse on the crisis.

To this end, I want to point out that the theoretical tools to foresee the crisis did exist but had been so marginalised that few knew of them (Walby, 2015). Now that critical insights have yet again been revived and sharpened, besides acknowledging their vitality, it is our duty to rework them in light of evidence and theory generated during the crisis, all the while building on their accumulated understanding of the history of capitalism (Wolff, 2012).

There is, without a doubt, a lot of work to be done. Apart from a naturally necessary clear theoretical framework, it is also crucial to conduct an explicit social, political and economic analysis in this framework and to devise a political strategy with a definite orientation and unmistakable purposes (Wolff, 2016; Grollios and Gounari, 2016; Pavlidis, 2017). Such an analysis would certainly have to include collective social subjects and how they use language and accompanying discourses in co-constructing their 'common sense' beliefs. I should of course point out that I do not mean the immersion to perpetual linguistic or lexical debates. Quite the contrary, the efforts to define ‘capitalism’ or ‘crisis’ are in no way different from the efforts to define concepts such as ‘freedom’ and ‘democracy’ that were “real material enactments of hard-earned victories” (Chun, 2017, p. 141).

The scientific comprehension of the capitalist society is of course an important factor in subverting it, but also insufficient, since the creation of objective terms is also required. And it is in this direction that I consider necessary the examination and profound understanding of how people engage with the public Discourses of capitalism and how these operate in the co-construction of capitalist ‘realities’. Because by doing so, we can also map the ways in which we can build the necessary counter-hegemonic discourses that can mobilise a critically grounded ‘good sense’ of people in their questioning, challenging and ultimately smashing capitalism (Chun, 2017). And what better source to draw on in this venture than Marxism, which represents capitalism’s most persistent, most developed and most profound criticism (Marxist Papers, 2016; Chun, 2017; Wolff, 2016).

3.14. Greek crisis: Whose fault?

Given the amount of time that has already passed since the outbreak of the crisis, it is possible to make a more comprehensive analysis of the situation in Greece, reaching beyond the images of destitution[86], to the underlying causes.

After eight years of implementing policies of internal devaluation and controlled bankruptcy, the Greek economy is stagnant and facing the abyss of depression and the invisible threat of unemployment. Meanwhile, the human cost of the crisis cannot easily be estimated, as the consequences, especially on the more vulnerable population groups[87], cannot be accurately assessed yet. At the same time, a new scenery for working relations is formed, dominated by the infringement of acquired rights and labour law, the deconstruction of collective agreements, the transformation of full-time employment into flexible or undocumented labour, the liberation of mass dismissals and the loss of any job-related benefits (Gounari and Grollios, 2013; INE-GSEE, 2012, p. 334; 2014, p 33).

3.14.1 The dominant narrative

In general, the main interpretation of dominant circles presents the Greek economic crisis as an exclusively local phenomenon. Greece is portrayed as a profligate country with an oversized deficient public sector, with corrupt governments which, for clientelist reasons, submitted to the extravagant demands of Greek citizens and trade unions.

In this context, when in 2010[88] Greece was forced to resort to the IMF, it was presented in the dominant narrative as a 'disobedient' country in the European South. Simultaneously, an image of 'unruly', irresponsible', 'disorganised', 'greedy' and

[86] Under no circumstances should the reader consider that the consequences of the crisis daily experienced by Greek citizens are of lesser value compared to its causes.
[87] I namely state financial exhaustion, conditions of extreme destitution, deepened inequalities, national depression, increased social discriminations, child poverty, long-term unemployment, homelessness.
[88] The announcement of the decision to resort to the European Union (EU), the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was made on 23 April 2010 from the Greek border island of Kastelorizo, where the then Greek Prime Minister Georgios Papandreou was visiting. Citing the data on the real 2009 deficit (13.6% of the GDP), he declared: "It is It is a national and imperative need to officially ask our partners in the EU for the activation of the support mechanism we jointly created."

'indolent' citizens who repeatedly broke the law was promoted. They were allegedly citizens who, having lied in order to adopt the common currency (euro), were spending their time drinking by the sea without a care in the world (Ovenden, 2015).

3.14.2 Deconstructing the capitalist narrative

It is my firm belief that this process of assigning responsibility and blame was primarily intended to play a binary role: on the one hand, to use the fiscal and civil disobedience as an excuse for the involuntary subordination of the country to IMF supervision, and on the other hand, to provide an explanatory framework for the crisis which demonised the people of a whole country[89] (Gounari, 2014; Ovenden, 2015).

Contrary to the claims of dominant circles, my thesis is that the Greek crisis is not primarily a debt or double deficit[90] crisis, nor a crisis due to corruption, bribery and appropriation of public funds[91]. The starting point in order to comprehend the crisis is my firm belief that there is a need for a clear theoretical framework, entirely distinct from bourgeois economic ones, which will acknowledge the depth, the extent and the nature of the ongoing crisis and will contribute in the direction of its revolutionary management. In this light and drawing on the research by Sakellaropoulos (2014), I believe that, in Greece, the stakes have become too high because of the opportunity to take advantage of the crisis for implementing extreme neoliberal measures and effecting profound and radical changes in Greek society.

Consequently, the root causes of the crisis will be presented and explained in Marxist terms in order for me to show that, despite significant Greek particularities, the national crisis must be examined in the context of the international economic crisis. It needs to be

[89] Along with it, with similar analyses, a number of other countries of the EU periphery are implicated as responsible for global instability and the crisis in the Eurozone, which are in fact collectively ridiculed as PIGS. In other words, the 'unruly', 'profligate' children of the European South.
[90] Public deficit and external debt.
[91] As a result, the real problem of the Greek capitalist crisis cannot be summed up neither in the oversized public sector generating deficit in terms of civil servant wages (c.f. OECD, 2011, p. 103) nor in extravagant spending of a 'profligate' state in terms of public and mostly social welfare expenditure (when indeed, regarding these two dimensions, the Greek state is smaller than the one of EU-15) (Maniatis, 2013b; Sakellaropoulos, 2014, pp. 36-37; Eurostat Government Finance Statistics).

connected with the state of global capitalist economy, which has triggered both the internal contradictions of Greek capitalism and the pressure by the global and European crisis internalised by the Greek social formation (Sakellaropoulos, 2014, p. 34).

An elemental position in my research, therefore, is that, in current circumstances, it is more vital than ever to employ a critical and radical perspective of the crisis. One that will bypass the politics of the mainstream media and bourgeois ideologisms and will place central focus on the exploitation of labourers. At the same time, it must openly take a stance against forms of dominant public discourse and be based on a holistic approach of the crisis as a social phenomenon defining the lives of citizens, labourers, teachers, pupils, students and their families (Grollios, 2013). This of course does not mean that iterations of crisis and resistance do not abound in Greece, but unfortunately much is lost in translation and this is a gap that must be filled.

The Greek economic crisis will be approached not as a Greek particularity, but as a deep, structural crisis of the capitalist system itself. Drawing on radical and Marxist political economy (Vatikiotis et al., 2010; Maniatis, 2010; 2011; 2013a; 2013b; Milios, 2011; 2014; Marxist Research Group, 2013; Sakellaropoulos, 2014), it is my firm conviction that today's crisis is essentially an attempt by capitalism to conceal its inherent structural weakness: the inability to adequately profitably invest the available and, mostly, the surplus capital in global capitalist economy[92] (Maniatis, 2013b). Hence, in an attempt to associate the Greek, as well as the European, crisis with the

[92] I should remind at this point that based on the principle of value, production in capitalism is based on the exploitation of labour force (the ability of man to work, the total of forces possessed by humans which can be applied in the process of production) and the extraction of surplus value from it, i.e. a value additional to the one required for its reproduction. Consequently, the exploitative relation between capital and labour determines the process of circulating capital. A basic problem of the capital is that the modernisation the means of production increases the productivity of labour on the one hand, while reducing the value of labour force on the other. But labour force is the one that produces surplus value in relation to the fixed capital (i.e. facilities, raw materials, fuels, machinery). This contradiction is the cause of the falling tendency of the average rate of profit. Thus, "the rate of profit does not fall because labour becomes less productive, but because it becomes more productive" (Marx, [1894] 1978, p. 303). Phenomena of overaccumulation are one of the consequences of the falling rate of profit, responsible for which is also the reduced demand of wage-earners either due to their conversion into unemployed labourers or due to the reduction of their salaries to compensate for the decline (Rousis, 2012; Grollios, Liampas and Pavlidis, 2015, pp. ii-iii).

deep, global, structural crisis of the capitalist system in 2007-2008, I can now interpret it as an opportunity to set up a sort of neoliberal laboratory. A place where a different model of accumulation based on low wages, violent transformation of working relations, purging non-competitive capitals, but also new modes of governmentality is being tested before being applied in other western countries at a later time (Gounari, 2012; Sakellaropoulos, 2014).

3.15. Summary

After having stressed the need for critically approaching notions such as capitalism and crisis that have been employed with different meanings and usages I will proceed to the next Chapter in order to clarify my working definitions of crucial notions such as "teaching", "schooling" and "education".

CHAPTER 4: Literature Review Part I: Dealing with Concepts

4.1. Introduction

In chapter 4, I will attempt to clarify key notions related to education, such as 'schooling', 'education' and 'teaching', and I will present different conceptions of teaching. I will proceed to explain the paradox entailed in the teaching profession and the shift in society's perception of teachers. Finally, after a brief overview of the legacy of Critical Pedagogy, I will discuss its role in the current state of affairs.

4.2. Defining 'schooling', 'education' and 'teaching'

In total agreement with Valentin Nikolaevich Voloshinov ([1929] 1996, p. 71) who observed that forgetting that the "divorce of language from its ideological impletion" is a serious mistake, it seems appropriate at this point to critically question some notions, which, although interwoven and inseparable from any educational research, tend to be taken for granted. However, before going on with a brief analysis of the terms 'education' and 'teaching', I consider appropriate to turn to the application of the term 'schooling', a category that has often been treated with unquestioned acceptance in educational literature.

As Kevin Harris argues, although an operational definition for the term schooling would be "what goes on in schools" (Harris, 1982, p.7), there is a tendency in our day-to-day, common language to use the terms 'schooling' and 'education' interchangeably, as if they are equivalent. This tendency even goes so far as to consider the "school/education nexus" as something normal and usual that gains more and more credibility while being used in academic statements and definitions. But this conjuncture is not as 'innocent' as it may appear at first glance. When these terms are used interchangeably, an antagonistic and incompatible relationship may be cultivated between the institution of schooling and the notion of education, and the Pandora 's Box of "which particular sense of education is being conflated with schooling" is opened up (Harris, 1982, pp. 7-11).

Having articulated the meaning that I ascribe to the term ‘schooling’, any further discussion from this point onwards, lacks substance until I properly and conceptually clarify the application of the term ‘education’.

4.3. Towards a genealogy of the concept of education

Living in a society that has, as early as the last decades of the previous century, made science and intellectual ability its most crucial productive force, it is to be expected that for this society to evolve, it needs to constantly ascertain the systematic cultivation of all the cognitive and cultural powers of modern day humanity.

In such a society, therefore, education acquires a globally strategic place as much for material production, as for almost all the domains permeating social life. One would think, given the cardinal role education is called to play, as well as the unprecedented proliferation of scientific knowledge and schooling, that there would be an educational system serving the need for citizens and workers with a versatile education, global knowledge and an extensive development of their mental skills (Pavlidis, 2013; Pavlidis, 2016).

On the contrary, modern schools, through practices incorporated in systematically promoted neoliberal governmental policies, continue to be confined to transmitting fragmentary knowledge and measurable skills. At the same time, the institution of education itself is shattered in dozens of independent and competitive institutes, which are increasingly funded through market processes, under circumstances created by the prolonged global economic crisis. These processes include, among others, parental choice, educational vouchers and various social and financial aids, companies, foundations, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) (Pavlidis, 2013; Pavlidis, 2016).

From all the above, it becomes apparent that the primary issue that arises is the conceptual clarification of the term ‘education’ itself. First and foremost, what kind of

education are we talking about, and also, where and in what way can it be acquired and developed? Following the classification of Pantelis Kyprianos (2009, pp. 18-20), in his book *Comparative History of Greek Education,* I will speak of formal, informal and non-formal education, focusing, however, on the first, which is in any case the object of this doctoral thesis.

By 'informal education' I mean any form of extracurricular and educational activity that we draw from so-called informal institutions. To be more specific, I am referring to those educational activities that take place at various times in our social life, such as our interactions at home, in public places, in the neighbourhood, at work, as well as at church, in political parties and professional unions (Kyprianos, 2009; Pavlidis, 2013).

By 'formal education' on the other hand, I mean the deliberate and systematic transmission of acquired knowledge and the cultivation of people's intellectual powers, based on the work of educators (Pavlidis, 2013) in institutionalised school structures, public and private which need to comply with three requirements: i) to be under the supervision of an authority, primarily the state, or other authorities appointed for that purpose, which will be responsible for defining a series of things, such as what should be taught, where, how much, how and by whom; ii) to be divided in stages, usually three, primary, secondary and higher education, with the state deciding which stages are compulsory, who can attend each stage and how they will transition from one stage to another; iii) finally, the studies and performance record in these institutionalised mechanisms should be certified with a recognised certificate, considered a formal criterion and qualification in order to practice a profession or to apply for a position in the public or private sector (Kyprianos, 2009, pp. 18-19).

Essentially, in Western societies at least, the history of education is characterised by the passage from informal to formal education, with the former being gradually replaced by the latter, without, however, completely disappearing. Its structure has naturally changed under the influence of the constantly evolving and expanding formal education, with their boundaries becoming less and less clear over the course. It is, in any case, well

known that the social significance of education was highlighted, as I will indicate further on, as a result of capitalist production relations; for a very long time, education was no more than a privilege of a small minority who, due to their social status, possessed the luxury of intellectual pursuits and activities (Kyprianos, 2009; Pavlidis, 2013).

Consequently, what I mean to say is that most forms of informal education take place among people who have been, at least for a while, in school. In contemporary societies in fact, those referred to as 'societies of knowledge' or 'societies of information', formal and informal education overlap more than ever. Without further analysis at this point, it is worth mentioning a great controversy that will become clear in various stages of this thesis. On the one hand, we have the unprecedented proliferation of formal knowledge and scholarly education as well as technological advancements and novel informative and educational institutions. On the other, there is a great decline of scholarly education and of the cultural experience in a commercialised 'culture industry' both of which imbue modern society with an "anti-education" dimension.

Finally, borrowing the terminology of Coombs and Ahmed (1974), and in order to distinguish it from both formal and informal education, by "non-formal" education, I am attempting to describe the new, supplementary institutions[93] which are set up either within the frame of formal education (though often competing with it) or outside of it (i.e. at the workplace), and include, among others, lifelong learning[94], distance learning, seminars, in-service training and continued training (Kyprianos, 2009, p. 20).

An understanding of 'education', given the fact that it constitutes a dynamic concept and process with a very wide connotation (Ravi, 2013, p.4), certainly requires a track-back in time analysis that will take the history of this term into consideration. At the same

[93] These institutions do not only differ from both formal and informal education, but their continuous thriving also involves, as pointed out by Anne Tuschling (2017, pp. 21-33), the danger of totally eliminating the boundaries between formal, informal and non-formal education and integrating all three, in equal terms, into the educational system.

[94] It is worth noting that the introduction of the neoliberal restructuring of all stages of education in EU countries has long been grounded in a "lifelong" planning which encompasses everything, overtly opening education up to the market. Besides, "lifelong" learning and mobility is the primary target in Europe 2020 Strategy, but also a fundamental principle for workers (Mavrogiorgos, 2017, pp. 67-68).

time, along with tracing the roots of the term, it is equally important to journey back in time to the origins of modern mass education. To adopt a historical perspective means to discover and understand the origins of contemporary educational institutions, the aims and purposes that have guided education, and to trace the development of teaching and learning methods (Ornstein, Levine and Gutek, 2011, p. 52).

However, at this point, it is imperative to note that this work is not and does not aspire to be a study in the history of education, defined as "the study of the origin and evolution of organised learning in the lives of individuals, groups, institutions and nations" (Ramsay, 2009, p. 283). It seems more appropriate, therefore, to describe what follows as a sketch of major points rather than an analysis of the history of education.

Throughout the centuries, the meaning of the term 'education' has changed and has been defined and explained differently by various thinkers, philosophers and educationalists, from diverse backgrounds and traditions, viewed through their own ideas, viewpoints and principles. Derived from different traditions in education philosophy, the definitions of the term are countless and, to be honest, it is very difficult to provide a single definition of education on which all educationalists would agree. Therefore, the "polysemy" (Kyprianos, 2009, p.15) of the term itself, and I will presently explain what I mean by that, 'facilitates' its relaxed use, often making room for misinterpretations and distortions.

It is true that the matter of defining the meaning and content of the term 'education' is neither localised, nor contemporary. It is, instead, found in several eras and countries. Its root must be sought in the interdependent factors that contribute to precisely what I formerly called the "polysemy" of the term 'education', which, according to Pantelis Kyprianos (2009, p. 15) can be summarised as follows: cultural and spiritual traditions of a country; social and technological developments; and, finally, different representations of education in each social group.

Thus, there are definitions that define only one aspect of education, whereas others emphasise various aspects and shed light on different features and aims of education. Although it is beyond the scope of this study to provide a detailed examination, one of my intentions is, however, to provide a brief overview.

While examining the application of the term 'education' over the years, I will use as a reference point for the analysis and classification of the various interpretations of the term, the distinction between the "wide" and "narrow" meaning of education, firstly introduced by John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) in 1867. According to Mill, the wide meaning of education referred to "whatever helps to make the individual what he is, or hinders him from being what he is not", while the narrow one referred to "the culture which each generation purposefully gives to those who are to be its successors, in order to qualify them for at least keeping up, and if possible, for raising the level of improvement which has been attained" (Cavenagh, 1931, p. 133).

In the same spirit, at the beginning of the 20th century, Thomas Raymont (1864-1953) drew much the same distinction with Mill when he asserted that the narrower sense of education "does not include self-culture and the general influences of one's surroundings" but only the influences that the adult part of the community "consciously and designedly" bear upon the young going through the family, the church or the state. At the same time, regarding his interpretation of the wider meaning of education, he declared that it is really life that educates (Raymont, 1906, p. 4).

Although in the following years and especially during the last two centuries, the plethora of the interpretations and variations, as far as the definition of the term goes, were embedded in the narrow meaning of education this was not always the case. There was a time when the application of the term was not so definite and explicit but on the contrary, it was used in a broader way to refer to "any process or occurrence which influenced a person's development" (Harris, 1982, p. 5). John Dewey (1916) supported that elements of education are inherent to any communication and interaction, but to the definition of education itself he gave a moral character. Thirty years or so later, the

meaning of education has been summed up by Rubert Lodge (1866-1961) in the following words: “Whatever broadens our horizon, deepens our insight, refines our reactions, and stimulates thought and feeling educates us” (Lodge, 1947, p. 23).

Now it can hardly be denied that, regardless of the definition used for ‘education’, there are two different meanings of the time in common usage today. The first sense points to socialisation, transmission of culture and development of skills, while the other one points well beyond socialisation, to the full personal, intellectual and cognitive development (Harris, 1982, p. 6). In this framework, it can be argued that education was and continues to be treated by the historians as a “complicated, mediating, moral and political human invention” (Ramsay, 2009, p. 284). To begin with, education is complicated as throughout the years it has taken several forms and has served various aims and functions before arriving at the contemporary set of conditions, structures and in different contexts.

At the same time, confined to schools, the main agents of socialisation, education serves as a mediating process, as one of its main functions is to convey norms, values and beliefs, fundamental to the functioning and the stability of society and to the establishment of the citizens ‘happiness’. However, we should recognise at this point that all these values and beliefs are based mainly on assumptions, and consequently objections can be raised regarding the historical motives of such assertions (Castoriadis, 1996, p. 226).

The third point to stress is that education is a moral enterprise in that it is saturated with judgements guided by a commitment to what is morally right and fundamentally good, as well as by a desire from elders to contribute to the consciousness of the younger generations and to the transmission of public knowledge, public values and public culture, necessary for the participation in society.
In concluding this section, I can briefly look at how education is a political process. One of the main points underlined by Freire’s (1921-1997) theory of knowledge is that

education, far from neutral, is a political activity. History, economics, literature and science are all forms of knowledge that always have and always will embody political, ideological and ethical commitments (Matthews, 1980, p. 188).

The same goes for the course content, the whole organisation of the classroom experiences, the way of teaching, the educational administration and the relationships of the school community. An immediate consequence of the former argument, which lies at the crux of the Freirean problematic, is what Richard Shaull explicitly noted, in the foreword of the 30th anniversary edition of the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

> Education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes the 'practice of freedom', the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world.
>
> (Shaull, 2005, p.35)

The fact that the whole process of producing, transmitting and justifying public knowledge, that takes place in schools, is broadly politically biased, was a widespread view as early as the 19th century, when the free, compulsory, universal elementary education emerged (Matthews, 1980, pp. 186-187). As Kevin Harris argues, schooling as we know it, "did not arise out of a vacuum" (1982, p. 80), but on the contrary its emergence was largely a result of the industrial revolution and of the changes that this revolution generated in both the mode and the site of production.

The new needs that have arisen because of the transition from manual production methods to machines and from home to factory, defined as the "collectivisation and socialisation" (1982, p. 79) of the work process, could no more be met by the family unit. As a result, the family unit, which used to be up to that point the site of production and therefore also the site of reproduction of specific labour power, was now expelled from the production force. Within this historical development of capitalism, the family unit was, for the first time, confronted with its inadequacy to reproduce the required bearers of labour power.

According to the new needs, the latter should have knowledge and skills but also "the norms, values, habits and attitudes" (Harris, 1982, p. 81) that would ensure both their willingness to enter into the new social relations of production and the property and stability of the new order. The production of the labour power became a State function, and free, compulsory, universal schooling became the key institution charged with passing on skills, knowledge, values and norms, instrumental in perpetuating the new mode of production (Matthews, 1980, pp. 185-188; Harris, 1982, pp. 79-90).

Having discussed the concept of 'education', it is now a good time to move further and look a little closer at the term 'teaching', since all educational efforts, either overtly or covertly, are always underpinned by particular conceptions of 'teaching'. In this respect, it can be argued that, using the categorisation proposed by Bascia and Hargreaves (2000, p.4), four conceptions of teaching can be identified as emerging from the literature review, when teaching is compared over time and across different countries (c.f. Hamilton, 1989; Louis, 1990; Tyack, 1991; Darling-Hammond, 1992; Broadfoot et al., 1993; Hargreaves, 1994): technical, socio-emotional, intellectual and socio-political conceptions of teaching.

4.4. What do we mean by 'teaching'? Four conceptions of the term

4.4.1. Technical conception

The claim that a technical conception of teaching is currently prevalent across many countries of the world, with the UK, the United States, Australia, Canada and New Zealand being the main ones, is well documented in the general social science, policy and educational literature, despite the wide array of perspectives regarding its prevalence, severity and emergence.

In this regard, some scholars argue that this conception, which can also be related to what Codd (1997) named a technocratic-reductionist view of teaching, dates back to more than a century ago (Carlson, 1992; Larson, 1997), to the establishment of large

bureaucratic school systems in the West, while some others trace its origin to the 1980s (Levin, 1998) and 1990s (Hargreaves, 1995; Lawn, 1996; Gouvias, 2007) to the neoliberal times of a globalised economy.

This approach to teaching views teachers as "technicians" (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000, p.5), as subjects, rather than agents of educational change, whose main function seems to be the implementation of centrally decided policy reform measures, while at the same time their job is restricted to work performed in classrooms. The wider aspects of teaching, such as the collaboration with colleagues, the meetings with parents and the curriculum development process are totally neglected, along with the complex, human "lifeworld of schooling" (Servogianni, 2000), while at the same time emphasis is given on the technical aspects of teaching and learning and the raising of students' standards.

Proponents of this technical perspective, espousing what Locke et al. (2005) call the managerial conceptualisation of teachers' professionalism, advocate the need for managerialistic structures to be put in place (Sachs, 2003) to ensure the execution of prescribed educational changes and the compliance of a frequently resistant teaching force that is presumed to be lazy, unknowledgeable and unfocused, despite its capacity to teach in different and innovative ways (Earl and LeMahieu, 1997).

Within the above context, government policies, reform strategies and change practices predicated on a technical model of teaching, by approaching teaching in a "one-dimensional way, as a set of skills, behaviours and beliefs" (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000, p. 4) that can be changed, tend to focus on curing 'ills', through following nostrums for practical problems (Matthews, 1980, pp. 8-9), on securing behavioural compliance (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998) and on promoting particular, narrow, content-driven and standard-based changes restricted to serving the short-term and superficial learning of basic skills in "pre-approved" by the system ways (Bailey, 2000, p. 123).

It can thus be argued that even when the proposed changes set out new practices of high scientific merit, the mandatory or compulsory nature that guides the strategy implementation, by marginalising teachers and creating feelings of powerlessness (Ball, 1987; Kemper, 1993), lessens their effectiveness and renders them doomed to failure from the start (Galton, 2000; Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000).

4.4.2. Intellectual conception

Ideas and arguments such as those quoted above, held by proponents of the technical approach, along with their stated or unstated underlying assumption that it is "educationally and morally irresponsible" (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000, p. 5) to let teachers self-invent their own practices, methods and techniques (c.f. Reynolds, 2000), stand in sharp contrast with the second conception of teaching, to which I will now turn, namely, the intellectual one.

Central to this view of teaching is the acknowledgment that teachers' work extends far beyond the classroom (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000) and thus, their contributions to curriculum development are perceived to be of great importance. In strong opposition to the technical model of instruction, this approach to teaching reasserts the professional and moral judgements inherent in teaching (Sprague, 1992) and challenges the view of teachers as passive and obedient civil servants who dutifully carry out the dictates of others.

In this sense, it can be argued that teaching, rather than being viewed as a matter of delivering a detachable and reproducible bundle of 'knowledge' from one place to another, is in fact considered a complex process which draws on "deep resources of knowledge, expertise, reflection, research and continuous learning" (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000, p. 7) and a transformative act in the sense that it produces some sort of qualitative change in a learner (Jackson, 1986). At the same time, arguments organised around this approach to teaching emphasise that teachers do not merely deliver the curriculum, but they also define and reinterpret it, and thus, it can be

ultimately assumed that it is what teachers believe and do at the classroom level that shapes the kind of learning that the future generation gets (Hargreaves, 1994).

In this view, teachers have the potential to function as a group of intellectuals (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1991; Giroux, 1988) under certain circumstances, but for this to be feasible, certain professional prerequisites must be fulfilled, with the following ones being highlighted as factors of great importance in the literature: to save time from day-to-day classroom duties and responsibilities for collegial relations and genuine collaborative work, as well as for reflection, planning, sharing and engagement in discourse and inquiry (c.f. Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1992; Hargreaves, 1994; Fullan, 2007); to allocate adequate funds for high-quality and effective professional development provision, tailored to teacher needs and research-based, so that it will generate and contribute new knowledge, ideas and expertise to the profession and will directly impact on teachers' practice (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000); and finally, to offer administrative support, access to peers who are willing to challenge each other's beliefs, values, assumptions, existing knowledge and practices (Little, 1993, 2003; King, 2004; Randi and Zeichner, 2004) as well as to have leaders open to new ideas and opposing opinions who foster reflection and work towards improvement alongside teachers (Little, 1984).

4.4.3. Socio-emotional conception

Continuing in the same spirit, the following discussion is preoccupied with the socio-emotional conception of teaching which points to a view that, although, as Zembylas stresses, it is by no means a new terrain for educators (2003), it is just recently that this perspective has become especially apparent in literature.

Until recently, there has been little attention to the role of emotions within the field of School Change, as well as in teaching and teachers' professional lives, despite the burgeoning psychological research on emotions in the early 1980s (Lewis and Haviland, 1993). However, by the end of the 20th century and during the first decade of the 21st century, this neglect was remedied and there has been an increased and renewed interest

in the role of emotions in teaching among educators[95]. This endeavour is in accord with calls for more research on emotion in the workplace in general (Reio Jr and Callahan, 2004) as well as in various other disciplines, such as sociology (c.f. Barbalet, 1992; Kemper, 1993; Weyher, 2012), cultural (c.f. Lutz and Abu-Lughod, 1990) and feminist (c.f. Campbell, 1994; 1997) studies and philosophy (c.f. Stocker, 1996).

It can be argued on such grounds that, since the special issue on emotions in teaching of the *Cambridge Journal of Education* in 1996 (Nias, 1996), a publication considered by many scholars as one of the first decisive attempts to shift academic interest in that direction (c.f. Veen and Lasky, 2005; Kelchtermans, 2005), there has been a growing body of international empirical studies[96] that have tried to shed light on the interrelationships among teaching identity, emotion and change, as well as on the emotional politics of teacher development and teaching, especially in the context of educational reforms (c.f. Little,1996; Hargreaves, 2000; 2001). From this perspective, in the last thirty years or so, different theoretical and methodological approaches have been adopted for theorising and examining emotions, varying from social-psychological approaches[97] and social-constructionist ones[98] to socio-cultural perspectives[99] and finally, post-structuralist ones[100].

[95] c.f. for an overview the works of Nias, 1989; 1993; 1996; Acker, 1992; 1999; Blackmore, 1996; Golby, 1996; Jeffrey and Woods, 1996; Kelchtermans, 1996; Little, 1996; Boler, 1997a; 1997b; 1997c; 1999; Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998; Hargreaves, 1997; 1998a; 1998b; 1999; 2000; Lasky, 2000; Schmidt, 2000; Zembylas, 2001; 2003; Sutton and Wheatley, 2003; Reio Jr, 2005; Kelchtermans, 2005; Isenbarger and Zembylas, 2006; Schutz and Zembylas, 2009; Tsouloupas et al., 2010.

[96] c.f. Nias, 1989; Woods and Jeffrey, 1996; Day and Kington, 2008 [UK]; Bullough et al., 1991; Reyna and Weiner, 2001; Schutz et al., 2006 [USA]; Pines, 2002 [Israel]; Lee and Yin, 2011 [China]; Zembylas et al., 2011 [Cyprus]; Fried, 2011 [Australia].

[97] Treating emotion as internalised personal dispositions and psychological phenomena and thus giving emphasis on the individual perspective (c.f. van Veen et al., 2005; Hong, 2010; Cross and Hong, 2012).

[98] Exploring emotions as embedded in and governed by social interactions, rather than treating them as being primarily determined by individual characteristics (c.f. Harré, 1986; Hargreaves' work).

[99] A perspective that examines emotions from an anthropological point of view, as socio-cultural products constructed through acculturation and understood in various ways in different cultural milieu and historical and institutional contexts (c.f. Osborn, 1996; Lasky, 2005).

[100] Emotions here seem to function as a discursive practice, since language and culture are assumed to play an important role in constituting their experience (c.f. Lutz, 1988) and are thus conceived as social and political experiences, historically situated and collaboratively constructed in particular social, cultural and political contexts, embedded in power relations and ideology (c.f. Campbell, 1994; Boler, 1999; 2005; 2007; 2010).

At this point, and before embarking upon a brief presentation of some common assumptions shared by the proponents of a socio-emotional conception of teaching, it is imperative to recognise that the way in which I have briefly presented the different theoretical approaches on emotions above, may indicate that the scholars associated with the various paradigms can be neatly located into one tradition, or that the different approaches fit squarely within a certain philosophical camp (Savin-Baden and Howell-Major, 2013, p. 32). For clarity's sake, therefore, I should stress that, in many instances, such neat divisions do not exist. The lines I have drawn to provide a concise overview of the different accounts, which is far from exhaustive, are often blurred and thus make it impossible to draw sharp distinctions.

In fact, in more than a few cases, there are many interconnections and interrelations between the various approaches, with scholars often border-crossing across traditions, not to mention the occasional lack of clarity in presenting the framework and its components within which a study is situated. With this caveat in mind, it can be argued that, despite the variety of research perspectives, there is at the core of the socio-emotional conception of teaching a commonly held belief among adherents. According to this perspective, teaching, apart from being a technical enterprise and beyond including "cognitive standards, content knowledge, intellectual mastery, deliberate judgement, rational planning, critical reflection and systematic problem-solving" (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000, p. 10), it also involves intensive personal interactions and therefore has an emotional dimension and is necessarily affective (Nias, 1996; Osborn, 1996).

In fact, it can be pointed out that this view of teaching emphasises the emotional factors that enter the process of learning and teaching (Salzberger-Wittenberg et al., 1983) and assumes that there is a complex relationship between teaching and caring (Isenbarger and Zembylas, 2006), since teachers, far from being just engaged in mental labour, they are also perceived as "service workers engaged in nurturing" (Cobble, 1999, p. 23). The latter assumption is elaborated in literature from different perspectives, with most

scholars focusing on the association between caring and good teaching (c.f. Collinson et al., 1998; Goldstein, 2002).

At the same time, the term most commonly used to refer to teachers' actions, such as listening to students' problems and worries, giving advice and guidance, showing warmth and love, is that of "emotional work" (England and Farkas, 1986), a term that according to Isenbarger and Zembylas (2006) implies the development of what Denzin calls "emotional understanding", meaning "the intersubjective process requiring that one person enter into the field of experience of another and experience for herself the same or similar experiences experienced by another" (1984, p. 37).

Differing from this, a term less commonly used in most literature, influenced by a Marxist perspective and sometimes mistakenly used by authors interchangeably with "emotional work", is that of "emotional labour" (Hochschild, 1983). As argued by Isenbarger and Zembylas (2006), this term is different as it implies that, when performed, besides involving the teacher's engagement in a caring relationship, it also entails the rule-based adaptation of teachers' emotions, according to which emotions are perceived as appropriate or inappropriate in particular contexts.

The aforementioned line of research has mainly analysed and emphasised the negative aspects and effects of emotional labour (Goldstein, 1999; Fineman, 2000) and has some congruence with studies pointing to the widespread in literature attribute of teachers' work, stress and burnout (Jeffrey and Woods, 1996; Nias, 1996; Troman and Woods, 2000) as well as studies that have attempted to identify sources of teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Kyriakou and Sutcliffe, 1979; Mykletun, 1984; Kyriakou, 1987; Farber, 1991; Friedman and Farber, 1992). The same goes for studies that have related various trends, such as imposed and centralised system accountability, lack of professional autonomy, relentlessly imposed changes, constant media criticism, reduced resources and moderate pay to low teacher satisfaction (Dinham and Scott, 1998; 2000; Vandenberghe and Huberman, 1999; van den Berg, 2002).

In concluding this section, it seems appropriate to add that recent studies have come to question the notion that emotional labour can only have a negative function and argue for a dual function, with its positive aspect being associated with the most rewarding parts of teaching, such as the potential for helping children to improve their lives (c.f. Isenbarger and Zembylas, 2006).

4.4.4. Socio-political conception

Bringing the section on the different conceptions of teaching to an end, I will now turn to the fourth and last conception of teaching, the socio-political one.

Of all the approaches to teaching reviewed, this is the most radical in that it conceptually inverts the commonly held belief, even by conservative educators themselves, that there is no place in the classroom for worldly socio-political issues and concerns, equating in that sense any suggestion of politics with indoctrination (Giroux, 2010) and perceiving it as a distraction from learning and thus, antithetical to 'good' teaching (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000).

Within such a view, neither education nor teachers are neutral and impartial but, on the contrary, classrooms, schools and the wider educational settings are perceived as inescapably political contexts, setting the stage for a model of teaching that encourages the participation of teachers in school-based decision making, along with their involvement in community and union activities. Hence, it can be argued that this conception of teaching presents an alternative image of classroom teachers, advocating a role for them as social and political activists (Sprague, 1992; McLaren and Farahmandpur, 2001). At the same time, schools are reclaimed as spaces that are not simply concerned and associated with the transmission of received knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and credentials necessary in creating students geared towards "voluntary submission to the existing social relations under capitalism and to the capitalist relations of production" (Harris, 1982, p. 115).

At the core of this approach to teaching, which is strongly embedded in the context of teacher empowerment, lies the call for a major transformation of the role of teachers. This extension goes beyond the recommendations for more collaboration among teachers, or for acts of resistance through coordinated action, all the way to embracing an emancipatory vision and the recognising the distinctive and influential role in society held by teachers (Sprague, 1992).

Within such a view, it is with the development of awareness of the political power of their role and the reclaiming of their profession that teachers can begin to function as "transformative intellectuals" (Giroux, 1988), as acting subjects and vital agents of democracy and public life, who are on the one hand reflective, so as to respond classroom complexities, and on the other hand involved in the changes and ready to question the reductionist understandings of their professionalism and to take a responsible role in shaping the aims, processes and conditions of schooling (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999; Achinstein and Ogawa, 2006).

In this sense, classroom teachers, with their clear grasp of both the limits and the potential of teaching in practice, as well as the everyday school 'realities', rather than allowing their work to be co-opted by whatever political forces are in power, they must act as agents and challengers: contributing to educational decision making; exercising professional judgement and taking initiatives about what and how to teach; and finally, influencing the way their work is both shaped and perceived (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000, p. 20) by various stakeholders.

With this background established, it can be argued at this point that the notion of transformative intellectual draws on insights from Gramsci's work (1971) and can be linked to his ideas on the role of intellectuals, identified as those who possess critical awareness of the transformative power of ideas and of the socially constructed nature of knowledge, as well as to the importance he placed on the transformational possibilities of education. Regarding the latter statement, however, it is of great importance that we recognise what is entailed in Gramsci's belief in the transformational possibilities of

education, since the interpretations of his work are many, as are the attempts to adopt his work and assimilate his educational thought into liberal/social democratic and neoliberal paradigms.

On grounds such as these, it can be claimed that Gramsci's belief is not associated with the naïve optimism and disillusionment concerning the centrality of the school for the transformation of society. Though for Gramsci, the possibility of social change is largely dependent on the education of the working class, in the sense that he believed that one of its main functions was the creation of working class "organic intellectuals" who would develop a critical consciousness among the masses, the role of consciousness is not exaggerated. On the contrary, Gramsci's writings stress the unity of theory and praxis and the strong relationship of education with politics. That is why he asserts that the struggle for changes in schools must be concurrent with struggles in society. For Gramsci, the capitalist state cannot be reformed. It must, therefore, be overthrown through revolution (Sarup, 1984, pp. 129-144).

In the same vein, it can be suggested that the socio-political approach to teaching has some congruence with Freire's conception of education. In this context, central to Freire's discourse, best developed in his most influential work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968), is the acknowledgement that teaching is eminently a political and moral practice that aspires to provide students with a new route to obtaining the optimum conditions "for self-reflection, a self-managed life and particular notions of critical agency" (Giroux, 2010).

In this sense, any point of view that considers teaching as being part of a project for "democracy and critical citizenship" (Giroux, 2007, p. 2) simultaneously recognises as an indispensable task of education the need to promote all the above qualities. It's a twofold path, as, on the one hand, these qualities do not grow like a plant and on the other hand, as Cornelius Castoriadis argues (1996, pp. 221-241), it is impossible to have a democratic society without a "democratic paideia". For in the main, the type of education that a society and its institutions promote is inseparable from the alleged

democracy, an argument that, if followed, may lead to the proposition that any form of dogmatic and authoritarian education would promote nothing else than a democracy that has turned into "the political equivalent of a religious ritual" (Castoriadis, 1996, pp. 221-241).

From this perspective, democratic citizenship and the kind of democracy conceived as "the regime in which the public sphere becomes truly and effectively public – belongs to everyone and is effectively open to the participation of all" (Castoriadis, 1996, pp. 221-241) can only be achieved if one of the main objectives of society and of its institutions is to educate social individuals in a critical manner. Such conceptualisations of teaching, therefore, tend to stress the need for social individuals, already moulded through the social-historical process and within the existing framework of the wider society, to change and turn into 'autonomous' social individuals that correspond to democracy and are capable of making it function and reproducing it; that is, citizens "capable of governing and being governed" (Aristotle, 1984, 1252a16) who have been granted all the conditions for an equal participation and intervention in the social life.

Given all the above, I can bring this section to a close arguing that, for Freire, pedagogy and literacy were never simply confined to teaching methods, practices and techniques instrumental in preparing students "for the world of subordinated labour or careers" (Aronowitz, 2009, p. ix). On the contrary, at the core of this conception of teaching is the realisation that pedagogy is a performative practice, which provides the suitable environment for the development of a language of scepticism and possibility, alongside a space where fundamental questions about democracy can be raised (Giroux, 2007, pp. 1-5).

Throughout his work, Paulo Freire called for the learner's "critical reflection" on the social, economic, political and cultural forces that penetrate education and the learning processes (Aronowitz, 1998, p. 12) and for a "critical thinking" (Giroux, 2011) that is much more than the simple understanding of the present and the reproduction of the past.

Thus, for Freire, critical thinking was perceived as a tool for "civic engagement", the cornerstone of "unconditional freedom" to question, to make vital judgements, to engage and participate, to exercise choices and to shape decisions that affect everyday life, institutional reforms and governmental policies (Giroux, 2007, pp. 1-5; 2011). This is a conceptualisation that seems to be in line with Adorno's understanding of the notion of critical thinking, best exemplified in his following argument: "thinking is not the spiritual reproduction of that which exists […] open thinking points beyond itself. For its part, such thinking takes a position as a figuration of praxis which is closely related to a praxis truly involved in change" (Adorno, 1969, p. 202).

In this line of reasoning, politics, rather than being treated as a distraction from learning, is perceived as a vital part of its improvement (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000) pointing to practices that go far beyond the creation of classrooms of kinder and gentler human relations and involve teachers ready to address the social context of their work (Sprague, 1992). Having articulated the notions of 'schooling' and 'education' and described the different conceptions of teaching, what remains to be examined is the specific case of teachers.

4.5. The paradoxical profession: being a school teacher in the 21st century

4.5.1. What does a teacher's job entail?

That teaching has always been a paradoxical profession can hardly be denied. What should be stressed however, is that this paradox has, if anything, intensified nowadays to such an extent that Hargreaves (2003, p. 2) argues about "a crisis of disturbing proportions".

On the one hand, teachers are hailed as the leading "catalysts of change", the ones who will build learning communities and will prepare the next generations for what Castells (1996) calls the "informational society", the creators of the knowledge, skills and capacities on which the economic prosperity of society will depend. As such, they are

expected to work better and harder, to collaborate effectively with colleagues, parents and communities and to commit themselves to their own lifelong learning, while remaining flexible and skilled enough to cope effectively with the radical social and educational changes (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000, p. 20; Hargreaves and Lo, 2000).

At the very same time, when their absolute best is expected of them, teachers find themselves in a profession with reduced opportunities, highly devalued and increasingly intensified, more complex, controlled, embattled and poorly paid. They are experiencing more anxiety, guilt, governmental and media assault, regulation of their work and pressure to comply with various innovations, all the while finding themselves more restricted and constrained by the bureaucratic and conservative organisational structure and conditions of their work, less supported, autonomous, flexible and creative and burdened with administrative form-filling that distracts them from teaching (Hargreaves, 1994; Helsby, 1998; Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000).

Furthermore, they are expected to meet these staggering demands in contexts of severe fiscal restraint and drain on public spending that place public expenditure and education at the "top of the public-service casualty list" (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 9; Saltman, 2007, pp. 1-21) and institutions of public life and human service organisations, like hospitals and public schools, in peril.

As if this were not enough, teachers are also expected to achieve contradictory goals simultaneously: 'celebrate', promote and advance the knowledge society and do their best to prepare children for their lives ahead while alleviating and counterbalancing many of the extensive problems that knowledge societies create, such as: redirection of resources to private citizens and corporations; advocacy of private choice; individual skilling and championing of self-interest at the expense of social good; individualism and exorbitant consumerism; thin and superficial teamwork instead of collegiality and collaborative culture that values loyalty and perseverance; and finally, broadening gaps between rich and poor that fuel hopelessness, exclusion and despair and create amazingly fertile breeding grounds for the development of anger, violence, repressive

regimes and ethnic and religious fundamentalism (Hargreaves and Lo, 2000; Hargreaves, 2003).

4.5.2. Teachers at the forefront: What does this essentially mean in practice?

After decades of educational research and reforms that focused on school effectiveness, on the production of educational materials, on the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Education and on curriculum and teaching methods as the key elements of educational change, the human factor that has been largely ignored in terms of personal agency and professionalism, has now returned to the forefront of the scene in global educational policies (Bonal, 2012, pp. iv-v).

The significant role that teachers play in education quality, clearly stressed in the latest UNESCO Global Monitoring Report (Education For All – EFA), depicts to some extent the global education reformer's rhetoric. Certain parallels can be drawn between UNESCO's statement that the quality of an education system cannot surpass the quality of its teachers (2013/4, p. 3) and the supporting argument by the advocates of the Global Managerial Education Reforms (GMER) that the performance of teachers is a decisive determinant of education quality (Verger and Altinyelken, 2013).

But despite the acknowledgement that the official rhetoric of education reformers around the globe coincides with the new focus of the international community on teachers, I cannot help but wonder why this new discursive centrality is not reflected in the actual education reforms. So, the teachers may have come back as protagonists at the centre of the education reform policies and the education debate, but, somewhat paradoxically, this is not in their best interest.

It should be stressed here that, despite the rhetoric about teachers being crucial agents in the learning process, very little of the education agenda has to do with the socio-economic context within which teachers operate or with the reality of schools. By contrast, contemporary teachers are supposed to assume more and more responsibilities at a time when their working conditions are much poorer than they used to be. The latter

is strongly related to the global reform tendency that is marked by "decoupling educational reform from funding" (Levin, 1998, p. 132). This "budget-cap, no-more-government-spending ideology" that was adopted in the 1980s, under the influence of Reagan and Thatcher (Klees, 2008, p. 336), was, as already mentioned above, the first action that signalled the move towards the neoliberal reforms of a cost-effective way and shifted responsibility for the omissions, failures and imperfections of the social services from lack of resources to poor management and to poor job accomplishment by public sector workers.

We can, therefore, come to the conclusion that, under the influence of neoliberal policies, there was a new canon of management of the function of the public sector which was established by applying the management[101] model of the business world (Ward, 2010); that is, by adopting what the University of London professor Norman Flynn called in 2002 'managerialism'[102]. The latter (newer than management that is

[101] This rise of managerialism, historically speaking, marked a transition from more federative and communal types of social structure to the centralised bureaucratic organisations that are dominant in many aspects of our modern way of life (c.f. Weber, 1947; Chandler, 1977; Berle and Means, [1933] 1991). The beginnings of management as a primary tool for putting human affairs in order can be traced back to the 19th century when capital ownership was separated from management and company ownership moved from individual to corporate. This development created a third group between workers and owners, a group that constituted "a special form of wage-labourer", for which "the work of supervision becomes their established and exclusive function" (Marx, [1876] 1976). This new cross-class social category was exceptionally interesting and controversial in terms of class analysis but an approach from this perspective was beyond the scope of this doctoral thesis. Regarding class analysis and the approach of a different cross-class social category, c.f. Chapter 6.

[102] I should note here that the concept of managerialism as a "regime of truth" – as it was aptly characterised by Louise Morley and Naz Rassool (2000, p. 170) –may be a modern-day phenomenon, however, its founding principles take us back in time. Even though many consider the concept of managerialism as a by-product of New Right ideas, the truth is that its founding principles owe much to Frederick Winslow Taylor's scientific school of management (1911). It is no coincidence that early examples of managerialism are often described as neo-Taylorist. Nevertheless, in the course of time and following developments in the field of management (i.e. change management, excellence and cultural approaches) the concept evolved (c.f. Peters and Waterman, 1982; Burnes, 1992; Handy, 1993) becoming today much more than the mere application of managerial practices in organisations. From this perspective, we could say that today managerialism represents a "powerful and pervasive force" (Shepherd, 2017, p. 5), an ideology which intends "both to influence opinion and to justify and legitimise a course of action" (Gerring, 1997; Kilkauer, 2015). In fact, managerialism is regarded as having "announced conditions for its own necessity" by announcing the mistakes in previous forms of public sector management when compared to the private sector (Clarke and Human, 1997). I should underline, however, that despite its prevalence, managerialism remains a concept that evades theoretical grasp (Kilkauer, 2015), with no single universally agreed-upon definition (Shepherd, 2017). The difficulty in defining it is related to the blurred boundaries it shares with the cogent concepts of New Public

perceived as an organisational stratum) was an ideology rather than the mere application of managerial practises in organisations, in recent decades at least. It was in fact an ideology which maintained that organisations can only function on condition that decisions are centrally made by 'objective' and professionally trained managers (Ward, 2011). As such, it worked as a normative system[103] regarding what can be considered "valuable knowledge", who possesses it and who is entitled to behave accordingly (Clarke, Gerwitz and McLaughlin, 2000).

Before I continue, what must be made clear as a matter of significant political importance is the difference between private sector and public sector managerialism. Unlike the private sector, where managerialism is driven by the market, in the public sector, managerialism is politically driven (Clarke and Newman, 1997). It is the means by which fundamental projects have been and continue to be implemented under the pretext that managerial practices employed in the private sector are by definition superior and should be transferred to the public sector in order to achieve improvements in the efficiency and performance of public services, including educational institutions (Dixon-Kouzmin and Korac Kakabadse, 1998).

This is why this importation of private sector practice and business in a public sector context is worth investigating. How did managerialism succeed in applying to and transforming public organisations and in having implications for public sector professions[104]? The answer lies in the application of techniques known as 'control

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Management (NPM) and neoliberalism. For further clarification of the term NPM, c.f. next subsection, while for neoliberalism, c.f. Chapter 1 of this doctoral thesis.

[103] In that sense, it can be compared to professionalism.

[104] At this point, I would like to point out that, even though I am using the term 'profession', in the case of educators specifically I believe I should briefly outline my position, though it is clear throughout this doctoral thesis. Without delving into the discussion of whether teaching is a profession or not (a discussion that is constant in the various disciplines of social sciences) suffice it to say that I consider the term 'de-professionalism' of teachers controversial. I agree with Cathleen Densmore (1987, p.134) that "professionalism [should be] seen not as an ideal type, nor as an actual or idealised description of work conditions, but as an ideology that influences people's practice" … [as far as teachers are concerned, this ideology] "legitimates and reinforces features of proletarianisation" (Densmore, 1987, p. 149). In that sense, professionalization is "a historically specific process which some occupations have undergone at a particular time, rather than a process which certain occupations may always be expected to undergo because of their essential qualities" (Johnson, 1972, p. 45).

technologies' in the form of "practical measures (i.e. target setting, performance management), new organisational structures of propaganda and persuasion" (Deem, Hillyard and Reed, 2007, p. 14).

This line of thinking will be further elaborated on in the following subsection, in which I will specifically discuss what is referred to as New Public Management (NPM): a two-fold mechanism, since, on the one hand, it is one of the most typical examples of a great political project which was applied by means of private sector managerialism[105], and on the other hand, its implementation is considered a defining moment for the application of managerialism in the public sector (Ward, 2010).

A phenomenon such as this, having taken place all over the world, would not stop in front of the gates of the public school. Thus, it is no coincidence that the main global discourse on education echoes that problems that were up to that moment considered political, could actually be solved with managerial approaches (Pollit, 1990), as it is seems possessed by a strong belief in the universal applicability of the same set of generic techniques and activities[106] (c.f. Ranson and Stewart, 1994; Kilkauer, 2015; Shepherd, 2017).

Paradoxically, even though in relevant literature the practice of transferring management models and strategies from the private economic sector to the educational sector has been proved to have difficulties in practical application, significant limitations and largely distorting consequences (indicatively c.f. Beckman and Cooper, 2004; Beckman, Cooper and Hill, 2009; Hill and Kumar, 2009), the strategies tried out remain the same[107].

[105] In any case, the use of managerialism in support of NPM has been described as a "covert form of privatisation" (Famham and Horton, 1996, p. 263).
[106] I am referring to that approach to managerialism that considers management a generic set of activities, found in every organisation where managers perform basically the same tasks regardless of what sector they are in. To put it differently, for the proponents of this approach, there is virtually no difference in skills required to run an oil rig or a university.
[107] Including, among others: high-stakes and standard-based testing, accountability measures, school inspections, performance-related pay for teachers, more administrative power and enhanced educational leadership for school principals.

What are the consequences on public sector workers, and specifically educators, however? Given the above line of thinking, the educational interventions and policies that are designed in the framework of the global managerial and accountability reforms fall under the paradox regarding the centrality of teachers: although the role of teachers is recognised as central, teachers are treated as "assets to be managed" (Verger and Altinyelken, 2013, p. 2), as employees and as "human resources required for the process of producing student learning outcomes" (Ginsburg, 2012, p. 84), rather than as agents of change and as reflective practitioners who participate, question and inquire in communities of practice, who actively seek out opportunities to grow professionally (Giroux, 1988; Aronowitz and Giroux, 1993; Darling-Hammond et al., 1999. p. 44) and who bring and legitimise the dominant culture values and practices (Skordoulis, 2009).

Thus, the current policy environment of education is characterised by the developing trend towards the debilitation and deskilling (Apple, 1995; McNeil, 2000) of teachers that involves not only a growing loss of power among teachers over the basic conditions of their job, since their labour rights are lost, their profession reshaped and their professional autonomy and status undermined (Forrester, 2000; Sahlberg, 2006), but also a changing perception of their role as reflective practitioners (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1993).

The control-oriented and managerial reforms, due to their disciplinary character, the intensification of the workload, which is accompanied by an emphasis on technical competence and performativity and their ideas of accountability (Apple, 2004), efficiency and effectiveness, not only change what teachers do, but also who teachers are or are supposed to be (Ball, 2003), as they signify the disappearance of a form of mental labour and a methodical proletarianisation of teacher work (Apple, 1986; Giroux, 1988; Popkewitz, 1991; Ozga, 1995; 2000; Forrester, 2000; Osgood, 2007).

4.5.3. Teachers as "knaves": A Shift to New Public Management

In the previous subsection, referring briefly to deskilling and intensifying the operation of teaching, I basically focused on the results brought by the managerialistic transformations in both education and teachers' work. What is perhaps more significant than analysing outcomes and results is the investigation and analysis of the causes, at least to those who are pursuing a fuller understanding and do not 'exclude from their armoury' the insights of labour process theory[108] (c.f. Reid, 2003).

Having already mentioned the term (NPM) I will proceed to briefly introduce its basic principles that have been widely used since the 1980s as the nostrum for the costly and allegedly inefficient public sector. How did it come to this and what do we mean by the term NPM? Without meaning to imply that there are not different variants of NPM or that the latter has not evolved through time (Ferlie, et. al., 1996; Shepherd, 2017), I will use as a working definition for this doctoral thesis the one provided by Pat Mahony and Ian Xextall:

> NPM is a top-down ideological technicist and managerialist driven version of Human Resource management, which is "fundamentally" grounded in the (disputed) notion that there exist a set of principles and procedures which can be applied to bring about effective, efficient, economic modes of operation [in the public sector, I would add]
>
> (Mahony and Xextall, 2000, p. 66 – emphasis in the original)

The 80s and 90s saw the rise of the ideas of NPM with neoliberalist governments being elected all over the world. The central underlying ideology was that global competition necessitated the changes it brought into public organisations[109], as well as cutbacks in public spending, and that the public was distrustful of bureaucracies and professions (Ward, 2011).

[108] For further analysis, c.f. further below, subsection 4.6.1.

[109] I will briefly mention some of the changes: shift to the private sector management policies; privatisation and quasi-privatisation measures; competitive and entrepreneurial environment; greater public accountability in the sense of providing 'customer' choice and satisfaction; a shift away from the traditional form of public administration; and differentiation and hierarchisation of public service labour (c.f. Hood, 1991; Ward, 2011).

Resembling the spread of managerialism throughout companies over the course of the last century, NPM deliberately emerged as the natural consequence of the push for economic efficiency proceeding to eliminate inefficiency, slackness, waste and complacency. This seriously problematic view denies, however, the essentially political nature of NPM and 'naturalises' changes and decisions on the pretext of wise, inexorable outcomes which were the product of 'rational' management. After all, who can question 'simply rational' economic calculations which reflect market 'realities' (c.f. Clarke, 2004; Ward, 2011)?

As a result, in the educational sector in particular, the main promoters of these policies (for an analysis, c.f. Parding, 2007) using evidence in a selective way and disregarding annoying pieces of research that shatter this myth, design policies under the assumption that teachers, more than all those operating in the public sector, are self-interested actors, just like the workers in the private sector. This has many implications for the teaching profession that will be briefly outlined as the discussion continues.

Although the latter assumption may appear as simple at first glance, it is noteworthy that this has not always been the case. According to Julian Le Grand, Professor in the London School of Economics and Political Science, it was in the late 1970s and with Margaret Thatcher at the wheel that the government's perception of its public servants changed. It was then that teachers stopped being considered as what Le Grand calls "knights" (1997; 2003), by which he meant "a spirited altruist", characterised by self-sacrifice and putting the needs of the public over their own. A decisive element of the functionalist educational reforms, which were strongly pushed by the New Right and Margaret Thatcher and which have resulted in the overwhelming erosion of the teachers' prestige and professionalism (Bonal, 2012, pp. Iv-v), was Thatcher's view of teachers as workers who are primarily motivated by self-interest, or, to put it in Le Grand's words, as "knaves", as "passive recipients of state largesse" (1997; 2003).

Under this assumption, the self-interested actors of the public sector, more particularly in our case, the teachers, could not be trusted to do what was best for their students

based on their sense of public duty, or even to know what was best, and therefore, a need arose for the provision of incentives and for the use of sticks and carrots mechanisms- where the stick is the penalties for failing to meet the targets and money the carrots. As a result, and despite the new discursive centrality of teachers, the vast majority of educational policies, which fall mainly under the global tendencies of managerial and accountability reforms[110], are designed under the assumption that teachers in the public sector are employees who should not be trusted to behave as professionals as they are lazy, unambitious and unproductive individuals who do not put enough effort and attention in their work.

Therefore, and in sharp contrast with research findings that associate limited teacher control with student behaviour challenges, conflicts among teachers, teacher turnover and lack of job satisfaction and motivation (Ingersoll, 2003), new methods of teacher evaluation and merit-based pay schemas are proposed, alongside with goal-setting policies and others that make recruitment more flexible (Verger and Altinyelken, 2013).

Ultimately, such policies promote individualistic values within the educational system and award competitiveness among teachers who are encouraged to strive for productivity and excellence, rather than for cooperation and solidarity, at a time when, as has already been supported, their professional autonomy is undermined, their opportunities to continuing professional development are decreasing, their positions are at risk of being lost and they are more than ever subjected to public blame.

4.6. Setting the scenery of critical scholarship

4.6.1. The legacy of critical scholarship

Although it is hardly within the main scope of this work to explore the past critical literature meticulously, one of my intentions is to provide a brief overview of some early

[110] These tendencies are clearly illustrated in the World Bank Group Education Strategy 2020 Report (World Bank, 2011) and in the book *Making Schools Work: New Evidence on Accountability Reforms,* published by the World Bank (Bruns et al., 2011).

influential works. Since the late 1960s and 1970s, radical scholars and Marxist theorists have provided a plethora of informative analyses and detailed critiques of educational systems in capitalist societies, largely contributing in this way to a broadly critical scholarship in the fields of sociology, political economy and philosophy of education.

Apart from the aforementioned works of American historians of education and of de-schoolers in Chapter 3, a work that stands out in the political economy of education is Bowles and Gintis' *Schooling in Capitalist America* (1976). Believing that there is a correspondence between the social relations of production and the social relations of education, the authors, relying on massive statistical data, argued that the educational system and schools act as agents that reproduce economic inequality and social stratification and distort personal development via a hidden curriculum (reproduction thesis).

Although Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis provided a powerful Marxist critique of formal education that has been a point of reference for radical and Marxist education theory since its publication, this work has also attracted important criticisms, their main points being the following: a deterministic view of a passive man; an overemphasis on form at the expense of content (curriculum); and a reductionist view of reproduction with an emphasis on the macro-level that neglects the contradictions within schooling and the interactions of teachers and pupils (Giroux, 1983; Cole, 1988).

Let me turn now to another major work that was published two years before Bowles and Gintis' book and had a dramatic impact on the area of labour process, an area that, with the exception of Gramsci's essay on Fordism (1971), had till then been largely neglected. Drawing on Marx, Harry Braverman, in his famous book *Labour and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (1974), provided an extremely informative analysis of capitalist social relations by positioning the issues of class and history at the centre of the analysis of work.

The main thesis of the author was that, within capitalist industrial labour processes, there is a tendency for labour to become fragmented and deskilled, dislocated from both the product and the process of capitalist production. By the early 1980s, several education scholars, inspired by the work of Braverman, began applying a labour process perspective to the emerging research field of state teachers' work, mainly focusing on his concept of proletarianisation, thus providing significant insights.[111]

However, in spite of the promising attempts back in the 1980s, this work has been severely criticised on the basis of its determinism, the omission of the subjective dimension of work and the lack of praxis, so that, today, forty years after its publication, it is considered outdated. This is why, according to Reid (2003), despite the application of some terms such as 'deskilling' and 'intensification', usually utilised with no real understanding of their theoretical origins, the use of an approach that explicitly employs labour process theory is virtually absent from the recent literature on teachers' work. However, since it is of great importance to me whether labour process theory has the potential to be an important tool in analysing teachers' work or not, Braverman's work will be taken up again in some detail as the discussion continues and the specific case of teachers' work is considered.

Having now briefly introduced the notable works of both Bowles and Gintis and Braverman, and before bringing the overview of early critical scholarship to an end, it is worth mentioning the influential contributions of: Paul Willis (1977) and his focus on the cultural level of schools. In order to understand 'how working class kids get working class jobs', Willis tried to integrate the methods of ethnography into the theory of reproduction and stressed the existence of strong anti-school or counter school subcultures among those who are "the objects of educational manipulation" (Aronowitz, 1981, p. xi), thus highlighting contradictions within schooling too often overlooked in radical analyses; Louis Althusser (1971) and his views on ideology and the school as an ideological state apparatus; Antonio Gramsci and his ideas on the role of teacher, the

[111] c.f. Harris, 1980; 1982; Ozga and Lawn, 1981; Apple, 1982; 1986; White, 1983; Connell, 1985; Lawn and Grace, 1987; Ozga, 1988; Seddon, 1991; Carlson, 1992.

purpose of the school and the meaning of hegemony; and finally, the work of many writers that have largely contributed to a broadly Marxist tradition in the philosophy of education.[112]

Before going any further, it should be made clear that in the course of this discussion and wherever it is necessary, further aspects of the aforementioned influential works will be outlined, along with contributions from other scholars.

4.6.2. The course of liberating and critical pedagogy in Greece

It is common knowledge that, in Greece, the pursuit of liberating and critical pedagogy has been limited. According to the data provided by Grollios and Gounari (2016, pp. 258-259), during the period 1974-1992, theoretical and applied liberating pedagogy in Greece was closely linked with PASOK, a party which, despite its left, popular and radical characteristics, transformed itself into a party managing the capitalist reconstruction after 1985.

Greek Marxist intellectuals of the time, who were integrated in the communist parties, strongly supported critical pedagogues and were greatly influenced by them as well. However, they never got involved with liberating nor critical pedagogy, mainly due to the fact, as Grollios and Gounari underline, that although liberating and critical pedagogy were greatly influenced by Marxism, they were never clearly Marxist. Therefore, Marxist intellectuals hesitated to adopt those approaches in fear that they would be accused of not being adequately focused on the work of Marxist classics, during a period when the Greek communist parties had strong debates on the issue of absolute compliance.

But neither did university professors systematically use liberating or critical pedagogy. Exceptions to the rule were Spiros Rasis and Panayiotis Noutsos. Spiros Rasis was the one to present basic principles of critical pedagogy in Greece. He was also the first to

[112] c.f. Harris, 1978; 1982; Norton and Ollman, 1978; Karabel and Halsey, 1977; Freire, 1968; Castles and Wüstenberg, 1979; Mepham and Ruben, 1979a; 1979b; Matthews, 1980.

translate in Greek the book *Ideology and Curriculum* by Michael Apple, a theorist representative of critical pedagogy. On the other hand, Panayiotis Noutsos was the one to propose the application of the research done by critical pedagogues in the understanding and categorisation of teachers as intellectuals in the context of Gramscian pedagogy[113].

4.6.2.1. A new era for critical pedagogy in Greece

However, the crisis the Left faced during the mid-80s created new conditions for liberating and critical pedagogy in Greece. The splits, first inside the KKE Interior and then inside the KKE, and the mass withdrawal of members who rejected their party moving in conservative directions by taking part in the Tzanetakis and Zolotas' governments of 1989-1990, released powers which were then joined by those PASOK members who also rejected the abandonment of the September 3 declaration and its transformation into a capitalist restructuring party.

In the field of education, in particular, those diverse and heterogeneous forces, along with others from the independent Left and members of organisations belonging to the extra-parliamentary Left, began in the late 1980s and early 1990s to systematically form various union groups known today as Interventions-Collectives that have managed today to become the second electoral power both in the Greek Federation of Secondary Education State Teachers (OLME) and in the Teachers' Federation of Greece (DOE). This assembly procedure was made possible thanks to the experience provided by the secondary education teachers' strikes during the 1988-1990 period and to the publication of two education journals *Counter-notebooks of Education*[114] and

[113] The main reason why university professors did not include liberating and critical pedagogy in their work is the conservative character of the faculties they were teaching in. The faculty offering pedagogical courses was mainly the School of Philosophy, Pedagogy and Psychology belonging to the School of Philosophy. This situation started changing after 1982, with the democratisation of university education thanks to the legislation proposed by PASOK, and most importantly after 1985 when the first Schools of Education were established.

[114] The first issue of the journal *Counter-notebooks of Education* was published in March 1988, two months after the great strike of secondary education teachers. In the introduction of this first issue, it is stated that the aims of the journal are, among others, "to open a new chapter in the reflection on educational problems, to strengthen the militant intentions of primary and secondary school teachers and others, to further fertilise criticism in all sides-visible or not- of the educational procedure. To function as

Ekpaideftiki Koinotita (Educational Community)[115] (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, pp.261-262). During the 90s, if we take into account the frame I have already described[116] we can fully understand why liberating and critical pedagogy were twisted and approached in conservative ways.

4.6.2.2. A Marxist orientation of critical pedagogy in Greece

During the following decade of the 2000, core elements of critical pedagogy[117] were approached from a Marxist viewpoint and those critical approaches were published during the second half of this decade (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, pp.265-266). The socio-political and ideological conditions of the decade were the main reasons why Marxism-based approaches flourished. During the 00s, all possibility of a persuasive political vision was postponed since the issues of competitiveness of the Greek bourgeois class became apparent. The eminent international capitalist crisis was at the door and the situation was further aggravated by the 2008 riots triggered by the killing of Alexandros Grigoropoulos.

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a "horizontal" stepping stone for information and action in the entire educational spectrum. To support every new, daring and radical movement in schools or Unions, which will try to overcome the adversities and all negative correlations […]The *Counter-notebooks of Education* aim to break with all those policies that wish to keep us "in the corner, yes-men supporting a miserable education", and wish to break with the non-political indifference, but also with the reasoning that uses us as bargaining chips in the party transactions of the bloc of "the change" (Counter-notebooks of Education, 1988).

[115]The first issue of the journal *Ekpaideftiki Koinotita* (Educational Community) was published a year later than *Counter-notebooks of Education*, in 1989. In the introduction of its first issue it is made clear that the journal wishes to become the voice of those teachers who, even in a difficult school reality, fight against becoming "mere employees" and promote what is essential in the classroom, without giving their voice to self-appointed representatives. The journal *Ekpaideftiki Koinotita* believed that there were favourable conditions for the creation of an educational grassroots movement after the secondary school teachers' strike and was committed to help the isolated and fragmentary outbursts to become united in a multifaceted and collective resistance current, by opening its pages to all those experiences and opinions of the struggling active teachers and by promoting the creation of a communication network between them (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, p.262).

[116] I indicatively mention the broadening of the capitalist reconstruction, the technocratic rhetoric, the modernisation that created new alliances between university professors and intellectuals, the intensified attack on the rights and claims of the workers.

[117] Such examples of important elements of critical pedagogy are the devaluation of exploitative class relations, the over emphasis on the construct and positions on quality regarding social class, social gender and race, the lack of overall social and political analyses, the vagueness of terms and the danger of its confinement to a mere transmission of experiential practices in schools.

Simultaneously, the Left, after having released many powers in education due to its 1980 crisis, started steadily increasing its political and trade union influence and proof of that can be found in the harsh 1997 secondary teacher strikes and the following primary teacher strikes in the 00s. The Interventions-Collectives that had supported the student movement of 1990-1991, took part in the clashes for the abolition of the appointment system of the Yearbook, in the widespread movement against the Arsenis' reform in the end of the 2000s and in the great mobilisations of the student movement to protect the university's public state.

Not only did these Interventions-Collectives have a leading role in all of the above mobilisations, but they also prepared the educational community ideologically and politically through the aforementioned journals, namely *Counter-notebooks of Education* and *Ekpaideftiki Koinotita.* (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, pp. 267-268). Nowadays, this same task is undertaken by the freshly published journal *Selidodeiktis* (*Bookmark*) which counts its two first issues[118].

In the conditions created by the capitalist crisis that ravaged the USA in 2008 and Greece two years later, the need for a discussion of the issues raised by liberating and critical pedagogy became evident. Those dynamics first made obvious in the Interventions-Collectives and/or in the School of Primary Education of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTh), were transformed into a close collaboration between the Schools of Education of the two top Greek Universities (the Aristotle University in Thessaloniki and the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA).

Along with the participation of the Hellenic Educational Society (HES), this collaboration made possible the 1st Panhellenic Conference on Critical Education which

[118] Quoting from the journal's editorial "The educational journal *Selidodeiktis* (*Bookmark*) and the website www.selidodeiktis.edu.gr emerged from the need to empower and expand on an anti-prevalent, critical voice on schools and education within the capitalistic crisis. *Selidodeiktis* aims to articulate a theoretical, political, unionist thesis from the educational movement's viewpoint, against the dominant bourgeois policies in education as dictated by the policies of the memorandum's governments and the EU, the OECD and several other international imperialist organisations."

is to take place in Thessaloniki, Greece on the 20-22 April 2018[119]. However, it must be stressed that this collaboration did not suddenly "emerge" but was actually made possible thanks to the progressive teamwork that was inspired by two Greek university professors, Konstantinos Skordoulis (former President of the Faculty of Primary Education of the NKUA) and Georgios Grollios.

4.6.2.3. Concluding remarks

Concluding this brief historical review of critical and liberating pedagogy in Greece from 1974 to the present, I can claim that, in the second half of the first decade of the millennium and the beginning of the 2010s, there were several significant critical approaches based on Marxism. Apart from the 1st Panhellenic Conference on Critical Education scheduled for April 2018, the most obvious proof of this growth is the organisation of three relevant international conferences in Athens and Thessaloniki with an increasing number of participants[120].

I must of course admit that not everything was made of roses, that some approaches had mistakes, others were full of ideologisms and others approached a more or less post-modern perspective[121]. Nonetheless, I totally agree with Grollios and Gounari (2016, p. 273) who note that, on the whole, all proposals played a part in broadening and enriching the debate around liberating and critical pedagogy in a lot of ways. Important notions were analysed, the opposition of critical pedagogy to the technocratic perception of education was stressed, the influence of feminist pedagogy but also its differentiation were discussed, its actuality regarding Greek reality was underlined, and finally, its potential applications in education, research and social/political movements were explored. (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, 272)

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[119] Further information on the conference can be sought on the official site of the conference: http://mylessonplan.net/1st_Panhellenic_Conference_on_Critical_Education/

[120] I am referring to the three out of six Annual International Conferences on Critical Education organized in Athens in 2011 and 2012 and in Thessaloniki in 2014. The rest took place in Ankara (2013), in Poland (2015) and in London (2016). The next is already being organised and will take place in London, at the University of East London (UEL) on 25-28 July 2018. For further information on the conference you may consult its official page: https://icce2018.wordpress.com

[121] I choose here to simply mention and not present or comment on the presented approaches, not because such analysis would not warrant attention, but simply because it is not linked to the goals of this doctoral thesis.

4.6.3. Current critical insights on educational research: a brief overview

As far as current critical scholarship is concerned, it can be argued that, over the last three decades or so, Critical pedagogy, also known as a "critical theory of education" (McLaren, 2007, p. 185), along with Revolutionary pedagogy (McLaren, 2000) that adopts a Marxist framework and thus represents the most far-reaching, controversial and cutting-edge contemporary educational theory and practice, have become a strong analytical framework of education research. Although there are differences in the specific intellectual and social projects that researchers working within these critical perspectives advocate, they maintain that schools, far from being merely instructional sites, also constitute political and cultural arenas.

As a result, they attempt to provide teachers, students and researchers with a radical theory and analysis of schooling, an analysis that gives primacy to politics and power, as well as to the cultural, the social and the economic in the understanding of schooling (McLaren, 2007, pp. 185-193), and thus represents a legitimate challenge for a wide variety of positivistic, ahistorical, and depoliticised analyses arguing for an "objective" and politically "neutral" education and learning process, removed from the concepts of power, politics, history and context (McLaren, 2007, p. 187).

Critical theorists working within these traditions, such as Peter McLaren, Paula Allman, Mike Cole, Dave Hill, Glenn Rikowski, Deb Kelsh, Ramin Farahmandpur, Ravi Kumar, Curry Malott, Gregory Martin, Shahrzad Mojab, Himani Bannerji, Basil Bernstein, John Holst, Faith Agostinone-Wilson, Konstantinos Skordoulis, George Grollios, Panagiota Gounari and many others, have taken advantage of breakthroughs in various distinct fields of research, such as the sociology of knowledge, cultural and symbolic anthropology, cultural Marxism and semiotics (McLaren, 2007, p. 187). They have thus developed new categories, concepts and methodologies for questioning the political economy of schooling, the state, the representation of texts, the experiences of students, the ideologies of teachers, the forms of knowledge in the context of classroom teaching, along with several aspects of school policy.

In this respect, it could be said that this large and important body of educational scholarship has provided a multitude of informative analyses in sociological, historical and economic literature concerning schooling, a substantial literature in education that points to how neoliberalism and neoconservatism have impacted on education and students (c.f. Hill, 2009a; 2009b; Hill and Kumar, 2009; Hill and Rosskam, 2009; Hill, 2013) in a number of countries. In this way, it has critically interrogated the pedagogical interrelationships between economics, authority, power, knowledge, culture and ideology.

Faith Agostinone-Wilson (2013), in her book *Dialectical Research Methods in the Classical Marxist Tradition*, provides a very good summary of the scholarship, of both past and current, familiar and lesser-known critical scholars and materialist researchers who work across a diversity of fields (education, history/philosophy of science, politics, economics, psychology, law, medicine), informative to education and are engaged in dialectical materialist inquiry, while operating from either an empirical standpoint or a qualitative and theoretical one.

In line with this, Agostinone-Wilson's work addresses an important gap in critical scholarship, in that it distinguishes and contrasts Marxist approaches with other seemingly related styles and liberal-left paradigms, while at the same time, it outlines the research process from the dialectical materialist perspective. In this respect, she does not simply provide an informative historical and contemporary overview of how mainstream inquiry, including educational research, has been and continues to be used in academia, along with a good discussion of the constraints and limitations of the mainstream educational research, be it empirical or pragmatic, constructivist or postmodern.

Agostinone-Wilson also outlines several key tenets common to most dialectical research studies, provides a thorough and clear description of what dialectical materialist inquiry entails and finally, challenges the view that only scholars who 'call themselves Marxists' work within a dialectical framework. This is a point that was also stressed by

Michael Matthews back in the 1980s, when he underlined that the kernel of historical materialism contained in Marx's and Engels' works is catholic, not sectarian, and thus can be elaborated in research inside and outside the Marxist tradition.

4.7. Summary

After having provided an overview of the legacy of critical scholarship in Greece and abroad I will employ this approach in the clarification of the vicious circle of failed educational reforms.

CHAPTER 5: Literature Review Part II: Crisis and Recovery in Public Schools – The Politics of Crisis and the Failure of Reforms

5.1. Introduction

Adopting a critical and historical perspective and building upon critical education studies of crisis and disaster, this Chapter argues that the targeting of public school and the blaming of teachers at times of crisis, has political implications. Tracing the factors that inhibit effective educational change, it questions the common accounts that point to immediate, isolated and practical problems and searches the causes of the political nature of education reforms. At the same time, by deploying the politics of crisis, this Chapter argues for the utility of crisis and disaster to neoliberal reformers to accelerate the expansion of the private sphere.

5.2. Education crisis: a dodge or a reality?

Today, more than ever before, it could hardly be denied that education is, globally as well as in Greece, a matter of public concern, undergoing a redefinition and facing a profound transformation. And although efforts to restructure schools date back to 1848, when the protestant-republican reformer Horace Mann (1796-1859), first introduced the notion of universal, graded education (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000), rarely has this been truer than in recent years.

The policy interventions, designed in the context of the Global Education Reform Movement, occur within a framework of immense moral panic (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000), similar to the one always produced at moments of crisis, about how the generations of the future will be prepared. This is accompanied by large-scale criticism of the State School and an emphasis on the "apocalyptic consequences" of omissions, failures and imperfections in the educational systems (Levin, 1998, p.132).However, despite the 'crisis rhetoric', schools are not autonomous arenas and at the end of the day they cannot save a society in which they are embedded, nor can they cure, at least alone,

national social 'ills' (Cuban, 2003, p. 1) and solve problems of international competitiveness. It is on grounds such as these that Laurence Arthur Cremin (1990) successfully wrote:

> […]to contend that problems of international competitiveness can be solved by educational reform … is not merely utopian and millennialist, it is at best foolish and at worst a crass effort to direct attention away from those truly responsible for doing something about competitiveness and to lay the burden instead on the schools
>
> (Cremin, 1990, p.103)

As the economic crisis gets deeper and deeper, hardly a day passes without an educational debate taken up by various sources such as national governments, international organisations, politicians, trade unions, teachers, parents, students and the media, as if the focus on education will compensate for their unwillingness to confront the economic crisis head-on. It is at moments like these, of crisis and disaster, that according to Halsey et al. (1980), education in general and schools in particular, become the "wastebasket" into which society's perennial and insoluble problems are abruptly deposited (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 5).

Within that context, schools are being charged with some burden tasks of economic rebirth and national reconstruction and are loaded, among others, with the expectation to save children from poverty and remedy inequality, to cultivate democratic attitudes in societies that feature marks of totalitarianism and to create a highly skilled workforce that will serve as a platform of economic survival (Hargreaves and Lo, 2000). But this translation of the economic, political and cultural anxieties and hopes into dramatic demands for educational reform (Tyack and Cuban, 1995) and the assigned faith in schools as "agents of social redemption" (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 13) can be considered a utopian conviction, capable of shifting schools from panacea to scapegoat.

Especially in these times of harsh financial repression, since neither schools and teachers nor education can "make restitution for all the previous sins" (Hargreaves and Lo, 2000, p. 3) and compensate for society (Bernstein, 1970; Popkewitz,1986;1999),

this subsequent disillusionment can turn public school into an easy target. In that sense, it could be argued that the educational debate and "the obsession with schools as the cause and the cure-all" (Michel and Rothstein, 2007, p.44) is a historically repeated dodge serving as a distraction from austerity, recession and unemployment and, in some cases, such an analysis is not too far from reality.

5.3. Blurring the boundaries: do educational reforms occur in distinct periods?

The American educational historian Lawrence Cremin argues in his book *Popular Education and its Discontents,* that this "device" (1990, p. 103), as he calls the "crisis-and-salvation narrative" (Parker, 2008, p. 198) about public schools, has been repeatedly used worldwide over the last two centuries, pointing retrospectively, according to Tyack and Cuban (1995, pp. 44-45), to the domestic and international challenges that the politically conservative decades of the 1950s and 1980s witnessed. In such periods, the challenge of international military and/or economic competition with the Soviets (1950s) and the Japanese (1980s), along with a variety of domestic 'crises' such as mass migration (1950s in UK) and the rise of protest movements such as civil rights (African-American 1954-1968), have triggered a surge of concern about schools and have fuelled school reform movements that were pressing for greater coherence and discipline in education and favouring a rhetoric of competition and quality (Tyack and Cuban, 1995, pp 44-45).

In the same vein, since the beginning of the 21st century, many scholars within the field of critical education policy studies have further elaborated on the discourse of crisis and recovery in education reform, mainly focusing on the neoliberal era[122]. This scholarship, in accordance both with authors such as Naomi Klein (2007), David Harvey (2010) and Andrew Gamble (2009) among others, and a radical line of thought within eco-socialist literature, has suggested that neoliberalism is producing, precipitating, maximising and taking advantage of an increasingly diverse array of crises and disasters, so as to

[122] c.f. Apple, 2004; De Lissovoy and McLaren 2003; Ball, 2003; 2009; Hursh, 2006; Saltman, 2007; De Lissovoy, 2008; Peters, 2011; Slater, 2015.

facilitate its expansion and convert collective resources into private property (Klein, 2007; Saltman, 2007; Slater, 2015).

In particular, regarding the operation of 'crisis politics' in neoliberal education reform, it has been argued that, since the publication of the report *A Nation at Risk* (1983) in the USA, neoliberal reformers have repeatedly made use of crises and disasters and have described public education as both the source of crisis and the site of reform. Under the above schema, it has been maintained that the expansion of neoliberal policies in education should be understood as a deliberate response to material conditions, that is, crises and disasters, either manufactured or naturally occurring, whereas privatisation and enclosure of public education should be viewed as the imposed mechanism of recovery. In that sense, neoliberal reformers reproduce and expand the historical burdening of education with tasks of recovery, while at the same time they externalise blame onto schools and teachers.

Within the above context, it seems that the targeting of education has political implications, that is, the crises and disasters facilitate the promotion of public school privatisation agenda, and the contention that education is the answer to all problems can be interpreted as a handy cliché, echoing at times of crisis, shifting the responsibility onto the schools and the public school teachers. Therefore, the evaluation of the relevance and usefulness of the above perspective on crisis and recovery, in order to understand the utility of the economic crisis in Greece for the implementation of neoliberalism in education, is of great importance.

5.4. Learning from the past: tracking policy cycles of progress and regression

It is remarkable that,40 years after the oil crisis of 1973 and the collapse of Keynesian economics that wound down the optimistic educational suppositions which followed World War II, the rhetoric remains the same. Taking this last statement out of the abstract realm and relating it to a brief overview of the history of educational reform, interesting insights into the above argued cycling repetition of crisis and recovery in

education policy emerge, which would justify a claim that attempts to change education in fundamental ways are intrinsically political in origin.

5.4.1. Trajectories of political agenda setting: trends in the 60s and early 70s

Adopting a historical perspective is essential for a critical understanding of the dialectics of crisis and recovery in educational policy. In that sense, it can be argued that in the late 1970s and 1980s, the policy talk about decline and regression that shaped the politics of school reform[123]occurred as a reaction to the liberal era of 1960s and early 1970s that preceded it. This period can be seen as radical criticism on capitalist society and its institutions, among them the school, or on the other hand, as a period ostensibly concerned with equal opportunity and justice, butt the same time decisive for the school becoming a "custodial institution designed to maintain social order"(Sarup, 1978, p. 155).This was achieved by separating the discussion of social justice from the mode of production, by perceiving education as something separate from the economy and by assuming a vast potential for change and a naïvely optimistic attitude (Sarup, 1978; 1984).

Whether the ideology associated with liberal or progressive education did or did not challenge the status quo is a matter of some importance, and my opinion on this will become clear at various points in this doctoral thesis. As a prelude, though, the following can be argued at this point. The approaches usually associated with liberalism were preoccupied with what should happen in schools and classrooms regardless of what was happening or what could happen. They attempted to depoliticise social problems and ignore the structural conflict within society, seeing progress through adjustments. Finally, they encouraged people to seek change through actions, which attempted to change the individual while leaving intact the unequal economic and social structures. This way, they have proved to be prone to distortion, change and gradual adaptation so as to fit to limited, controlled, and pre-approved by the system changes (Sarup, 1978; 1984; Matthews, 1980; Harris, 1982).It should not be forgotten, though,

[123] This policy talk was defined by Tyack and Cuban (1995, p. 40) as "diagnoses of problems and advocacy of solutions".

that there is always some resistance to this process and thus, it should be stressed here that the role of activists, the protest movements and the radical thinking of student movements during those years have also exercised a decisive influence over shaping the reform agenda (Field, 2001).

With all that background behind, it can be suggested that during those years of innovation and optimism[124], echoing claims made by Horace Mann more than a century ago[125], reforms in the 1960s and early 1970s, came fast and shifted attention to assisting the disadvantaged (i.e. Blacks, Hispanics, women, handicapped);achieving social justice for dispossessed groups too long ignored in educational policy; democratising knowledge; and creating a genuinely 'meritocratic' society (Borg and Mayo, 2005).During this period, serious questions were being asked of the schools and other educational institutions, and reform propositions were being fuelled. These concerned reforms advocating the replacement of conventional classrooms, traditional roles for teachers and pre-set curricula, along with a rethinking of time, subjects, space, class size, grouping of students and teachers' cooperation.

Among the most radical ideas in educational cycles during those years were those found in the work of de-schoolers[126], and the work of radical American historians focusing on the origins of mass schooling and the functions it serves (c.f. Karier, Violas and Spring, 1973). One final point needs to be stressed here before proceeding further. Illich's idealist belief that social change can be brought up by a change in personal consciousness is highly debatable, but such a debate is not within the scope of this doctoral thesis. What, however, can be recognised is that in spite of the weaknesses, Illich and the de-schoolers have raised an important point by challenging the dominant assumption of education as a social good (Sarup, 1978).

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[124] We could also add to this the years of disillusionment concerning schools and the promises they held on to.

[125] Claims about how proper schooling can bring about access, equality, social levelling and cohesion, even prevention of poverty.

[126] Such as Ivan Illich's (1971) lead for the 'deschooling' of society, arguing among others for 'free schools' and 'schools without walls' (c.f. Goodman, 1964; Dennison, 1969; Rogers, 1969; Silberman, 1970; Graubard, 1972; Reimer, 1971).

5.4.2. Tracing the roots of business-inspired educational reforms: reasons for changing conceptions over time

Having traced the trajectories of political agenda setting in the 60s and early 70s, we can now turn to the roots of business-inspired educational reforms in the mid-70s. The situation, as it actually stands in the subsequent years, is that all these ideals of progressive education flourished till the mid-70s, when they were essentially put aside. This familiar motive reminds of the USA in 1950, when the launch of Sputnik and the threat of Soviet military and technical supremacy in the Cold War triggered anxiety about the effectiveness of schooling.

So, beginning in the mid-70s, there was a reallocation of public expenditure away from compensatory programmes for the disadvantaged and areas such as the liberal arts, while an emphasis was given instead on the installation of basic, practical, marketable and job-oriented skills (Matthews, 1980; Harris, 1982, p. 134; Tyack and Cuban, 1995, pp. 47; 53; 87; 102-103).But the latter comes as no surprise, given that, as Matthews (1968, pp. 160-161) puts it, “liberalism has always been an optional extra as far as capitalism is concerned. In periods of boom and subsidence of class struggle, capitalism can afford to wear a liberal face; however, when crises occur, liberalism tends to be jettisoned”.

In this sense, the neoliberal policies in the economy, society and education did not arise as a result of the moods of ‘apprentice magicians’ of the Chicago School, nor were they implemented in a political and social vacuum. It is no coincidence that these ideas, already existing for decades, began to be implemented at an economic and political level after the 1970 crisis, when the global capitalist system entered a long series of restructurings.

In this framework, the economic, social and political neoliberal 'recipes' which spread internationally in the early 1980s[127] must primarily be understood as the counterattack of powerful portions of the capital in the face of a capitalist crisis whose primary cause was the same as today's crisis. In other words, they can be seen as an expression of the structural need of the capital to respond to the fall in average rate of profit and its inability to regroup and increase its profits. (Boyiopoulos, 2011; Grollios, Liampas and Pavlidis, 2015).

The situation, then, is that, since the late 70s, public opinion has changed, as have media representations of what is happening in schools, confidence in public schools has declined and schools have been blamed for lack of economic competitiveness and other societal problems. The previous assumption that the public school was improving generation by generation has been replaced by discourses of derision that shame and blame teachers for failing their students (Tyack and Cuban, 1995; Stoll and Myers, 1998; Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000). At the same time, depressing statistics pointing to declining test scores have been routinely used to give coherence and force to market-inspired reforms that promote a version of traditional schooling focusing on high academic standards, stronger school discipline, a standardised curriculum, and testing (Cuban, 2003).

5.4.3. Policing the new education reforms: management and accountability from a global perspective

Turning to reforms in recent years, it can be argued that since the late 70s and 80s, although the underlying rationale in policy discourse[128] remains the same, its dominance is more evident than ever before.

[127] Following the election of Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain in 1979 and Ronald Reagan in the USA in 1980 and having already been applied in the bloody Chile experiment by the military junta of Augusto Pinochet.

[128] i.e. to link education to the wealth of nation and use schooling as an instrument of economic competitiveness.

In that sense, the worldwide trend of marketisation of education, memorably since the 80s (Levin, 1980), has been at the core of educational reforms around the globe for the last 25 years (Apple, 2001). As part of a worldwide campaign of the neoliberal capital, reforms that are at least in part, if not fully, grounded in the neoliberal ideology of economic success and the "neoconservative back-to-basics mentality" (Gouvias, 2007, p. 299) have been launched in many developed Western countries[129].

Furthermore, from the 80s onward, similar policies that combined key aspects of a neoliberal policy have been imposed to both developing countries[130] and highly indebted countries of the European South (e.g. Greece, Spain, Italy, Portugal), under the structural adjustment programmes of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank that put pressures on leaders for reforming their economic systems and shrinking their government bureaucracies (Fiske, 1996) and specifically detail every area of life in those countries with their recommendations.

Especially in the case of Greece, it should be stressed that as a result of the country's subjection to the support mechanism of the EU and IMF, the efforts to implement neoliberalism in education, already one of the main aims of the various governments since the 90's, have strongly intensified.

It should already be clear from this initial and elementary discussion that, as today the economic crisis gets deeper and deeper, and as social, political and economic changes transform the structure of our societies, the central policies in the education agenda around the globe fall mainly under worldwide tendencies to drastically transform the

[129] See, for instance, Britain's set of Education Reform acts in the 1980s and early 1990s that have brought about profound changes in the educational system, such as open enrolment and moves towards local management and grant-maintained schools (Webb and Vulliamy, 1996, pp. 8-26). Along the same lines, there was the 1983 release of the report *A Nation at Risk* in the US that has fuelled more educational laws and regulations than the states had generated in the previous twenty years, accompanied by the signing of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLA) nineteen years later. Finally, there was the charter school movement and school-based management in the US and Canada, individual school charters in New Zeeland and competitive and deregulatory choice programs in Australia (Whitty, 1997).

[130] c.f. Verger, Altinyelken and De Koning, 2013; in Africa Haquel, 2008 (e.g. Tanzania, Zaire, Uganda, Jamaica, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Namibia); Asia (e.g. India, Japan, Pakistan, Thailand, Malaysia) and Latin America (López Guerra and Flores, 2006) (e.g. Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Peru).

public sector in education. This is promoted by introducing "managerial and accountability reforms" (Leeuwen, 2012, p. vi), alongside a new culture of "competitive performativity" (Verger and Altinyelken, 2013, p. 1).

I should stress yet again that the prevailing rationales behind the education reform policies are economic and the shift towards the re-assertion of order, discipline and authority, both in society and education, and the "moralistic turn in control which emphasises adherence to norms and values" (Achinstein and Ogawa, 2006, p. 55) determining what is allowable, wrong and right, must be seen as representing changing ways of consolidating the restructuring of relations of production, put forward by capital itself, in order to confront acute dangers and its ills and save the system (Sarup, 1982, p. 109; 13).

5.5. The language of critique and a historical perspective

5.5.1. Political context of educational reforms

I began the previous section by arguing on the importance of a brief historical overview in the construction of a convincing argument on the political nature of educational reforms. It is now a good time to turn to two further potential benefits of the adoption of a historical perspective on the issue at hand.

To begin with, given that many educational problems have deep roots in the past and, as already argued above, there is a cycling repetition of recovery identified as the proposed solutions, adopting a historical perspective would mean discovering and understanding how solutions already tried, fated in the past. The second point to stress is strongly related to the adoption of a critical perspective and the assumptions about inquiry on which such a perspective relies. On grounds such as these, it can be argued that such an approach, rather than viewing the boundaries of a problem as a given (Agostinone-Wilson, 2013, p. 73) and then, consistencies identified by the researcher as causal claims (Sprague, 1992), it seeks instead to reveal misinterpretations and expose weaknesses of

the dominant and prevailing views and theoretical stances which attempt to rationalise values and legitimise actions (Harris, 1979, p. 85). In that sense, it is a critique that has an inevitable tendency towards suspicion and thus begins with the recognition that distortions and illusions do exist and only when they are recognised for what they are and their effects are identified, can the reaction against them begin.

Thus, within the above framework, a good start in the above direction is the presentation of the identified consistencies in forms of recurring tensions and contradictions and the introduction of alternative challenging and broad questions, such as: Is it a coincidence that the education reform preceded the aftermath of a crisis or disaster? Who gains from the reform? How is the reform legitimised? What kind of crisis is it? Why are things the way they are and what are we going to do? How did they get this way? Why, despite the efforts, does successful school change on a widespread basis continue to be elusive?(Matthews, 1980; Hargreaves, 2005; McLaren, 2007; Agostinone-Wilson, 2013).It is important to proceed with the interpretation of situations in terms of these questions, and finally, to address social processes, issues and conditions as the result of both historical processes that brought them about in the first place, and ongoing material and practical conditions that maintain them (Tyack and Cuban, 1995).

Under the above schema, it can be suggested that the situation might appear different when a problem is seen neither as new, nor as temporary. Thus, alternative understandings of the past might lead to the conclusion that the permanence of a problem is better understood as a result of the following: long-term tendencies and policies, arising from a broader conservative ideology; the crisis of neoliberalism as a form of economic and social governance (Sotiris, 2013, p. 21); and finally, the crisis at the very structural heart of capitalism itself, producing in that way different visions of the future.

Another principal factor must be attended to before this section is brought to a close. In important interventions into the critical analysis of neoliberal education reform, several scholars have questioned the ‘crisis rhetoric’ accompanying the neoliberal reforms,

meaning by the latter the causal linkages between educational performance, regression in schooling and economic productivity and competitiveness (c.f. Cremin, 1990; Cuban, 1992; Howe, 1993; Levin, 1998).

On grounds such as these, some scholars have argued that such claims, apart from being extremely simplistic, ignoring all other plausible explanations and reducing a very complex problem to a simple minded equation ("bad schools = bad economy", c.f. Cuban, 1993), they are also dangerous in the sense that, as already mentioned above, they, firstly, turn public attention away from more fundamental factors and, secondly, encourage a public opinion about schools as institutions solely serving the needs of the economy.

In the same vein, others emphasised that no consensus exists among economists that schools have caused the productivity crisis, with some even questioning the very connection(c.f. Cuban, 1992).Furthermore, a number of scholars have raised objections to the quality, statistical validity and the meaning of international test score comparisons as both means of compiling, comparing, and performing what it means to be a globally successful school and teacher[131]and evidence for alleged decline in public education and consequently in worker productivity[132]. On the other hand, the very meaning of the notions 'progress' and 'regression' in education, have been challenged, with Tyack and Cuban (1995) suggesting that they are highly debatable and subjective political constructs that were fabricated to mobilise and direct reforms in the first place.

5.6. Assessing the implications of educational restructuring: from caring to controlling

In light of the above, Sarup's seemingly prophetic argument that at times of worldwide crises all the former 'luxuries', connected with periods of capitalist prosperity and

[131] Not to mention here UNESCO's hesitation in the first place regarding comparing countries using statistics (Robertson, 2013).
[132] c.f. Harris, 1982; Cuban, 1992; Tyack and Cuban, 1995; Grissmer, 2000; Robertson, 2013.

expansion, are essentially put aside and there is a shift in emphasis "on law and order" and from "care to control" in society (Sarup, 1982, p. 109; 13), begins to sound very familiar.

It can be argued at this point that this shift[133] that is also evident in education, features different faces and characteristics which can be summed up in the following points: the enforcement of a stricter discipline; the re-assertion of authority; the increasing accountability of teachers in terms of their effectiveness; the general pressure imposed on all who work in educational institutions; the introduction of forms of quality assessment of schools and teachers; the changes in terms and working conditions of teachers entailing deskilling, growing loss of power around the basic conditions of their job, reduction of their remuneration, changes in the hours or working pattern and in the perception of their role as reflective practitioners; the styles of instruction associated with a move towards technical education and vocational training; instilling basic and marketable skills with greater job-relevance; the introduction of an entrepreneurial culture; the redirection in educational expenditure towards a cheaper and more productive school and last but not least the massive cuts in educational spending (Sarup, 1982, pp. 2; 13; 109; Harris, 1982, pp. 133-141; Aronowitz and Giroux, 1993, p. 34; Sotiris, 2013, pp. 21-22).

Meanwhile, change is once again implemented with a sense of urgency, education has had to face purges, despondency and panic, and teachers are blamed for everything and subjected to public attacks by the government and the media (Hargreaves, 2003).As for the latter, it should be stressed at this point that a number of commentators (c.f. Scheff, 1994; Stoll and Myers, 1998)view such narrative of shame and blame in public discourses shaped around teachers as deliberate actions aimed at rendering teaching and public schooling unpopular, at encouraging parents to invest in private schooling and at forcing older and expensive teachers into retirement (Barlow and Robertson, 1994).

[133] Which will become more evident as the discussion goes on.

5.7. The 'epidemic' of education reforms: assessing standardised policies and recontextualisation

Taking into consideration the "epidemic" (Levin, 1998; Steiner- Khamsi, 2004) of education reforms over the last three decades, especially in the industrialised English-speaking countries (c.f. UK, USA, Australia, Canada) (Levin, 2001), which have resulted in fundamental administrative and financial changes in the educational structure, the intensified reform movement in education, in the current moment of crisis, is nothing to be surprised at. Besides, as already mentioned above, the concepts of the utopian tradition of social reform through schooling, aligned with the diversion of attention from more costly politically controversial, and difficult societal reforms is not a new terrain in educational literature (Tyack and Cuban, 2003).

Advancing educational change is a global phenomenon with profound implications for educational systems worldwide and thus links can be traced through an analysis that relates parts to the whole. In that sense, an analysis that aspires to look at the bigger picture can neither be restricted to the mere examination of the influences of national policies nor to the specifics of each particular change in each particular country.

On the contrary, if its aim is to meaningfully evaluate the benefits and deficiencies of educational changes, it should go one step further and address first of all the policy itself as a practice (Locke et al., 2005). In this respect, Tyack and Cuban (1995, p. 8) maintain that school politics have never been carried out on a "level playing field", in the sense that it has always been policy elites, drawing members from stakeholders who controlled the economy with privileged access to media and who were leading institutions and organisations of many kinds, and not a multiplicity of groups, that were setting the dominant patterns of educational reform. They were the same elites that, on the pretext of disengaging schools from politics, have delegated educational decisions to 'experts', with whom they were sharing the same definitions of diagnosed problems and prescribed solutions, so as to ultimately end up exercising even more power over shaping the agenda and implementing the school reforms.

Such an analysis, as the one proposed above, through emphasising the interrelationships between the reforms in the educational structure and the purpose and context of their development (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 8) may reveal interconnected patterns and components, and thus the set of the same ideological influences that has fuelled policies and changes in the first place (Webb et al., 2004; Slater, 2015).

However, none of these are meant to underestimate the importance of acknowledging the "processes of translation and recontextualisation" of policies in specific national and local settings (Ball, 1998, p. 119) or to suggest that there is nothing to be said on the different ways and extent to which specifics of national contexts have mediated the adaptation or extension of policy changes (Locke, et al., 2005).On the contrary, a large portion of comparative education literature points to the mediating role of domestic history, political ideology of the government, position adopted by stakeholders, including the resistance of teachers and their unions, and, in general, to the complex interplay between global and local forces (Verger et al., 2012;Verger and Altinyelken, 2013), when globalised policies related to assessment systems, teacher accountability and decentralisation (Rhoten, 2000; Benveniste, 2002;Steiner-Khamsi and Waldow 2012) 'travel' to specific contexts.

We can conclude, therefore, that what is implied by all the above is that, although changes in education policy vary and have always varied between countries based on their unique "historical trajectories of socio-economic development and political structures" (Gouvias, 2007, p. 307), and therefore must be understood in conjunction with the stages of development of the capital in each country (Kumar, 2008), there is a commonality that emerges across all of them which needs to be acknowledged.

In concluding this section, I would like to reiterate that regardless of whether or not one accepts that all changes in education have been and continue to be fuelled by the same ideological influences, what seems to be the case is that the empirical changes that take place in education, in the nature of schooling and in its institutions, although they may appear disparate at first, are manifestations of clear trends that have already emerged in

advanced Capitalist States. What remains to be seen now is how the varied practices and relations that constitute schooling are addressed in the dominant educational research and literature.

5.8. Dominant discourses in main stream educational change theory: an unfortunate lacuna

Despite the significant body of critical scholarship that was briefly considered in Chapter 3 and the best efforts of a number of educational scholars who are working within critical research paradigms and are developing approaches of micro-macro relationships, the dominant educational research and literature is still aberrant in the respect that it brings about and encourages the fragmentation of different sectors of education.

In that sense, many studies in this latter category show little concern with the concrete historical analysis of existing realities and thus, by focusing on discrete problems, they fail to provide us with adequate conceptualisations of the varied practices and relations that constitute schooling. The basis of this failure lies mainly in the fact that all the different sectors in education are not investigated as part of the overall context to which they are tied, but are treated as discrete and isolated, and thus conceptual boundaries are drawn between what is inside the classroom and what is 'out there' in the world beyond (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998). But the context in which school and education changes take place clearly matters (McLaughlin and Talbert, 1993), despite the fact that until recently, within the field of educational change, there has been little attention to the political and social dimensions of educational changes (Hargreaves, 2005).

While the evidence repeatedly indicates that fundamental educational reforms cannot be disengaged from the context of their occurrence, since they are, in their majority a 'political response' to changes in the broader social environment[134], most educational

[134] Such as changes in family, in technology and in the law, economic crises, child poverty, unemployment, attitudes toward authority (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000; Hargreaves, 2005), which

change theorists tend to neglect the political components of the change process (Hargreaves, 2005). Indeed, in the main literature on school change, with its focus on the technical or cultural aspects of educational reforms, the political facet was either totally neglected or, in the best-case scenario, it was just addressed in terms of conflicting interests among stakeholders.

Within the above context, it can be argued that mainstream educational change theory, by ignoring that the national- and international-level educational reforms that have transformed the education systems worldwide over the last decades (Sahlberg, 2006), are predominantly political acts (Levin, 2001, p. 4), fails to account for the particular social, economic, political and institutional context in which they arise, and thus to relate their conceptualisation to the social relations of production of the specific social formation within which they are integrated.

In addition, it can be argued that in many ways, in the large and varied body of research on education conducted within the prevailing research paradigms, there is remarkably little attention to the particular conceptions of teaching[135] that underpin the educational changes. At the same time, the "systematic, contextual and political nature of public education" (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000, p,15), along with stakeholders' attempts to control and change it, are hardly treated as potential explanations- which if nothing else, at least merit equally serious consideration- of the perennial and unsolved educational issues. Having argued the latter, I will go on to explore the causes of failure to bring about effective and long-lasting educational change through reforms.

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according to Levin and Riffel (2000), are also the ones that most powerfully affect the nature of schooling and the work of teachers in the long run.

[135] These conceptions ultimately also affect the assumptions held about the principles and activities that comprise it.

5.9. Questions of interpretation and the repeated failure of educational reforms

Throughout the history of educational theorising, questions of educational character and important educational issues were raised from within various kinds of scholarly traditions. In this respect, it could be said that since the end of the 19th century and the emergence of compulsory elementary schooling, the term education, the process of schooling and the job of teaching have been subjected to various forms of analysis, so that today we have a wealth of information. But given the latter and the so many years of research and repeated efforts to create significant change and to restructure schools, why do schools today look much like schools of yesterday (Cuban, 1989), perpetually facing the same issues? Why does educational inequality persist and why do the radical changes that have been occurring in education worldwide, rather than improving schools, creating engaging and creative curricula and empowering teachers, move towards the confinement of schools, the debasing of education and the deskilling of teachers?

Satisfactory answers to the above questions cannot be found either by tracing immediate, practical and overt factors, or by sticking to the evaluation in the abstract of the benefits and drawbacks of the specific components of individual reforms, let alone by resorting to vague metaphysical reasoning. On the contrary, the answer to these questions lies deeper in the factors that underpin what Sarason (1990) calls the "predictable failure of educational reform" and cannot be traced unless the different patterns and components of educational change are addressed not as isolated and autonomous issues, but as instrumental pieces, intricately tied up with the purpose of their development and with the contexts which promote them (Harris, 1982, pp. 12-16; Hargreaves, 1994, p. 8; Hargreaves, 2005).

Thus, what is being suggested by the latter is that a meaningful and realistic analysis cannot separate the school-level change processes from the bigger picture: the societal change forces that drive educational change, along with the political and economic factors that shape its purposes and processes and people's attempts to control and change it.

5.9.1. Challenging the factors inhibiting effective change: a critical perspective

Before developing the most crucial of points, though, what should be stressed is that there is far more to the issue than simply recognising that educational change theory attends to political and economic questions. In a socially divided, culturally diverse and power imbalanced society, clearly it does (Hargreaves, 2005). Despite the relatively little attention, in comparison to the vast body of literature on change theory, to the systemic social inequalities and power imbalances that surround the school and its community (Fink and Stoll, 2005, p. 11), it can be argued that, for over a century now, controversies in education have arisen.

Those conflicts recurred over ethnic, racial, gender, and class differences, over language policies and religious issues, such as the teaching of evolution and the use of prayers in public school, as have contests in the politics of education between stakeholders trying to express their values and secure the interests of some groups over others (Tyack and Cuban, 1995).With that in mind, thus, what is of great importance is how these issues are addressed and whether a critical perspective on inquiry is adopted or not, since I find myself in agreement with the view that various interpretations can be promoted, depending on the economic, political, or social context within which they are explained.

In this sense, while there is certainly substantial literature in education, dating back to the foundational period of educational change research in the 70's and beyond[136], this literature should be carefully reviewed. While this literature points out to the difficulties in creating meaningful and lasting change[137] and documenting well at least the cultural and strategic causes of failure to bring about educational change (Hargreaves, 1998c, pp. 281-294), it can be problematic. Uncritically accepting those writings, as if they are a set of clearly identified and operationalised variables and failing to address the interplay of micro and macro forces, runs the risk of privileging existing patterns of the dominant discourse (Sprague, 1992).

[136] c.f. Sarason, 1971, 1990; Berman and McLaughlin, 1977; Miles and Huberman, 1984; Louis and Miles, 1990; Fullan, 1993; 2007; Schweiker-Marra, 1995; Stoll and Fink, 1996; Donahoe, 1997; Fineman 2000.

[137] c.f. Cuban, 1990; Tyack and Cuban, 1995; Sarason, 1996; Hargreaves and Evans, 1997; Fullan, 1997; Hargreaves, 1998c; 2000; 2005.

To avoid this, we must keep at least two things in mind. First, that the descriptive nature of the conventional language of social research, through its very vocabulary, might give the impression that there is an undisputable and unproblematic 'reality' lying out there in the world, awaiting discovery and description by researchers. And second, that the dominant educational literature, with its strong reliance on educational psychology, tends to analyse educational problems in terms of individual personalities or pathologies, without properly considering the influence and effects which the larger context imposes, leading thus into misinterpretations of the instances in question and mistaken conclusions (Harris, 1982; Sprague, 1992).

5.9.2. The resort to practical, immediate factors: a never-ending story

It was noted in the previous section that there is far more to the matter at hand than simply identifying and overcoming immediate and practical isolated factors. In order to support such an assertion, it might be useful to state this problem in reverse and assume that the above-mentioned factors are actually the fundamental causes. It would then follow that by overcoming or curing them, we would solve the general problem, the repeated failure of educational change. Thus, echoing the same type of question that Kevin Harris indicated (1982, p. 15) while accounting for teacher failure within capitalist social relations, I could wonder: If the cultural and strategic reasons given for the repeated failure of educational change in the change literature are the fundamental causes that "successful school change on a widespread basis continues to be infuriatingly elusive" (Hargreaves, 2005, p. 2), why, even after having identified them and given the perpetual struggle striving to improve education, are they not overcome?

The answer, to its simplest form, is that most, if not all initiatives for educational change grow out of a deficit model of what is wrong with schools, in terms of immediate, isolated and overt issues and what is needed to be done in order to fix them. And although none of the aforementioned are meant to underestimate the importance of solving everyday practical problems and of rectifying immediate and practical issues, which in fact do exist and do bring about problems, what is being suggested can be summed up as follows: these factors cannot simply be overcome by being attended to in

isolation. On the contrary, and as already mentioned above, these factors are strongly interconnected with much larger issues, underlying the "systemic, contextual and political nature of public education" (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000, p, 15) and the social and economic relations under capitalism.

In this sense, it can be suggested, perhaps accurately to some extent, that the problem is often located in key staff who can contribute to change but are not committed, or in leaders who are either too controlling or too influential or in teachers who are recalcitrant (c.f. Duffy and Roehler, 1986; Plant, 1987; Fullan, 1991) and resistant to change. The pupils within the school are also a common target, frequently charged with clinging to ways of learning that are familiar to them and thus turning into "the most powerful protectors of the past" (Hargreaves, 1998c, p. 282) engaged in resistance, while the same goes for parents who are held to blame for either opposing the change because they have not been involved or for negotiating special deals for their own children. The list can go on and on with problems viewed as arising from the actual physical conditions of schools, such as lack of facilities and overcrowded classes, or the change itself that is poorly resourced and conceptualised, or pursued in isolation, or it might be the general policies of the Department of Education and the training institutions that fail to prepare teachers adequately for the challenges of classroom realities (Harris, 1982, pp. 12-16; Hargreaves, 1989, pp. 281-282).

5.9.3. OECD-inspired reforms in Greek education

During the period of the crisis (2009-2017), all policies imposed on Greek education, with the assistance of the inter-state organisations of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), the EU and the IMF, have had all the characteristics of a supra-national governance, with reports and evaluations, advisory program proposals, operational programmes of the Ministry of Education, of the memoranda and of all commitments resulting from countless consultations, blackmails and a relative "subservience towards the so-called institutions and the OECD" (Mavrogiorgos, 2017, p. 59). Thus, in spite of all the promises made at the beginning of

the school year for "stability" in Greek education, the situation is far from "stable", with the scenes from Mykonos and Santorini[138] proving the devaluation of teachers and of the public school, and the cruel reality of flexible work conditions.

As George Mavrogiorgos (2017), Professor emeritus of the University of Ioannina, puts it:

> 'Stability' in education will not come back, unless we have permanently appointed teachers in the classrooms. The exercise of pedagogy cannot be implemented on students lost in the "net of flexible working conditions", by wandering nomads and homeless teachers (c.f. Santorini). Pedagogy gets blinded when the teacher's integrity is attacked. Education with homeless working teachers is flawed and evaluation cannot fit in the educational process.
>
> (Mavrogiorgos, 2017, p. 59)

Since as early as February 2017, the Greek Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs has had the OECD report on the Greek educational system (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). The multiple circulars, the establishment of two-year training programs, the adoption of the new Presidential Decree No 79/2017139, and the reappearance of the report on the evaluation of the educational work by the Authority for Quality Assurance in Primary and Secondary Education (ADIPPDE)[140], the new system for choosing school headmasters, and, of

[138] Reference is made here to the events that took place in September 2017, when dozens of substitute teachers, unable to find a room in the "capitals" of our tourist industry (Mykonos, Santorini) had to spend the night in their cars or on the beach. I have to stress here that, behind the narrative of the efficient management of the NSRF (National Strategic Reference Framework), thousands of substitute teachers get moved from one end of Greece to the other every year.

[139] The Presidential Decree No 79/2017 has replaced the decrees No 200 and No 201 and regulates the organisation and operation of nursery schools and primary schools. Through the centralisation of enrolments (there is a three-member committee in every Directorate for Education which deals with student enrolment and has the power, if the number of students in a class surpasses the 25-student limit, to even use selective draws in order to move the surplus students to adjacent schools) it aims at an indirect program for merging and abolishing schools, reducing the number of classes and, eventually, eliminating teacher posts. At the same time, according to the Presidential Decree No 79/2017, the all-day school, despite its alleged upgrade, is transformed into a "student depository" (students who are absent for more than 15 days will be stricken off), while the school timetable is only drawn by the Head master and aligned with a centralised administration model.

[140] President of the Authority for Quality Assurance in Primary and Secondary Education (ADIPPDE) is Elias G. Matsagouras, the Professor of Pedagogy in the National Kapodistrian University of Athens. For a general criticism on Matsagouras' conservative and, at times, distorted approach on critical pedagogy c.f. Grollios and Gounari, 2017, pp. 103-110.

course, merging the Nursery Schools with the Department of Early Childhood Education are closely interlinked with the OECD "toolbox"[141].

Using the economic crisis and the Memoranda as pretext, there is an attempt to achieve a sweeping progress against all delays imposed by the harsh labour struggles in education and all working fields. These sweeping changes are not even commitments, but "prerequisites" for all evaluations. The current government continues the application in education of the same reactionary restructuring policies of the previous New Democracy and PASOK governments, with the sole difference of using its "left mark" as a way "of ideological investment and practical management"[142] (Ioannidou, 2017, p. 44)

Under this scope, all analyses (Mavrogiorgos, 2017, pp. 57-69; Ioannidou, 2017, p.44; Selidodeiktis (*Bookmark*), 2017, pp. 8-9) seem to converge on the same point: during the last years, the application of the EU and OECD guidelines functions as the basis for the restructuring of the Greek education system[143]. For this reason, and in order to be able to fully demonstrate how power, ideology, control and governing issues are embedded in important educational policies, I believe it is important to make a short reference to the OECD's ideological orientation[144].

[141] The supra-national organisations trying to have an active role in the state educational policy is no news to Greece. From the loan agreements with the World Bank during the military regime of Junta, to the mid-80s, the directives of the European Economic Community, the guidelines of the European Commission and the OECD toolbox, the supra-national organisations were always hidden behind every reform process in education. The application of capitalist restructuring in Greece has always gone through the European Programs (Community Support Frameworks (CSF) and the NSRF.

[142] I should note here that the new NSRF for the 2014-2020 period is the first ever to refer to a merging of the operational Program on Education and Lifelong Learning with the human resource management program. Among others, it initiates apprenticeship and training as flexible working forms for all graduate teachers.

[143]One should not forget that signing the agreement for a new OECD survey was one of the prerequisite measures for completing the second review under the terms of the third Memorandum.

[144] I should remind here again that this doctoral thesis is based on the theoretical assumption that education is a state ideological mechanism which contributes to the extensive reproduction of social relations suffering from unequally allocated wealth, privileges, power and dominant ideology. This reproductive function redefines itself and becomes more intense when supra-national, interstate mechanisms get involved "dictating from a distance" political governances that aim at the promotion and consolidation of neoliberal outlines (Mavrogiorgos, 2017, p.57).

Furthermore, Greece constitutes a very interesting case study in this direction, keeping in mind that in 2011 and in the midst of the economic crisis, OECD comments on Greece being "one of the few European countries without external school evaluation", while the EU states that there will be a new school evaluation system, along with its intention for controlling and regulating teachers' work in an attempt to align Greek education with the priorities of the modernisation reform.

At this point, it is worth quoting Ken Jones who, when interviewed on EU and OECD policies regarding Greece and the educational policies being 'predetermined' by the Memoranda and facilitated by all Greek governments, stated:

> [The supra-national organisations and the EU] consider teachers incapable of bringing notable change: the modernisation of education in Greece, according to the EU (2017) is based on the import of EU and OECD "good practices". This "good practice" entails "advanced deregulation and professional autonomy, along with the development of school leadership [...] which [responds] to the market's pressures and [leads] its staff accordingly. If this were to happen, it would mean a severe step backwards.
>
> (Jones, 2017, p.19)

5.9.3.1 The ideological orientation of OECD

When commonly referring to the acronym OECD, we tend to forget that we refer to an "extended supra-national, intergovernmental, transnational organisation" (Mavrogiorgos, 2017, p. 61). It is a framed, organised structure, a network of many circles of influence with 35-member countries, most of which are high-income economies and regarded as developed countries.

Hence, in order to be able to grasp the OECD's ideological orientation and the effects of its operation during the last thirty years, it does not suffice to approach it on an educational, psychometric or technical basis (Lundgren, 2011; Mavrogiorgos, 2017). On the contrary, I strongly believe that it has to be understood as part of a context that has been historically shaped by a particular "intellectual starting point" (Mavrogiorgos, 2017, p. 17) and as a product of objective, real conditions of capitalist economy (Hirtt, 2017, p.15).

To begin with, we should not forget that the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development originated in particular, post war circumstances of competitiveness between the USA and the Soviet Union. Thus, it was actually the result of a broader USA strategy for geopolitical expansion and an extension of its alliances throughout Europe in a way that would also give the USA permission to control the developments of the member countries.

The course of the organisation was not always smooth, and its directional approaches were not always the same. There was a period of tension and conflict between the social-democrat approaches –originally dominant in European countries- and the neoliberal ones, which finally prevailed and were adopted during the 90s, under the influence of the USA and the UK (Mavrogiorgos, 2017, p. 62)[145]. Hence, from 1990 onwards, the OECD adopts and promotes an economist perception of a link between educational targets and the requirements of a global knowledge society and of an educational leadership expressed by the New Public Management (NPM) Theory (Morgan, 2007, p.14).

It is not a coincidence that this turn towards the commercialisation of education followed the almost permanent state of crisis that the economic systems of the developed capitalist states had already faced. As Nico Hirtt points out, with most public services already privatised, the 2.5 billion dollars spent on education throughout the world are viewed as the "new Eldorado" by investors constantly in search of profitable markets.

On the other hand, the OECD would never have successfully performed its functions without a clear perspective and responsibilities. And that is exactly where the EU intervenes, setting up a controversial framework in response to an ongoing, never ending crisis and incorporating the promise of social progress in a pattern based on the

[145] Suffice it to say that the American advisory group "Edventures" (from the words "education" and "venture") wrote that the 90s would be remembered as the time of a profitable educational industry (Hirtt, 2017, p.11).

imposition of a unified economic and social model of financial austerity and structural reforms. Under this scope, the EU and the Troika have assigned the OECD the key role of facing, exposing[146] and 'leading' those national policies of 'failed' states in a new direction.

In periods of long and severe financial crisis, like the one Greece faces, the debt is used as additional leverage for violent reforms. Nowadays, the OECD's priorities have nothing to do with the expansion of public education or equality of opportunities. On the contrary, the OECD has clear, neoliberal political and ideological axes concerning education, which, among others, entail privatisations, decentralised and autonomous school units, underfunding, intensification of examination procedures, increased control, flexibility of teachers' working relations, setting up a flexible workforce in accordance with market needs and, above all, the promotion of technocratic and managing approaches in the drawing of educational changes (Mavrogiorgos, 2017, p. 62).

5.9.4. Towards a critical reappraisal

Now, it can hardly be denied that there are of course teachers whose resistance is not always rooted in unadulterated altruism, just as there are administrators and policymakers who do not take the issue of supporting teachers seriously and are out-of-touch with the realities of classrooms and schools. Similarly, there are policies which can destroy confidence, trust and motivation among the teaching force (Hargreaves, 2005), schools with an organisational culture that discourages collaboration (c.f. Little, 1982; 1987; Bird and Little, 1986; McNeil, 1988), mutual trust and respect (c.f. Johnson et. al., 2003) and students who resist their teachers and are engaged in disruptive classroom behaviour (c.f. Willis, 1977), not to mention school buildings that are substandard, poorly equipped and overcrowded. On the other hand, there are

[146] At this point, I am referring to that OEDC characteristic which gives it power and functions as the big advantage for the managers and those who shape policies. It is none other than its ability to offer global analyses and concise collections of data that measure the effectiveness of a society's institutions in accordance with the development of a cognitive model, and by presenting them in comparison as well. Thus, a continuous competition between countries is cultivated in an attempt to prove their strategic effectiveness in attaining the political goals on the basis of the human capital theory.

headmasters that set a negative tone by making their staff's job harder rather than easier and are "arbitrary, abusive, or neglectful" (Johnson and Birkeland, 2003, p. 594). However, the problem with all the above clearly identified issues, and a serious problem it is, is that despite years and years of educational research, they are still treated as relatively autonomous and isolated 'ills' that have to be overcome. At the same time, the context of their development and their place within a specific set of social relations tends to be accepted without serious consideration and critical thinking. Instead of questioning the common sense and automatic conceptualisations behind this never changing deficit model, dominant literature continues to simply treat the patient than cure the actual illness (Matthews, 1980; Harris, 1982).

Put concretely, to take the preceding examples a little further, it can be argued that solving the teacher-training problem requires far more than introducing tougher teacher training tests, simplifying the application process, shifting the funding from universities to schools and changing the role specifications and assessment criteria that trainers should achieve; it raises fundamental questions regarding why anyone wanting to be a teacher is not already so well educated so that no further test of the basics is needed or why certain types of trainers/lecturers/tutors are employed in the first place, whereas others are not.

No one would deny that hiring more permanent teachers, reducing class sizes, equipping schools with instructional materials, properly maintaining school buildings, providing counsellors and supporting staff would lead to an effective change. However, all the above mentioned changes require a vast education expenditure redistribution; a redistribution that is fiercely rejected by the neoliberal paradigm, which 'resists' this kind of changes and keeps calling for a dramatic restructuring of state-run public education and its replacement with more market-responsive systems (Harris, 1982; Hargreaves, 2005).

Following the same strain of thought, teachers do resist globally. But why must this resistance be seen as faulty, with its roots in the unwillingness of teachers to change?

Why is that the teachers' resistance to adopt teaching activities, practices, and curricula, which are suggested or mandated by administrators and policymakers who are external to the teaching and learning setting, is perceived as a conservative act with psychological roots in the 'change hurts' perspective? Teachers can easily find themselves blamed for unfulfilled change when we interpret their resistance as a psychological characteristic, instead of a natural consequence of their awareness that organisational arrangements, resource availability and their educational background are adequate (Hargreaves, 1994; Bascia and Rottmann, 2011).

Thus, automatically, teachers and not the system are perceived as the problem. Their resistance generated by professional principles and deep commitments is not even seriously considered as a possible explanation and is constantly treated as a psychological deficit that needs to be changed for the sake of quality education (Achinstein and Ogawa, 2006). Despite the fact that during the last decade the research scenery has slowly changed thanks to work in the area of teacher's resistance and the growing acceptance of counter-arguments, the prevailing image has not yet changed. Still today the culture of teaching as embodying an implied inertia to saying goodbye to old habits and ways continues to be the privileged interpretation.

Under the above schema, it can be suggested that whether or not one characterises the teachers' resistance to change as a psychological deficit will depend upon where one stands, but there seems little room for arguing anything other than that it is not proven. What is implied by the latter is that, although such a standpoint can be supported by a series of arguments, those arguments are not inherent in the data, but have mainly been grafted on afterwards, and as such, it is difficult to see how any of them could be clearly established as scientific, as non-interest-serving and thus as non-ideological (Harris, 1979; Hargreaves, 2004).

The message lurking within these examples should be clear: Although the reasons given for the repeated failure of educational change are varied, what I find most convincing are the explanations that point to the intrinsic political nature of the process of the

educational change. In that sense, most attempts to at least change education in fundamental ways are ultimately political acts. They are undertaken within the economic, political and ideological constraints of their times and as such, it is both logical and practical for the reformers to marginalise teachers' perspectives as "informants and guides to policy" (McLaughlin, 1990, p. 15) and to ignore that what must be changed is "an interconnected, highly complex and profoundly political system which shapes and constrains both the work of teaching and efforts to improve or transform it" (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000, pp. 3-4).

This point leads us inevitably to some pessimism. But what should be stressed is that this pessimism arises partly through perceiving the situation in the context of the neoliberal authoritarian statement that there is no alternative. And although the pessimism may not be completely overcome, it can at least be mitigated if we realise that resistance and opposition is possible and, in fact, manifested in the subsequent generations of educators and students who have strongly resisted the implementation of neoliberal reforms.

As already mentioned above, it should not be forgotten that contradictions do exist in schools and although they reproduce social relations, they are also institutions where struggle takes place and forms of resistance can be reproduced. To what extent the latter is possible though, and how it can be achieved cannot get an immediate and straightforward answer, if at least what we aspire to is the setting of realistic goals. It is important, at this point, to look back on the course of the union movement in Greece, if we are to complete the picture and make proposals for effective practice. This is a matter that will be developed further at the next section.

5.10. The Greek Trade Union System and the importance of unionisation

In a period, when the influence of the global trade union movement subsides under the pressure of current developments[147], which of course entail a correlation of powers very negative for labour, different approaches rise strong concerns regarding two important issues: firstly, what the future of labour is and secondly, what the future of trade unions is and whether these can control the developments and successfully rise to the new challenges[148].

However, I have to unequivocally state right from the start that, in full accordance with Giannis Kouzis (2007, p.12), among others, and without the slightest intent to get caught up into a futuristic analysis, I am not admitting to those disaster approaches preaching the end of labour or the end of trade unions[149]. On the other hand, I cannot but admit the reduction in unionisation numbers, a common phenomenon around the globe. Tainted by the economic liberalist policies and by the interrelationship of external[150] and internal factors[151], European trade unions[152] with some exceptions (i.e. those of Scandinavian countries) record an important reduction of their percentages (Kouzis, 2007; EIRO, 2000).

5.10.1. The end of trade unions and labour?

One has to admit that the decline of trade unions raises well- or ill-intentioned concerns, and this is why I saw fit to clarify the grounds on which this particular doctoral thesis is set. Thus, I cannot side with these analyses which predict the end of trade unions or their

[147] I am referring to the total downgrading of labour, in terms of content and employment conditions, and the phenomenal for post war circumstances unemployment percentages.
[148] c.f. for example Dupeuroux, (1991) who even suggests the end of trade unions and Rifkin, (1995) for the end of labour.
[149] I am alluding here to the new trend that wants a waning working class and a fast-approaching end to labour. In this line of thought, the efforts of the "defeated" labour movement to regroup and counterattack are seen as hopelessly fighting a rear-guard action (Alexatos, 2003, p.6).
[150] c.f. globalisation of economy, unemployment, crisis, subsidence of the collective visions, individualism, flexible forms of labour and a change in the structuring of the modern employed work.
[151] I am referring to the trade unions' weakness to efficiently face the modern capitalist attacks because of their own pathogenicity, consisting of internal dispute and rivalries, as well as the lack of coordinated action or effective response to developments.
[152] We should not forget that Europe constitutes the rampart of the international union movement especially when contrasted to the USA or Japan, which present a severe reduction in their union density.

marginalisation as the inevitable development of the so-called era of Microelectronics, of "Post-Fordism" or of "knowledge society". On the contrary, this doctoral thesis is grounded on the fundamental belief that labour, despite undergoing changes, still persists as a key element of the exploitative by nature capitalist system, as the basic productive force for the creation of global wealth.

Hence, labour cannot lose its collective representation, because all collective expressions, with trade unions being their most important historical version, fulfil the rightful need for the defence of its interests. In a system of growing inequality and restriction of labour rights, of intensified labour insecurity and worsening living conditions, trade unions, as social subjects holding a political role, are capable of playing an important role as social inequality moderators, redistributing the wealth in favour of labour (Kouzis, 2007, p 17, pp.265-266).

It goes without saying, that, as I have previously mentioned, we have to admit the dire reduction in union density and perceive it as evidence of the crisis affecting the union institution. However, I maintain that this is not a structural crisis but a circumstantial one that can be seen in accordance with the general crisis affecting the global labour movement and the political Left during a period of severe transformations in economy and politics. (Kouzis, 200, p.19)

5.10.2. Need for pause and reflection

As a result, I have concluded that the study of modern union movement characteristics is a field of great importance, in order to draw its actual image with its qualities and weaknesses. In order for trade unions to regain their front seat and the trust of workers that goes with it, they need to take stock and redefine their organisational structure, their terms of operation and their mentality[153].

[153] Of course, we should not forget that collective visions are assisted neither by the neoliberal proposals favouring individualism and competitiveness, nor by the implemented policies in the labour market and the crisis affecting the welfare state.

Nevertheless, apart from bringing to light all the external factors which caused the union's decline, any such attempt will also have to focus on an internal analysis[154]. In addition, the terms that will make it possible for the union movement to respond to modern conditions have to be sought out as well. There is no blueprint for the future in order to find an answer to the question: will the unions be able to express labour through this period of recession and reflection, or will this be made possible through new collectives[155]? In any case, history has shown that nothing is born in a vacuum. Hence, useful lessons and experience can be drawn from the rich international history of trade unions that have played the most interventionist role in favour of labour forces.

Throughout the years, the Greek labour movement has remained strong despite the persecutions, the arrests, the assassinations, the judicial and administrative interventions. Therefore, we are in need of a study of modern characteristics, special features and particularities of the union movement at a national level, which of course will have to follow an international and –if possible- comparative approach. We should not forget that every country has its own historical, political, social and economic conditions, under which trade unions evolved, and its own positive experiences that offer us a better understanding of some aspects of union life.

This does not mean of course that whole models can be artificially and mechanically transferred from one country to another (Kouzis, 2007, pp.18-22; p. 266). On the other hand, such an analysis goes hand in hand with the need to maintain communication channels, which could promote international cooperation and coordinated union action

[154] I must point out though, that this need for self-awareness should by no means be perceived as an accusation against the union movement's weaknesses that resulted in negative labour developments. Failing to point out the actions and omissions of national and supranational political authorities would be extremely unfair to the unions, which have intervened in favour of labour forces. International experience can still reveal many positive elements from current union movement practices, even if most of them are of a defensive nature in front of the wave of changes imposed by neo-liberalism. I would like to stress here that trade unions as social subjects, having by nature a political role, contribute in turn to the final result, to the extent that this is possible.

[155] A very important issue that should be also taken into account is that of correlations inside and outside unions. Will the trends promoting radical reforms to improve the status of employed labour as a whole prevail? Or will it be those who are satisfied with the so called easy and relatively painless interventions that usually come hand in hand with terms of an overall degradation of labour?

against the overall attack on labour; a feature that, as I will point out further along, is particularly absent in Greece.

5.10.3. The Greek Trade Union System: brief overview

The analysis of the Greek union movement and its modern characteristics could be a doctoral thesis in its own right. I will not get into an extended analysis and I will content myself with a brief overview, absolutely necessary for setting the scene.

Of all the features governing the contemporary Greek union system, some are characteristic of the international union movement, while others are particular to Greece. As far as these particularities are concerned and taking into account that the analysis of the present presupposes knowledge of the past, it is of great importance to linger at some decisive points that shaped the course of the Greek union system and have left their mark on its current image.

Thus, I may not propose any solutions since it is out of the scope of the present doctoral thesis, but as Kouzis states (2007, p. 26) the mere process of recording and the resulting self-awareness help in the direction of finding a solution. Kouzis goes on to further indicate that the Greek historical reality is significantly different from the historical course of labour movements in the countries of Central and Northern Europe and seems to have more in common with the movements present in Southern European countries, especially in Spain and Portugal (this does not mean of course that we do not come across national particularities in those cases as well)[156].

In the case of Greece, researchers seem to agree on three main characteristics of the trade union movement. Firstly, the Greek trade union movement is characterised by a belated emergence and development[157] and secondly by an irregular development in an

[156] These countries seem to be in the lead in terms of processes for launching a strike, while they lag behind in diversity of tactics.

[157] The late development of the productive forces in Greece, when contrasted with European countries where the Industrial Revolution has been booming since the beginning of the 19th century, is presented as the main reason for the belated emergence of the labour and union movement in Greece (Kouzis, 2017). On the other hand, the effects of the Enlightenment and of socialist ideas came with a great delay in

irregular political environment, with intense adherence to political parties[158]. Last but not least, we could name as a third characteristic of the Greek union movement its slow

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Greece and they began to affect the country in the late 1885 onwards (c.f. Kordatos, 1972; Moskof, 1988; Kouzis, 2007). However, I must stress here that in the Greek case, as well as in the case of other countries, there was a long illegitimate presence of trade unions and persecutions of union action until the acknowledgement of the right to unionise in 1914 and the first association. However, I must point out that in Greek bibliography there is no mention of the social formation of the working class and of the importance of this class as a social force in Modern Greek history. To be more specific, as Giorgos Alexatos (2003) accurately states, even when historiography research is conducted by Greek Marxists, in its largest part, it is presented as a process of economic and political developments, defined by economic and political factors. That is, the social forces that coexist and oppose one another in the framework of Greek capitalist social formation are absent. This way, historical reality is absent as well and a question of huge importance is left unanswered: "How is it that the Greek working class, despite the low level of concentration of capitalist production and in spite of mainly consisting of first generation male and female workers, managed to become one of the most resistant and dangerous to the capital working classes in Europe?" (Alexatos, 2003, p.11) Unfortunately, by leaving the previous question unanswered, there have been many instances of analyses that, in the best of cases, resort to evasions and, in the worst, in ideologisms or scientifically unfounded approaches, for one must always bear in mind that the Greek shipyard capital has always been one of the strongest in the world. Greek capitalism went through periods of great growth (between and after the World Wars), and its dynamic character was the one that, after the fall of the Junta, made its participation in the coalition of the imperialist EEC and EU countries possible. At the same time, there were periods of capitalist boost, during which the Greek processing industry, even though not as sizeable as those in western countries, reached great growth rates, while the same can be said for the building and construction industries. Finally, as this is often used in a negative light, I need to question the idea of extended smallholding in agricultural production and in small industry functioning as "underdevelopment", since both agricultural and small industry production have assisted in capitalist growth since the beginning of the 19th century.

[158] Even though in the late 1980s there is a change in the attitude of the state, which gives more autonomy to the trade unions, there is a long tradition of state interference in the operation of the Greek union movement which is present even today. Of course, this intense state interference was aided by the long presence of autocratic regimes in Greece and historically coincides with the acute phenomenon of party alliances inside the trade unions. This phenomenon also persists during the years of the Metapolitefsi, when we find the formation of union parties closely linked to the presence of parliamentary political parties, while the perception of clientelist unionism is cultivated. All this contributes to the creation of a clientelist conception of unionism among many union members and of a governing partisan culture. By this I am referring to a particularly widespread culture according to which, the interests of the party are what matters most in the narrow and frequently short-term view of partisanism. This partisanism that prevails over genuine unionism can lead to disrupting phenomena, when this favouritism and this spirit of partiality for a specific political party comes before the real interests of the trade union and the accomplishment of its proclaimed goals (c.f. Kouzis, 2007, pp. 32-42;193;196-197). Naturally, in order to avoid any kind of misconceptions, I must stress that I support neither the need for unions outside politics, nor the absence of politics inside the union movement (c.f. Marx and Engels, 1979 *The Greek book About Unionism: The Content and Importance of Claims*). The trade union is a political formation and the conception of incompatibility between unionism and politics cannot be accepted. In this view, the absence of a united point of view inside the union can be fully understood, especially if we take into account that the nature of the capitalist system itself creates discriminations, categorisations and segmentations inside the circles of employed labour. The issue of union movement autonomy cannot be interpreted as an apolitical attitude among its members nor can it deprive them of their freedom to actively take part in the political life of a country. It goes without saying that union members retain their political views and actively participate in all social and political processes in an attempt to improve the workers' position, not only through unionisation, but also by interfering inside the political formations they belong to. The problem stems from union partisanism, when a group of union members tend to promote their biased party identity and their petty interests often combined with personal ambitions as well. Thus, the above

and rather recent "coming of age". All the above mentioned factors are of great importance if we are to understand the modern characteristics of the Greek union movement, but also the pathogenicity following it to this day[159].

The Greek working class emerges and develops during the second half of the 19th century and plays a major social role throughout the 20th century. During that time, it is organised in unions, it becomes massive because of the proletarianisation of immigrant populations[160] during the two World Wars and conducts great struggles until the dictatorship inflicted by Metaxas in 1936[161].

Later on, during the years of the Resistance against Nazi occupation (1941-1944), the working class dominates the EAM[162] and transforms itself into a movement with many social revolutionary characteristics that are expressed some years later during the Events of December 1944[163] and the armed conflict of the years 1946-1949[164]. After its defeat

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presented phenomenon of party alliances, so typical of the Greek case, has negative side effects on the Union movement and severely threatens its unity by putting at stake the goals that could be achieved through unity (Kouzis, 2007, pp. 213-219).

[159] Understanding and justifying the problem should not equal inactivity, idleness and lack of countermeasures.

[160] In 1923, after the "Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations" at Lausanne signed by the governments of Greece and Turkey, 1.5 million Greeks from Asia Minor, Eastern Thrace, the Pontic Alps and the Caucasus, were forced out of their homes and denaturalised from their homelands. According to some calculations, during the autumn of 1922, around 900,000 refugees of Greek descent arrived in Greece.

[161] Ioannis Metaxas was a General and politician, who served as Prime Minister of Greece from 1936 until his death in 1941. He governed constitutionally for the first four months of his tenure, and thereafter as the strongman of the authoritarian 4th of August Regime, also known as the Metaxas Regime. This was a totalitarian regime under the leadership of Metaxas who carried out a self-coup, with the support of King George II, on 4 August 1936. Metaxas presided over this conservative authoritarian and staunchly anti-communist government until his death.

[162] In February 1942, EAM, an organisation controlled by the local Communist Party formed a military corps, ELAS, which would operate in the mountains with Aris Velouchiotis, a communist activist, as their chief captain. Armed groups attacked and disarmed local gendarmerie stations and isolated Italian outposts or toured the villages and gave patriotic speeches. Their fight culminated in one of the war's most spectacular sabotage acts, the blowing up of the Gorgopotamos railway bridge, linking northern and southern Greece, on 25 November 1942.

[163] I am referring here to The *Dekemvriana* ("December events"), which were a series of clashes fought during World War II in Athens from 3 December 1944 to 11 January 1945 between the Greek left-wing resistance force, the EAM, some parts of its military wing, the ELAS stationed in Athens, and the Communist Party (KKE) on one side and on the other side, the Greek Government, some parts of the Hellenic Royal Army, the Hellenic Gendarmerie, the Cities Police, the far-right Organization X, among others and also the British Army. The *Dekemvriana* ended with the defeat of EAM-ELAS, leading to its disarmament in the Varkiza Agreement which marked the end of ELAS. This first defeat broke the

in the Civil War, the working class regroups and strengthens its movement once again thanks to the countryside masses that arrive in the big cities.

The rapidly growing working movement is halted by the Dictatorship of 1967-1974[165], only to regroup itself after the fall of the Junta and leave its mark on the developments of the post-dictatorship period (Alexatos, 2003, pp. 10-11).

Finishing this overview, I would also like to briefly present some other defining characteristics of the Greek union movement, without going into detail, in an attempt to help the reader, create a clearer picture of the matter, useful in the empirical, research and partisan aspects as well as in the issue of resistance.

First of all, we have to bear in mind that we are in front of a conflictualist social model[166]. Even though since the beginning of the 90s, we have witnessed an amplification of consensual practices, we cannot by any means place the case of Greece among those of other countries governed by consensual social standards. Since its

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power of EAM and was followed by a period of "White Terror" against the left, which contributed to the outbreak of the Greek Civil War in 1946.

[164]The Greek Civil War was fought in Greece from 1946 to 1949 between the Greek government army (backed by the United Kingdom and the United States), and the Democratic Army of Greece (DSE, the military branch of the Greek Communist Party (KKE), backed by Yugoslavia and Albania as well as by Bulgaria), most probably the first proxy war of the Cold War. Founded by the Communist Party of Greece and funded by Communist nations such as Yugoslavia, the Democratic Army of Greece included personnel who had fought as partisans against German and Italian occupation forces during the Second World War of 1939–1945.The fighting resulted in the defeat of the Communist insurgents by the government forces.

[165]The Greek military junta of 1967–1974 was a series of far-right military juntas that ruled Greece following the 1967 Greek coup d'état led by a group of colonels on 21 April 1967.

[166] Throughout most of its historical course, the Greek working class strongly rejected the reformist social-democratic perspective to such a degree, that, in Greece, the concept of the “Left” is identified with the Communist party. And this is precisely why it is particularly interesting to explore the reasons that, over the last decades, allowed the formation of a Greek mass social-democrat party and its relations with the Greek working class (Alexatos, 2003). To that we should also add the important problem of union structure; a mainly political and not simply organisational problem. And this is because the union structural formation strongly reflects the pursued goals. To put it differently, those who do not wish to escape the capitalist system rationale propose a union structural composition that views unions as a means of simply repelling some of the impacts of capitalism, while those who have not succumbed to reformist directives propose a completely different structure.

appearance as a collective structure, the Greek union movement has adopted for a number of reasons[167], an attitude of conflict against employers and against the state[168].

Even though we observe a decline in the intensity of social conflicts from the 90s and onwards[169], which of course goes hand in hand with an ongoing reduction in union density[170], in countries with a long conflictualist tradition such as Greece, the development of a social climate is reinforced by the intense union politicisation.

Concluding this brief review on Greek unionisation, I would like to refer to the limited international orientation of the Greek trade unions due to a series of factors: the manifested introspection of the Greek unionisation, the fact that they hardly keep abreast of the developments in Europe, the geographical isolation of Greece from the European "developed" countries and, of course, the fact that Greek union members lack great foreign language skills (c.f. Kouzis, 2007, pp.257-263).

[167] Among those reasons I should mention the intense politicisation of the Greek union movement since its first steps and the adoption of class struggle as a statute, the strongly intervening and conflictualist role of the state and the traditionally authoritative majority of employers during all phases of capital accumulation in Greece (Kouzis, 2007, pp.221-225).

[168] At this point it is worth mentioning a Greek particularity of the union movement: it is the only country in Europe that historically shows a high number of conflicts without having adopted the pluralistic union organisation model, a model which is particularly widespread in Europe. On the contrary, Greece maintains a united organisational structure (a structure where different ideological tendencies coexist, and which reminds of countries with a more consensual social model such as Scandinavia, Germany, and Austria). Finally, I would like to make a final clarification about the organisational expression of unionism in Greece: whereas Greece adopts a unified organisational structure where different ideological tendencies coexist, all unions fall under two big categories depending on their employment status. Thus, in Greece we have two big trade unions, the General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE) which represents the workers of the private sector and of the broader public sector such as Public Utility Organisations (DEKO), Local Government Units (OTA) and public banks; and the Confederation of Civil Servants (ADEDY) which represents the workers of the core public sector (public administration, education, health).

[169] As Kouzis points out, Greece, when compared to other European countries, joined with a great delay the universal tendency for tension recession; a tendency that is universally reinforced by the decline in union power and union density and by the adoption of institutions such as the social dialogue and the empowerment of collaborative negotiation. (Kouzis, 2007, p.247)

[170] This phenomenon is not only specific to Greece but affects unionism universally. Moreover, one should not forget that the Greek private sector suffers from a particularly low union density, since it is impossible to create institutions for the representation of small-scale private business employees, which form the vast majority of Greek businesses.

5.11. Summary

After having provided a historical overview of Greek unionism, I will proceed to Chapter 6 with an overview of the theory of social classes along with the distinction o productive/unproductive labour. I will explore the potential use of this distinction as an analytical tool for social classification.

CHAPTER 6: Reflection on the Notions of Class and Productive/Unproductive Labour and the Use of Historical Analysis

6.1. Introduction

In this Chapter, I explain the importance of an overview of the theory of social classes for my holistic approach. I try to define the concept of 'social class' which pervades my whole thesis and proceed to prove that the use of the concept of unproductive labour as an analytical tool to categorise social classes is not recommended. Finally, after a historical overview of the evolution of social classes in Greece in the period following the Metapolitefsi, I outline major educational reforms and forms of resistance that they triggered.

6.2. My approach to social classes: why the connection is necessary

One might wonder about the reason why I find imperative in this doctoral thesis to analyse, if possible, issues connected with the restructuring of production and the restructuring of labour[171]. And while the link between a brief overview of the theory of social classes and the structuring of social stratification with my thesis may not seem obvious at first glance, I have to argue on its behalf.

Hence, in order to offer a holistic perspective, I could not of course dismiss the effects of the crisis and all issues that arise from the empirical approach, but simultaneously I feel that my research would be incomplete if I chose to neglect issues of great political and theoretical importance; moreover, I will attempt to bring to light the important interconnections between the two which are not always obvious.

But if I stopped here, I would not have adequately illustrated the weaknesses of those sociological theories supporting that in Greek society petit bourgeois strata are

[171] A discussion which cannot however be opened without previously defining social classes and making a reference to social stratification.

prevalent. In addition, I would have left unanswered questions regarding the nature of social strata that seem difficult to classify at first glance (e.g. civil servants, managers).

To begin with, I must clarify that I do not approach the issue of social classes as sociological categories that pre-exist and to which people are simply added. Social classes are the result of class struggle and it is the historical evolution of exactly this struggle that defines which classes exist in every formation and their particular characteristics (Sakellaropoulos, 2014, p.193).

A second point I would like to make are the three basic characteristics of the Marxist theory concerning social classes: i) the "relationist element" of social classes: the position of a person inside class stratification of a particular society should not be seen as the integration in a pyramidical social hierarchy, but as a correlation of his/her social class with the rest of social classes, ii) the conflictual aspect of this relation which arises from the given differences in the material interests of each class, and iii) the objective existence of those social classes: someone belonging to one social class or another is associated with the social relations he/she bears and not to his/her personal beliefs about social integration (Callinicos, 1987a, reference in Sakellaropoulos' book).

6.2.1. Defining 'social class'

But how are we to define "social class"? It is widely known that Marx attempted to define social classes in *Capital* Vol III, without having the time to complete it. However, both Marx and Engels throughout their work gave us definitions of the notion of class. In *German Ideology* they mention:

> The separate individuals form a class only insofar as they have to carry on a common battle against another class [...]
>
> On the other hand, the class in its turn achieves an independent existence over against the individuals so that the latter find their conditions of existence predestined, and hence have their position in life and their personal development assigned to them by their class, become subsumed under it.
>
> (Marx and Engels, [1932] 1968, p.42)

However, the above mentioned position of the classics is at a high level of abstraction. They managed however to provide us with more concrete wording in other works such as "*Communist Manifesto"*:

> By *bourgeoisie* is meant the class of modern capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labour. By proletariat, the class of modern wage labourers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labour power in order to live. [Note by Engels to the English edition of 1888]
>
> (Marx and Engels [1848] 1988, p.209)

Since that time, many were the writers who attempted to define social classes. In this doctoral thesis, I choose to use Lenin's definition on social classes because I feel in accordance with many theoreticians (Sakellaropoulos, 2017,) that his definition is the most accurate and complete of all. Lenin's definition of classes is given in his pamphlet "A Great Beginning" in *Collected Works*: Volume 29.

> Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and consequently by the dimensions of the share of the social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.
>
> (Lenin, [1919] 1965, p. 42)

Hence, according to Lenin's approach, a "bourgeois" is someone who owns the means of production, who appropriates surplus value, who has a managing role in the production and a high income so that he/she and the members of his/her family can live comfortably, so that he/she is able to reclaim his/her capital.

Following Lenin's line of thinking, a "proletarian" is someone who does not have in his/her hands the means of production, who does not appropriate surplus value, someone who receives his/her income in the form of a salary and the amount of this salary barely

suffices or does not suffice for the reproduction of his/her labour power[172] (governed by historicity), someone who does not hold a managing role in production. And this has nothing to do with the nature of his labour which may be mental or manual.

In the core of Lenin's definition, pervading all his three criteria, one finds the phenomenon of exploitation. The owner of the means of production exploits those who only own their labour power, by paying them less than they work. In order for this social relation (deriving from capital ownership[173]) to reproduce, it is necessary to form some structural characteristics of the productive process which will enable the augmentation of capital and create the necessary hierarchical structure that will ensure work discipline. In other words, exploitation[174] and on a second level, dominance relations (and the way these are structured inside a social structure) are the two factors that form and reproduce social classes.

At this point, I must again call attention to three different points; firstly, the application of Lenin's criteria must involve all three as a whole. However, the most defining of three is the possession of the means of production, because the productive sphere is the heart of the capitalist system. Secondly, we must bear in mind that there are exceptions where one of the criteria and sometimes not the most defining one (possession of means of production) can define social class (e.g. doctors who have become 'big fish'). Last

[172] The reproduction of the labour power (labour power as product) means the restoration of powers and energy that a worker spends. In order to do that the worker must eat, drink, get dressed, rest, have a residence, etc. Hence, it equals the sum a worker needs to support himself/herself and his/her family. However, the size of this value is defined by many factors because during the historical social development of a country the level and the means for the labourers to fulfil their basic needs differ. I will only mention here some of the factors such as the historical course of every country that shaped the class of employed workers, the climate and other physical conditions and the expenses for the satisfaction of cultural needs (children education, book purchase). Finally, one should not forget that the level of the value and of the price of labour force differs, with respect to the density of the working class in each country (c.f. Polymerides, 2000, pp. 26-38).

[173] For this reason Marx had supported that the capital is primarily a social relation.

[174] Marxist theory is based on the notion of surplus value and exploitation. Through this theory, Marx scientifically proved the conflict between capital and labour and the need for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. Class struggle was not born in vacuum, it is rooted in the methods of production, and by this we mean the methods of exploitation of labour that characterise every class society (Kappos, 2005, p.41).

but not least, I must stress that social division does not entail an ideologically or politically homogeneous class[175].

Thus, the basis of social stratification is in the mere presence of exploitation and dominance relations. Belonging to a class depends primarily on the possession of the means of production as well as on the place one occupies inside the labour division and on the size of social wealth one extracts (Sakellaropoulos, 2014, p. 195). To sum up, the most basic criterion for people's integration into social classes (people who are viewed as bearers of social relations) is their relation to the means of production.

The two other factors mentioned by Lenin (i.e. the position in the social division of labour and the portion of social wealth one owns) should be used as subsidiary in cases where the utility of the first criterion does not suffice. Otherwise, using the third criterion (salary/amount of income) as a basic one could lead to important mistakes, because inter-class differences occurring inside the working class can mistakenly be seen as exploitation relations (Sakellaropoulos, 2014, p. 196).

When coming to Greece, I must side with Lytras, who states in his book *Introduction to the Theory of Greek Social Structure* (1993, p. 9) that the study of the Modern Greek society becomes systematic only after the Metapolitefsi. Since then, and over the following 20 years, a series of studies were published, directly or indirectly connected to aspects of the Greek social structure. This delay in the opening of the dialogue about this issue was also reflected in the subsequent delay in defining classes and framing social analysis.

[175] In society there never was, nor is, nor will ever be an one-to-one correlation between class position and ideology. In real life things are far more complicated and much less clearly defined. If it were otherwise, industrial proletariat would by definition be communist, workers would never vote for bourgeois parties, they would unionise, strikes would never be broken and the concepts of unity, of class struggle and revolution would be self-evident. On the other hand, we cannot forget that some of the most important revolutionists came from the bourgeois and not the working class: Marx, Engels, Lenin, Castro, Che, Luxemburg and the Greek example of Beloyannis are only some to be mentioned, while numerous are the cases in Greece where teachers were pioneers of the social struggle (Sakellariou, 2003).

6.3. Productive and unproductive labour: a controversial Marxist concept

Productive and unproductive labour are concepts in Marxist economic theory that, even today, Marxists[176] either completely avoid or, when forced[177], consider an "outdated terminology". For many of them, in fact, they constitute a contradictory and perhaps even unjustifiable intrusion of pre-Marxist conceptions in the work of Marx[178], which may even conceal an ideological condemnation of specific professional groups[179]. As a result, therefore, even when they are employed as an analytical tool, it is often the case that they are radically modified and integrated into an entirely different conceptual framework[180] (Dedousopoulos, 1983).

They are, in fact, two categories[181] that had almost entirely been abandoned by sociologists around the world between 1870 and 1975. The American[182] political economist Joseph Schumpeter (1883-1950) wrote in his book *History of Economic Analysis* (1954, p. 631) that this 'meaningless distinction' served only "to display the world-mildness of economists and their inability to tell a real problem from a spurious

[176] Or a great majority, at the very least.
[177] Especially when analysing *Capital*.
[178] Mainly as influences of physiocrats which, through Adam Smith (1723-1790), passed into the work of Marx. Even though I do not espouse this view, I will have to remark here, for clarification purposes, that Marx was not the first to introduce these terms into economic theory (Stamatis, 1989).
[179] I would like to point out that I disagree with this approach, which, as I will proceed to prove, makes an unfair allusion to Marx incorporating the problem into the neo-classical field of utility theory. Thus, it refers to transfers of value and profit from productive to unproductive sectors. Check also my footnote below. It will become clearer along the way, but to avoid 'grey areas' that the reader might have in his/her understanding, I would like to emphasise that the reading of Marx that I adopt in this doctoral thesis on the distinction attempts to prove that, while the concept of unproductive labour is charged with a "moralism" in pre-capitalist modes of production, it is devoid of any moral dimension in the capitalist mode of production as Marx conceived it. That is, as a specific mode of production, a conjunction of distinct levels (the autonomy of which is precisely what removes any moral dimension from unproductive labour) and not just a social relation of production defined only in terms of economic level (Dedousopoulos, 1983). Let me note that, in contemporary social sciences in Greece, This is unfortunately the dominant view, which ultimately leads to the 'persecution' of unproductive labour and the cultivation of a negative attitude towards certain unproductive occupations that are presented as wasteful and parasitic, for example, civil servants. (Stamatis, 1991, pp. 133-138).
[180] One of the few to recognise this issue, without limiting himself to a selective reading of Marx, is K. Hunt. For him, the main reason to reject these two terms lies in their erroneous approach to the issue. Studying it within the utility tradition of economic theory, an approach which essentially reduces the concept of productive labour to one that creates utility, they necessarily reach the following conclusion: "Any human activity for which money is paid in the market must be productive" (Hunt, 1979, pp. 304-305). Naturally, within an interpretation such as this, there is the emergence of a context in which the remuneration of unproductive workers is considered unfounded.
[181] Referring here to the categories of productive and unproductive labour.
[182] But Austrian-born.

one". This situation changed in 1957 with the publication of two important books[183] which sparked the interest in the distinction anew, but they were also the reason for a conflict among Marxist economists that lasted long afterwards. This conflict did not merely concern the usefulness of the distinction itself, but also the various definitions proposed for these two terms[184] (Hunt, 1979, pp. 303-325).

The reasons why I deemed necessary to take part in the often heated debate and include, even briefly, the concepts of productive and unproductive labour in this doctoral thesis will become apparent in the course of this section. However, I would like at this point to stress that I assign great theoretical and practical value to the debate surrounding the concept of unproductive labour, as an issue that gives rise to important matters of policy[185].

6.3.1. Can unproductive labour be of use in categorising social classes?

To begin with, it is important for me to clarify if and to what extent the concept of unproductive labour could be used as an analytical tool regarding the class nature of certain cross-class social categories[186] that seem, at first glance, difficult to classify (including, among others, the civil servants – therefore the state school teachers- and intellectuals).

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[183] *The Falling Rate of Profit* (Joseph Gillman) and *The Political Economy of Growth* (Paul Baran).

[184] Let me note here that the definitions given in this context were not simply different, but they were often at odds with each other. This will become clearer in the course of this section. I will briefly mention that P. Baran (1957) and J. Gillman (1957) came up against harsh criticism, mainly by Marxists, because they characterised their definitions as identical to those given by Marx. D. Yaffe (1972, pp. 11-12) writes for instance: "[…] any 'moralistic' definition of productive labour, i.e. useful to society, has nothing in common with Marx's definition and merely confuses the issue by abstracting from the particular mode of production".

[185] For a detailed overview, c.f. the collection of articles of the conference on social classes organised by the Sociology Group of the Communist Party of Great Britain and presented in November 1976 at the Polytechnic of the South Bank in London. These articles have been published (*Class and Class Structure*) by A. Hunt (1977), c.f. also footnote above.

[186] I would like to make a clarification here. The existence of the two basic classes of the capitalist mode of production does not exclude the existence of other social classes in a society, and this is related to the levels of abstraction that I discuss in the following footnote. In other words, we can speak of two classes only at the highest level of abstraction. To be precise, at the level of specific societies, national social formations, there are more strata precisely due to the different historical evolution of each social formation and the modes of production it includes (i.e. petit-bourgeoisie in the analysis of Greek social stratification (Sakellaropoulos, 2014, p. 200).

At the same time, based on the original material and without selective reading, I would like to highlight certain issues of political importance, as well as certain misinterpretations of Marx's views regarding the content of these two terms[187], which arise from confined viewpoints considering the productive element as primary in forming social classes[188]. Without even actually belonging in the Marxist approach, these misinterpretations, as I will attempt to prove, contribute significantly to certain popular contemporary positions regarding the decline, if not eradication, of the working class[189].

In total agreement with Apostolos Dedousopoulos (1983), I believe that the incorporation of the concept of productive labour in Marx's theoretical framework alludes to a specific perception of the mode of production. If we fail to understand this dimension of unproductive labour, we are led to contradictory alternative standards of productivity, at odds with one another and with the rest of the framework (Ian, 1972; Hunt, 1979, pp. 303-325; Stamatis, 1971; 1989; Dedousopoulos, 1983; Sakellaropoulos, 2014).

[187] At this point, I would like to stress that the misinterpretation of these and others of Marx's terms bring to the surface important issues related to the way his work is read in total, to the need to understand the 'language' he often uses, to the different levels of abstraction that need to be understood in order for them to be used in understanding and analysing the conceptual distinctions he draws, but also to the disambiguation of basic points of Marx's thought in his more mature works (Dedousopoulos, 1983; Stamatis, 1991, pp. 133-138). In the main body of the following section, I will briefly refer to the above. What level of abstraction we choose is interwoven with what questions can be answered and which activities, functions and concepts can be analysed. To illustrate further, I would like to give an example: At the highest level of abstraction, that is, the level of mode of production, it is possible to distinguish between a producer and a non-producer, but it is impossible to pinpoint the role of supervisory work, which presupposes a particular analysis of political and ideological functions performed in the process of producing surplus value, while the work of civil servants can only partly be classified. On the contrary, at a very low level of abstraction (that of social formation for instance) we may analyse some state functions, especially those connected to the welfare state.

[188] The issue of productive and unproductive labour was studied by several social sciences after the war, as I have already mentioned. There is abundant literature, c.f. indicatively: Morris, 1958; Blake, 1960; Gough, 1972; Harrison, 1973; O'Connor, 1975; Hunt, 1979; Moraitis and Copley, 2016. As an example of a confined viewpoint I will refer to the opinions expressed by N. Poulantzas, as well as other Marxist intellectuals, who made the error of examining the issue of social classes from a perspective that accepted productive labour as a fundamental factor.

[189] Specifically, in the case of Greece, this wouldn't shed enough light on the weaknesses of those sociological theories that support the dominance of petit-bourgeois strata. c.f. the section on social stratification in Greece, further on in this Chapter.

6.3.2. Difficulties in reading Marx's work causing controversy

Before proceeding with my analysis, I would like to briefly outline some objective difficulties permeating the reading and understanding of Marx's work, which are generally considered as the root of misinterpretations and confusion concerning the content of some basic concepts (i.e. productive – unproductive labour). The same difficulties, of course, dictate great attention when suggesting 'full' or 'absolute' interpretations of Marx. The first objective factor causing difficulty, as Apostolos Dedousopoulos supports (1983), is historic and insurmountable and has to do with the tragic fact of Marx's incomplete work.

This alone gives rise to problems in two ways: firstly, we cannot but keep in mind that a lot of Marx's writing was published without him editing the final publishable versions[190], and secondly, we cannot assign the same gravity to all of Marx's writings since they reflect different stages in his research. If we do this, not only do we overlook the shifts in Marx's reflection[191], but also the specific viewpoint through which Marx formed his opinions[192] (Stamatis, 1991, pp. 133-138).

The second factor is essentially a consequence of the first and relates to the greater attention that should be paid to the method of reading Marx. The wisest way to read Marx is the one proposed but Theodor W. Adorno (1903-1969) in reading G. W.

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[190] In the case of unproductive labour, in particular, this is true of all of Marx's texts in which he dealt extensively with the issue (to avoid misunderstandings, I do not include texts in which he hinted at the issue): *Capital* Volume I (with the exception of a few paragraphs in this Volume), Volume II, Volume III; *Theories of Value; Grundrisse*.

[191] To avoid misunderstandings, I should specify that by the term 'shifts in Marx's reflection' I am mainly referring to the different levels of editing his texts were subjected to.

[192] The distinction between the research method and the way it is presented was one of the issues that Marx was very aware of while writing *Capital* Volume I. Marx's texts, reflecting different stages of his research and various levels of editing, range from notes and critical remarks on the opinions of earlier economists to the unambiguous articulation of his own perceptions, which, however, never managed to reach their final form. Particularly on the issue of unproductive labour, on which some contradictions can be found throughout his texts, as noted by researchers, the careful selection of more important texts is deemed necessary to clarify the term. I will briefly mention here that it makes sense to consider Volume I of *Capital* or *The Results of the Immediate Production Process* (the unfinished draft of a conclusion to *Capital* Volume I) as more accurate than Volume III. Volume I was edited twice by Marx himself for the publisher (once for the first edition, and once more on the occasion of translation in Russian and French and the second German edition) and once more before the 'lost chapter', i.e. *The Results of the Immediate Production Process*. On the contrary, Volume III of *Capital* was in the form of notes, not even the first draft of text on the way to publication (Stamatis, 1991, pp. 133-138; Dedousopoulos, 1983).

Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831): to pay attention to the isolated phrase keeping in mind the whole (Stamatis, 1991, pp. 131-138; Dedousopoulos, 1983). Another source of misinterpretations, mainly related to the concepts we are examining and the way one of his main works on the subject, *The Results of the Immediate Production Process*, is read, involves understanding the way Marx writes. In this book, Marx does not develop his own thoughts, but based on them, he critically approaches the opinions expressed by earlier economists.

Moreover, he employs an odd way to express his critical disagreement with a text, as he does in other cases as well. Basically, Marx uses the language of the subject under critique. Thus, if we fail to realise that by appropriating the language of the subject in a realistic but ironic manner, Marx engages in a critical dialogue with the language of the original subject, misunderstandings will ensue. The researchers who do that, believe that Marx agrees with the opinions expressed, which is simply not true. Finally, in *The Results of the Immediate Production Process*, Marx does not comply[193] with some conventions which apply in the German language, creating added difficulty for the non-initiated reader. We should not forget, though, that this work by Marx is not a sum of curated material presented to the reader, but more like work notes, a text meant to be read by Marx himself. This realisation will offer a better understanding of the issue (Stamatis, 1991, pp. 133-138).

[193] When Marx quotes other people's opinions (either neutrally or simultaneously questioning their accuracy), he does not employ reported speech (Indirekte Rede), a standard convention in German. However, the issue of being familiar with German linguistic conventions emerges here. Because, when quoted opinions exceed the size of a phrase, or even a sentence, then reported speech is abandoned and one limits oneself to indications of the sort 'according to'. Even those are often omitted as easily understood by the reader. This is what Marx does in *The Results of the Immediate Production Process* and this creates the misunderstandings. Consequently, though Marx's opinions on productive and unproductive labour may appear different in Volume I of the *Capital*, in *Theories of Value* and in *The Results of the Immediate Production Process* if we do not take this into account, they are essentially the same and equally clear opinions on the two concepts.

6.3.3. Marx's definitions of productive and unproductive labour

In Marx, productive and unproductive sectors are closely connected with the concepts of productive and unproductive labour, but, as I stressed above, what Marx defines as productive and unproductive labour remains a controversial issue. With this framework and the aforementioned objective difficulties in mind, I will attempt to show that such intense controversy regarding the definitions is uncalled for, since the answer provided by Marx himself is clear and definite.

Let me start with the definition of productive and unproductive labour proposed by Marx in *The Results of the Immediate Production Process*. His answer is unequivocal: Productive is the labour which creates surplus value.

> Since the immediate purpose and the *authentic product* of capitalist production is *surplus-value, labour is only productive* and an exponent of labour-power is only a *productive worker*, if it or he creates *surplus-value* directly, i.e. the only productive labour is that which is directly *consumed* in the course of production for the valorization of capital"
>
> (Marx, [1864] 1976, p. 1038 – emphasis in the original)

or, at a different point in the same work:

> Productive labour, in its meaning for capitalist production, is wage-labour which, exchanged against the variable part of capital (the part of capital that is spent on wages), reproduces not only this part of the capital (or the value of its own labour-power), but in addition produces surplus-value for the capitalist [...].
>
> (Marx, [1863] 1969, p. 152)

The similarity in meaning between the two definitions is obvious. There is, however, an essential connection and this is none other than their common operational framework. In other words, the definition of productive labour as put by Marx in both preceding quotes is specific and exclusive to the capitalist mode of production[194].

[194] "Since the immediate purpose and the *authentic product* of capitalist production…", "Productive labour, in its meaning for capitalist production…". Let me stress once again that the capitalist mode of production is perceived by Marx as a unity of structured levels where the economic level plays a dominant role. This dominance means, among others, that the presence of other levels is a presupposition for the existence of the dominant one (economic) while at the same time they are relatively autonomous and influence the dominant level.

However, for Marx the concept of productive labour was historically specific[195], therefore it is not limited to the above definitions. Beginning with the analytical character of the two concepts, with a 'realistic' distinction from a real and valid point of view[196] resulting from the state of things, that is, the capitalist society itself, he turns to the historical nature of the terms (Stamatis, 1989; 1991, pp. 133-138). Thus, after the historical specification of productive labour, from a capitalist viewpoint, i.e. in the context of the capitalist mode of production[197], comes the definition of productive labour in general[198], irrespective of mode of production[199].

In the following extracts from Marx's works, it becomes clear that if the two concepts are perceived historically, it is possible to make the distinction between productive and unproductive labour even in societies where products do not take the form of merchandise.

In this extract from *The Results of the Immediate Process of Production*, the meaning of the term 'production' for Marx is made obvious (Gough, 1972, pp. 47-72; Dedousopoulos, 1983):

[195] To illustrate further what I mean when referring to the concepts of productive and unproductive labour as historical, let me say that they are essential in every society, be it a capitalist one, or a society of simple commodity producers, or even a society without commodity trade. What is productive or unproductive in each of these societies is proportional to their mode of production, not in theory but in practice. Practically, it is related to what constitutes wealth in a society and what produces this wealth. If, for instance, we have a pre-industrial agricultural society, according to the physiocrats, its wealth is the product of the earth. In a capitalist society, its wealth is profit generated by labour as subject to capital. Certainly, their being historical concepts does not mean that they cannot be seen as analytical regarding the capitalist society, for instance, in terms of the work process (Stamatis, 1989; 1991, pp. 133-138).
[196] In direct opposition to an arbitrary theoretical one.
[197] In the sense of surplus value production.
[198] This is what Marx calls "useful labour" in Chapter 1 of the Volume I in *Capital*.
[199] With this distinction between productive labour under capitalism and productive labour in general, which Marx makes at the outset, he essentially employs methodological principles of definition and functionality of the term itself, as also supported by A. Dedousopoulos (1983).

> It is only bourgeois obtuseness that encourages the view that capitalist production is production in its absolute form, the unique form of production as prescribed by nature. And only the bourgeoisie can confuse the questions: what is productive labour? and what is a productive worker from the standpoint of capitalism? with the question: what is productive labour as such? And they alone could vest content with the tautological answer that all labour is productive if it produces, if it results in a product or some other use-value or in anything at all.
>
> (Marx, [1864] 1976, p. 1039 – emphasis in the original)

or at a different point in Chapter 1 of Volume I in *Capital*, Marx underlines:

> […] The use-value of every commodity contains useful labour, i.e. productive activity of a definite kind carried on with a definite aim […] labour, then, as the creator of use-values, as useful labour, is a condition of human existence which is independent of all forms of society; it is an eternal natural necessity which mediates the metabolism between man and nature, and therefore human life itself.
>
> (Marx, [1864], 1976, pp. 132-133)

So far, whereas it has been made clear that labour which is common to production in general can be distinguished from that which is simply the result of the commodity-form, we have not yet discussed the nature of produced goods (Gough, 1972, p. 60). This is exactly where the second fundamental element that emerges from an analysis of Marx's work regarding his views on productive labour becomes relevant (Dedousopoulos, 1983).

These are none other than the fact that productive labour does not depend neither on particular work, nor the particular product-use value that is generated from the process of production[200]. It is precisely this element in Marx's perception that we find in the following extract from *The Results of the Immediate Production Process*:

[200] The fact that the necessary or intricate usefulness of labour is nowhere in Marx confused with productive labour is eloquently expounded by E. Mandel in Volume I of *Marxist Economic Theory*, when he writes: "When they produce dum-dum bullets, opium or pornographic novels, workers create new value, since these commodities, finding as they do buyers on the market, possess a use-value which enables them to realise their exchange value. But from the standpoint of the general interests of human society, these workers have done work which is absolutely useless or even harmful" (Mandel, 1968, p. 191).

> "[…] for *labour to be designated productive,* qualities are required which are utterly unconnected with the *specific content* of the labour, with its particular utility or the use-value in which it is objectifies. Hence labour with the *same content* can be either productive or unproductive."
>
> (Marx, [1864], 1976, p. 1044 – emphasis in the original)

It is an argument for the independence of productive labour, which Marx mentions repeatedly in many different parts, illustrated with examples so that there can be no room for serious misinterpretation. This becomes even clearer in the following quote which can be found, with minimal modifications, both in *Theories of Surplus Value* and in *The Results of the Immediate Production Process*:

> For instance, Milton who wrote *Paradise Lost* was an unproductive worker. On the other hand, a writer who turns out work for his publisher in factory style is a productive worker. Milton produced *Paradise Lost* as a silkworm produces silk, as the activation of *his own* nature. He later sold his product for £5 and thus became a merchant. But the literary proletarian of Leipzig who produces books, such as compendia on political economy, at the behest of his publisher is pretty nearly a productive worker since his production is taken over by capital and only occurs in order to increase it. A singer who sings like a bird is an unproductive worker. If she sells her song for money, she is to that extent a wage-labourer or merchant. But if the same singer is engaged by an entrepreneur who makes her sing to make money, then she becomes a productive worker, since she *produces* capital directly. A schoolmaster who instructs others is not a productive worker. But a schoolmaster who works for wages in an institution along with others, using his own labour to increase the money of the entrepreneur who owns the knowledge-mongering institution is a productive worker. But for the most part, work of this sort has scarcely reached the stage of being subsumed even formally under capital and belongs essentially to a transitional stage.
>
> (Marx, [1864], 1976, p. 1044 – emphasis in the original)

For Marx, therefore[201], the distinction between productive and unproductive labour has nothing to do with issues of comparison of different modes of production, nor with issues of "rational" or "irrational" organisation of a social formation in relation to an

[201] To discuss some of the basic misinterpretations of the matter.

ideal model[202]. On the contrary, as Apostolos Dedousopoulos (1983) very correctly observes, for Marx, the distinction between productive and unproductive labour is associated with "the reproduction of the dominant relation of exploitation and indicates the dominance of the surplus value production process over the process that generates the final product".

This is, in any case, what is supported in Marx's report that follows, which I consider his most accurate and definite view on the matter of productive labour. The reason why I believe it is exceptionally significant is connected to its source (*Capital* Volume I), which is a mature piece of work, published by Marx himself, more recent than the rest of his notes on the matter.

> [...] the concept of productive labour also becomes narrower. Capitalist production is not merely the production of commodities; it is, by its very essence, the production of surplus-value. The worker produces not for himself, but for capital. It is no longer sufficient, therefore, for him simply to produce. He must produce surplus-value. The only worker who is productive is one who produces surplus-value for the capitalist, or in other words contributes towards the self-valorization of capital. If we may take an example from outside the sphere of material production, a schoolmaster is a productive worker when, in addition to belabouring the heads of his pupils, he works himself into the ground to enrich the owner of the school. That the latter has laid out his capital in a teaching factory, instead of a sausage factory, makes no difference to the relation. The concept of a productive worker therefore implies not merely a relation between the activity of work and its useful effect, between the worker and the product of his work, but also a specifically social relation of production, a relation with a historical origin which stamps the worker as capital's direct means of valorization.
>
> (Marx, [1887], 1976, p. 644)

[202] With this comment I am alluding to the dimension given by neo-Marxist writers P. A. Baran (1957), P.M. Sweezy (1966) and J. M. Gillman (1957) to unproductive labour (choosing to mention only Marxists dealing with this from a shared perspective). I will briefly mention that they generally use the distinction between productive and unproductive labour in order to criticise capitalism, contrasting it with a "more rationally ordered society", meaning by that a socialist one. As Baran writes (1957, p. 32), "[unproductive labour] consists of all labour resulting in the output of goods and services the demand for which is attributable to the specific conditions and relationships of the capitalist system, and which would be absent in a 'rationally' ordered society". For a comprehensive critique on the views and methodology of Baran and Sweezy, c.f. L. Culley (1977) and J. G. Taylor (1978).

6.3.4. Summarising the basic points

Concluding at this point the overview of the importance of and distinction between these two terms in Marx's work, I believe a brief recapitulation of my conclusions is called for. Summing up, the following three basic points emerge (Marx, [1864] 1967; Stamatis, 1989; Dedousopoulos, 1983):

- The concept of unproductive labour is historical; therefore, it is relative and variable. It only becomes specific in the context of a particular mode of production.
- At a high level of abstraction, social production relations lie at the root of defining productive labour. That is, the relations of exploitation of labour in the specific mode of production. At a lower level of abstraction, in a social formation for instance, the dominant exploitation relation is the basis of the definition. The product, thus, as use-value, plays no part in defining the productivity of labour[203].
- As a final conclusion, the distinction between material goods and intangible services is irrelevant to the distinction between productive and unproductive labour. As irrelevant, to use Marx's own terminology, as the distinction between "basic goods"[204] and "luxury goods"[205].

[203] I should stress at this point that the main source of misconceptions is the view that productive and unproductive labour are not socially defined, that is, from the social circumstances under which they are done, but from the form of use-value they produce. Therefore, this is not simply a misunderstanding of Marx's views on the two terms, but theoretical errors regarding the objective content of the two concepts (Stamatis, 1989). For instance, Baran's concept of unproductive labour, radically different from that of Marx, is specified by its relationship to an image of an ideal society (c.f. also my footnote 28) in which full human potential is realised. On the contrary, productive labour in Marxist terms is always defined in relation to a determinate mode of production (not in any ideal state of affairs). The object of *Capital* is not an 'moral' critique on capitalism, but the elaboration of the concept of the capitalist mode of production and the conditions corresponding to that mode. The main problem, with serious political implications, in Baran's (and not only, i.e. Sweezy's also) discourse is that without a clear conception of the mode of production, no consistent concept of the relations of production can be developed, and thus no consistent concept of the class struggle, either. Indeed, in the whole discourse there is a total absence of the conditions of class struggle, something which would not be of central concern in any Marxist analysis (Culley, 1977, pp. 105-106).

[204] Meaning by that those goods that directly or indirectly return to the process of production.

[205] Let me note here that, according to Baran and Sweezy (see also my previous footnote), these are considered unproductive.

To sum up, I have so far supported that Marx's writings referring to the concept of productive labour, apart from distinguishing the capitalist mode of production from other forms of social organisation, do not place any distinction between material and non-material production. But this assumption is not as simple as it may seem, as it leads to the rejection of the well-established perception that considers services as unproductive by nature[206].

It thus creates a number of questions which emerge from actual contradictions on the matter in Marx's own work and which call for a satisfactory answer. Consequently, I will once again resort to the manner of reading the work of Marx and the inherent difficulties I referred to at the beginning of this section.

6.3.5. Overturning the argument of alternative readings

I will start this analysis in a somewhat unorthodox manner, based on an extract from Volume I of *Theories of Surplus Value*, which is simultaneously one of the characteristic parts of the text where he clearly refers to the unproductive nature of services:

> It is however clear that in the same measure as capital subjugates to itself the whole of production – that is to say, that all commodities are produced for the market and not for immediate consumption, and the productivity of labour rises in the same measure- there will also develop more and more a material difference between productive and unproductive labourers, inasmuch as the former, apart *from minor exceptions*, will exclusively produce *commodities*, which the latter, *with minor exceptions*, will perform only personal services.
>
> (Marx, [1863] 1969, p. 161 – emphasis in the original)

Reading the above quote more carefully, what becomes apparent is the Marx's persistence in speaking of exceptions. This indicates that the above quote is more of a prediction than a theoretical proposition, strictly articulated. As a prediction, therefore,

[206] Contrary to other definitions which claim to be within a Marxist framework. It is a fact that at the centre of the conflict surrounding the concept of unproductive labour, there is the nature of services with two prevalent views: i) the one supported in this doctoral thesis, which rejects the assumption that services are inherently unproductive (that is, regardless of the manner of social organisation of their production), and ii) the one that claims (ironically invoking Marx's writings) that services are unproductive by nature (c.f. N. Poulantzas (1975)).

based on the empirical image of the form capitalism was beginning to assume in 19th century Britain, the model-country[207], it is subject to empirical test, verification and contradiction.

Today, nearly 160 years after *Capital* was written (1876), we can say that Marx's assessment of a quick subversion of the capitalist system was proven wrong, and the expansion of capitalism in the field of personal services has acquired proportions that Marx did not predict[208]. Based on the above, his assessment should more wisely be considered circumstantial and defined by the particular historical model of capitalist development that Marx himself experienced, rather than a definition, much less a definition with general applicability that remains valid not only in every developmental stage of the capitalist system, but also in different modes of production (Dedousopoulos, 1983)[209].

Nevertheless, there is in the above extract, as Apostolos Dedousopoulos aptly observes, another proposition combined with the aforementioned empirical one, which is more theoretical than empirical. Marx's observation regarding the lesser ability of personal services to be organised in a system of capitalist production, compared to other sectors of social production, indicates his views on the matter, which lead to his prediction even if it is eventually proven wrong. What I mean is that Marx bases his prediction on the potential reduced ability of the capital to penetrate this sphere of production and not a materialist criterion, such as the material nature of the product.

[207] Let me note here, that the scenery in 19th century Britain was set by the intense capitalism of the industrial era as well as the transitions from workshop to factory and from manufacturing to mechanised production.
[208] I should stress here that it is true that since the end of World War II, there has been an era of extensive acquisition of the sector of personal services by the capital. But it is equally true that this historic process was severely belated.
[209] This historical dimension of Marx's discussion of services is exactly what N. Poulantzas does not recognise (Tregenna, 2009, p. 9).

6.3.6. Productive and unproductive labour cannot account for social stratification

From my analysis so far, it has been made obvious that the main position expressed in this doctoral thesis is different to the one expressed, predominantly but not exclusively, by Nicos Poulantzas (1975, p. 215), who falls into the trap he repeatedly warns against: he provides a physiocratic interpretation[210] for productive labour, which forces him to restate Marx's definition of social classes[211].

Thus, although Nicos Poulantzas maintains that classes cannot be defined exclusively at the economic level, and he underlines the significance of the political and ideological that must also be taken into consideration, he does not ultimately avoid an essentially economist and technicist definition of the working class (Hunt, 1977, p. 85).
Nicos Poulantzas' line of argument was naturally determined by his effort to avoid inherent confusion between 'useful labour' and 'productive labour', as well as between 'wage labourer' and 'productive labourer'. There was a price to pay, however, as he did not accurately deal with services, rendering his whole argumentation weak[212] (Dedousopoulos, 1983).

In every society, irrespective of its particular content, the definition 'unproductive' obviously carries negative connotations, alluding to something excluded from the norm,

[210] Let it be noted that physiocracy has been strenuously rejected by Marx himself. In fact, he had considered it guilty of similar errors made by physiocrats. I should also point out that Mandel (1978, pp. 42-45) employs a physiocratic approach as well in a similar attempt.
[211] A. Hunt (1977, p. 83), in outlining the various analyses developed in the late 70s, within the framework of Marxist theory regarding class and class structure, and distinguishing between "broad" and "narrow" definitions of class, he writes characteristically on Nicos Poulantzas: "Nicos Poulantzas has provided the most rigorous representation of the 'narrow' definition of the working class as composed of normal productive labourers, and which expressly excludes large sections of wage-earners who are indentified as constituting the 'new petty bourgeoisie'".
[212] To avoid misunderstandings, I would like to point out that my critique of N. Poulantzas is not meant to question his intentions, since I definitely do not claim that he is classified as a theoretical conservative (c.f. also, footnote 13, above), nor is it meant to reduce the exceptional calibre of other analyses in the sum of his work. What I essentially intended was: i) to point out that such a confined theory on social classes, as the one presented in N. Poulantzas' work, may reinforce opinions on the decline of worker strata, concealing thus the real and intense social oppositions, and ii) to use my critique of his physiocratic interpretation of productive labour as a compass to show that the increasing expansion of the capital in the area of services results in boosting the numbers of the working class through the greater subordination of parts of labour to capital. As I will proceed to prove in the main body of the text, this latter concept is connected with the 'persecution' of certain occupations as 'unproductive' ultimately planning to ideologically foreground their 'liberation' and subordination to the capital aspiring to increased profits (Stamatis, 1989; 1991, pp. 133-138; Dedousopoulos, 1983; Sakellaropoulos, 2014, p. 219).

that is, the dominant mode of production (Stamatis, 1991, pp. 133-138). This observation further aggravates the 'situation' of a concept that, either due to inefficiencies of the bourgeois analysis[213], or in a deliberate and planned way, is at the mercy of theoretical errors.

On the one hand, thus, we have the misinterpretation of the concepts of productive and unproductive labour[214] by many Marxists[215] and the denigration of the terms by others, and on the other hand, the fact that the distinction between them, or even the consensus on whether this distinction is useful, continue to be a debated issue. Both have proved extremely useful tools for the dominant classes. By this I mean the systematic cultivation of a negative attitude towards unproductive labourers[216] and a persecution which can only be comprehended[217] if they are considered guilty of not producing capitalist products[218].

Bringing this section to a close[219], I would like to elucidate the main position supported in this doctoral thesis on the formation of social classes. The main element I based my analysis on is the relations of exploitation[220], while the conclusion I reached on using

[213] Particularly popular in social sciences.
[214] A very important matter in its own right, apart from the objective difficulties in reading the work of Marx, to which I have referred in the main body of the text.
[215] With grave consequences, as I have shown, not just theoretical, since they affect the general theory of social classes articulated, but also political and ideological.
[216] Thus, starts a discussion that can encompass everything, from the 'end' of labour and the working class, all the way to views describing a voluminous petty bourgeois class, parasitic civil servants and of course, matters of inadequate understanding and clarification of the objective content of basic Marxist concepts which could have been used as excellent analytical tools.
[217] At least outside the context of bourgeois and conservative analyses.
[218] Products, yes, but not capitalist ones. I will simply mention the subordination of the self-employed to a great chain and the commercialisable substitution of services connected to the production of personal services.
[219] I am definitely not claiming that my investigation of the matter of productive and unproductive labour is complete. Besides there being problems (of great political and theoretical significance) that were not touched on because they did not belong in the scope of this doctoral thesis, there were also concepts which were briefly mentioned or alleged to. But my goals were very specific, and they in no way included the global analysis of the theses and problematic issues connected to the concept of unproductive labour.
[220] In order to prepare the reader for the analysis of the results, I should note here that, in direct contrast with the term 'relations of exploitation' I also use the term 'oppressive' relation; both terms proposed initially by J. F. Henry (1975). The fact that no surplus value is produced by a labourer's work and, as a result, the capitalist relation of exploitation cannot be traced does not mean that this labourer does not provide surplus labour. As Henry (1975, p. 40) notes "[…] the link between oppression and exploitation under capitalism is that oppression is necessary so that exploitation may occur – workers must be deprived

productive labour with reference to the formation of a general sociology of social classes can only lead to theoretical misinterpretations[221] (Sakellaropoulos, 2014).

6.4. Historical overview of social classes in Greece: 1981-2014

6.4.1. The years before 1981: Metapolitefsi[222] and change

The Greek military Junta, commonly known as the Regime of the Colonels, ruled Greece from April 1967 until July 1974[223]. Its fall was associated with the invasion of Turkish troops in Cyprus and the division of the island, which was characterised as "a national tragedy". However, the military regime had already been isolated due to the aggravation of the Greek economy in the early 70s and the growth of popular resistance which culminated in the Athens Polytechnic Uprising in November 1973[224].

During this transitional period after the fall of the military regime, the Greek bourgeois class had to deal with the termination of the power structures that had ruled the country since the Greek Civil War[225] and comprised the Military, the Palace and militia

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of control over the means of production (must lose their economic freedom) in order to enable the capitalist to expropriate surplus value" (Carchedi, 1975, pp. 18-19; Henry, 1975; Dedousopoulos, 1983).

[221] To illustrate the position I hold in this doctoral thesis, I will use the following example: A labourer may be productive (in various terms, directly producing surplus value in the sphere of material production or contributing to the self-valorisation of capital, but not in the sphere of production, or, finally, working in a factory) or he/she may just not be productive. All the above are labourers, but with different specific weight in their objective role in social evolution.

[222] by the term 'Metapolitefsi' (Polity Change), we refer to the transitional period in Modern Greek history after the fall of the 1967-1974 military Junta and the transition of the regime to Presidential Parliamentary Republic.

[223] The Greek military Junta, commonly known as the Regime of the Colonels, ruled Greece from April 1967 until July 1974. Its fall was associated with the invasion of Turkish troops in Cyprus and the division of the island, which was characterised as "a national tragedy". However, the military regime had already been isolated due to the aggravation of the Greek economy in the early 70s and the growth of popular resistance which culminated in the Athens Polytechnic Uprising in November 1973.

[224] The Athens Polytechnic Uprising occurred in November 1973 as a massive demonstration of popular rejection of the Greek military Junta of 1967–1974. The uprising began on November 14th, 1973, escalated to an open anti-Junta revolt, and ended in bloodshed in the early morning of November 17th after a series of events starting with a tank crashing through the gates of the Polytechnic.

[225] The Greek Civil War was fought in Greece from 1946 to 1949 between the Greek government army (backed by the United Kingdom and the United States), and the Democratic Army of Greece (DSE, the military branch of the Greek Communist Party (KKE)), supported by Yugoslavia and Albania as well as Bulgaria.

organisations. At the same time, this same bourgeois class placed all its hopes for a smooth transition towards a moderate parliamentary reform on Konstantinos G. Karamanlis[226] and on the conservative party of New Democracy that he had formed. In this context, Karamanlis with his party managed to obtain 54% of the votes in the 1974 elections and become Prime Minister with a massive parliamentary majority, by taking advantage of the fear of what a transition from a Dictatorship to a Republic could entail and of the compromised popular social classes who saw all of the above mentioned institutional concessions with relief[227].

The period from 1974 to 1981 in Greece is characterised by intense social struggles, which can only be understood if the particularities of the Greek society of the time are taken into account. The first years after the Metapolitefsi, Greek society faces a severe unequal distribution of wealth between the bourgeois and working class, aggravated by the tax system, unequal distribution of land among the peasants and a considerable number of destitute people when compared to other countries members of the EEC (European Economic Community, now European Union, EU). As Grollios and Gounari (2016, p.17) indicate, from 1976 until 1980, the country experienced an impressive rise in the number of strikes in both the public and private sectors, new radical forms of organisation of the working class (factory unions), important peasant activity, intense political and ideological radicalisation and a widespread diffusion of ideas of the Left.

The response of the bourgeois class to all these changes came with authoritarian legal frameworks (i.e. Law 330 for strike limitation), an intense repressive state function (arrests, incarcerations) and with the dismissal of thousands of union members. The primary choice and goal of the bourgeois class was Europeanism, expressed by the country's accession to the EEC and an attempt, through this accession, to strengthen its dominance against the people's struggles and the political empowerment of the Left, to

[226] Konstantinos G. Karamanlis, who is commonly anglicised to Constantine Karamanlis or Caramanlis, had remained outside Greece during the coup years and formed the party of New Democracy upon his return.

[227] I am referring to the institutional changes such as the function of the parliamentary republic, the abolition of monarchy, the legalisation of the communist parties and organisations and the downgrading of the role of the military.

gain financial profits through exports and subsidies, to broaden its international alliances in times of continued Turkish occupation of Cyprus and to intellectually integrate those of the new petit bourgeois class who aspired to benefit from this accession (Sakellaropoulos, 2014, p.18).

Greek capitalism adhered to the EEC in 1981. This choice was made by the bourgeois state of the time, which sought to reproduce capital relations in the long run and viewed competition with more dynamic European capitals as an opportunity for the internal restructuring of Greek production forces, through the expulsion of non-competitive capitals[228]. On the other hand, the Left had supported the thesis that Greece's accession to the EEC would have disastrous consequences on the country's economy since the 1960s.

6.4.2. The period 1981 – 1991

From 1981 to 1991, the morphology of Greek society changed significantly. The reasons for these changes should be traced back to the contradictory position of PASOK[229] when it came to power and its consequences on all social classes. In this context, the whole government power (1981-1989) must be divided in two periods. The first period from 1981 to 1985 is characterized by all those elements of leftist governance, while the second one, during the years 1985-1989[230] is dominated by a mild Neo-Liberalism, acquiring the name of capitalist restructuring strategy.

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[228] At the time, Greece, with the exception of the shipping sector and some other sectors of the economy, such as constructions and the cement and steel industries, faced severe problems of competition against European capitals. At this point, I should not fail to mention that in order to understand the developments in the EU and the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) we must turn years back. The European Union, as of the end of the 20th century, had already been aware of its difficulty to compete with the rest of western economic poles (North America, Japan) as well as with the emerging economies of the East (China, India, Russia, countries of Southeast Asia). For this reason, it adopted the Lisbon Agenda, which aimed at a coordinated broader application of neoliberal politics inside the EU. The main goal of this Agenda, which was named after the 2010 Lisbon Summit, where the core decisions were made in March 2000, was to render the EU "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" by 2010.

[229] The Panhellenic Socialist Movement known mostly by its acronym PASOK, is a social-democratic political party in Greece. PASOK was founded on 3 September 1974 by Andreas Papandreou as a democratic socialist and left-wing nationalist party. As a result of the 1981 legislative election, PASOK became Greece's first left-of-centre party to win a majority in the Hellenic Parliament.

[230] During this second period PASOK transforms itself from a leftist party to a neoliberal bourgeois one through the adoption of the capitalist restructuring strategy.

During the first period of the PASOK governance (1981-1985) raises were given to lowly-paid workers, the welfare State was strengthened, and many reforms were made in Family Law[231]. Furthermore, all the residual regulations of the post-Civil War era were abolished with the recognition of the National Resistance against the Nazi Occupation (1941-1944) and political refugees of the Left after the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) were finally given permission to return to Greece (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, pp.20-21).

During this period, all trade unions' claims, and actions subsided since employment rights were boosted after the establishment of the 40-hour work week, the four-week holiday time and the overall democratisation of Union Law. As a result, trade unions supported by PASOK gained in 1983 the absolute majority in the conventions both of the General Confederation of Labour (GSEE) and the Civil Servants' Confederation (ADEDY).

In the June 1985 elections, PASOK won a stable parliamentary majority and began its second term, mainly because it partly improved the living conditions of lower social classes, even though it failed to meet most of the demands of its pre-election agenda. Despite its leftist rhetoric and its confrontation with the bourgeois class in terms of its grass-roots governmental policy, PASOK never risked a breach with the basic structures of the bourgeois State nor the organizations in which it participated (NATO, the EEC).

During its second term (1985-1989), PASOK changed its policy orientation and transformed itself from a broad autonomy party (when compared to traditional social-democrats and conservative parties) into a neoliberal bourgeois party. As Grollios and Gounari (2016) underline, PASOK accepted the bourgeois rationale which promoted the reversal of power relations between the capital and labour through the redistribution of the capital's income, the reduction of social benefits, the setting up of flexible forms of

[231] These reforms, including the recognition of civil marriages as equal to religious ones, mainly aimed at strengthening the rights of women.

employment, the manipulation of the Union Movement and the discrediting of the working class struggle as countermeasures to the crisis.

The government measures put forward by PASOK during its second term, resulted in the rupture of the trade union party inside the General Confederation of Labour (GSEE,). There was a fierce strike movement from 1985 to 1988, against which the government used a series of questionable actions such as criminalisation of strike, judicial intervention in the GSEE and the emergency "civil-mobilisation" law. Finally, PASOK lost the 1986 municipal elections, and, apart from the split in the trade union party inside the GSEE, it also suffered a severe loss of power in the Civil Servants' Confederation (ADEDY), as well as student youth associations. At this point, it is important to stress that a conservative turn was observed amidst the Greek intellectuals (even some pertaining to the Renewing Left[232]), who were openly in favour of the modernisation of capitalist economy, discredited social struggle as "passé", denounced the clientelist character of the parties, populism and the "overpopulated" public sector (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, p.22).

Thus, from 1981 to 1991 there were significant changes in the composition of Greek social classes. More specifically, there was a reduction in the volume of the poor peasant stratum (from 21,9% to 13,1%), there was an increase in the working class (from 43% to 46,2%) and the two segments of petit bourgeois class (the traditional one from 16% to 21,5% and the new one from 9,8% to 14,3%), while the size of the bourgeois class remained essentially the same, as well as the rich and middle-peasant strata. (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, p. 23)

[232]The Renewing Communist Ecological Left (AKOA) was a Eurocommunist party in Greece. Established in 1987 as KKE Interior – Renewing Left, the party resulted from the KKE Interior splitting in two. The party didn't play a major role in electoral politics during the 1990s. This would only change in 2000, when the party aligned with Synaspismos, and in 2004 became one of the founding forces of Syriza (Coalition of the Radical Left).

According to Sakellaropoulos (2014, pp.290-291) during this decade, the Greek society continues its transformation, from a society governed by traditional social characteristics (width of agricultural sector, restricted number of working class) to a more "western" social model. Hence, while we witness a society in transformation and an increase in traditional petit bourgeoisie, the Greek society cannot be seen as a dominantly petit bourgeois society.

6.4.3. The period 1991- 2001

The morphology of the Greek society will face numerous and important changes from 1991 until 2001. The fall of eastern state regimes as well as the advance of neo-liberal ideas in the entire western world left their imprint on Greece as well.

In this line of thinking, the Konstantinos Mitsotakis government and the ones following it, will all contribute (though not to the same extent) to the consolidation of politics favouring endless austerity, the extension of flexible forms of employment and the enlargement of social inequality. All these developments must also be evaluated in connection to hundreds of thousands foreign workers[233] who came to work in Greece, integrated into the Greek working class and played a very substantial role in the high growth rates of the Greek economy.

The turning point of this period should be sought in the capital expansion towards countries and economic sectors that had not, up to that point, been in its scope of exploitation or were provided by the State to the public and not sold as capitalist merchandise. Health, education, different leisure activities, welfare state are only some of the new sectors exploited by the capitalist system that either expands in new activities (investment consultancies, courier services, cleaning, entertainment or sports services)

[233]After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989, there was significant influx of economic immigrants from the Balkans and Eastern European countries (Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Poland) towards Greece. Among them there were also an important number of co-ethnic Greek migrants (meaning foreigners of Greek descent) from former Soviet bloc countries and Albania.

or gets involved in already existing and provided services related to health, private education of all kinds and forms and advertising development.

In this frame, one must add the spreading of capitalist elements in businesses, traditionally run by the petit bourgeois class such as restaurant/catering services or repair services. Those developments seriously affected the agricultural sector as well, with thousands of farmers abandoning their lands and seeking waged labour in urban centres, as a result of not only the development of capitalist sectors of employment but also of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

The narrative adopted by the dominant class, presenting the last decade of the 20th century as a period governed by consumerism and "free-riding", during which the middle classes grew in number, is far from the truth. Increase in consumption expenditure was only related to the purchase of capitalist merchandise produced by capitalist businesses so as to ensure the capital's profits and development.

As far as social structure is concerned, the fact of the increase of the national income itself did not necessarily mean that this was equally distributed. To put it differently, the 90s was not the "big party" for the elimination of social differences but actually quite the opposite; social differences grew, because of the unobstructed accumulation of capital due to the implemented governmental policies (Sakellaropoulos, 2014, p. 294).

Thus, from 1991 to 2001, there was a new significant reduction in the volume of the peasant and the traditional bourgeois class, as well. The social formations were more reminiscent of those in modern western societies, and the capital's expansion to new profitable sectors resulted in the increase of the volume of the working class, the new petit bourgeois class and the bourgeoisie.

In the 1990s, all Greek governments, starting with the New Democracy government under Konstantinos Mitsotakis (1990-1993), and continuing with the PASOK governments (under Andreas Papandreou from 1993 to 1996, and then under Kostas

Simitis up to 2000), established austerity as a permanent and essential feature of their economic policy and favoured the redistribution of social wealth in favour of the bourgeois class. At the same time, through various processes, they adopted the direction of privatisations.

Regarding working relations, there were important changes, with the expansion of part-time work, the link between wages and productivity and the overall redistribution of the total working time. These changes meant to increase capital productivity and intensify the exploitation of the labour force. Unemployment rates climbed from 7% to 11,7% and this increase was taken advantage of for disciplinary purposes in the workplace and for the limitation of wage claims, while the systematic influx of foreign workers was utilized for the same purposes.

Equally important in Greek political developments in this decade was the course of the European Unification which was accelerated by the Maastricht Treaty and the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). Becoming a part of EMU became the new "Megali Idea"[234] of the Greek bourgeois class closely linked with the technocratic modernising rhetoric which was systematically promoted by the mass media. The empowerment of repressive mechanisms contributed greatly in this direction and a large percentage of intellectuals (many of them rooted in the Left) started defending capitalist modernisation and opposing "outdated" forms of political action which could potentially call the idea into question.

6.4.4. The period 1996-2000 and the establishment of neoliberal policies

The election of Kostas Simitis as President of PASOK, following Papandreou's illness, and as Prime Minister (as Papandreou had won the elections of 1993), meant a shift in an even more conservative direction. The Simitis administration upgraded a series of social categories connected to capitalist restructuring (i.e. engineers, CEOs, University

[234] The "Great Idea": this nationalist concept originally referred to the goal of establishing an all-encompassing Greek State that would include regions inhabited by Greeks as well as regions traditionally belonging to Greece in ancient times. For a whole century, the "Megali Idea" shaped the country's foreign policy and influenced -overtly or covertly- domestic policy as well.

Professors and journalists) and promoted the private market principles in the public sector's operation and the direct or indirect privatisations of its institutions. It also further encouraged flexible working relations, accelerated Greece's accession to the EMU and the organisation of the 2004 Olympic Games. As far as ideology is concerned, it solidified Europeanism, internationalisation and competiveness as main pillars of modernisation and, when faced with social struggle, it adopted a harsh attitude, by advocating that even the least concession would compromise the political victories won by the bourgeois class over the last years (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, p.83).

The prevalence of the neoliberal and neoconservatist doctrines of "New Thinking" and "New World Order" and the signing of the Maastricht Treaty brought international changes. These, combined with the election of Kostas Simitis as PASOK's president and Greece's Prime Minister, opened the path for a new educational reform named after the Minister for Education Gerasimos Arsenis. The use of a particular rhetoric containing words such as globalisation, scientific and technological revolution, knowledge and information society. As Grollios and Gounari point out:

> In the distinct European Union dialect, these terms refer to a concrete future form of social organisation as an inevitable necessity, in order to ideologically legalise the commercialisation of education, that is, its direct subjugation to the needs of the capital.
>
> (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, p.91-92).

In the 1995 European Union White Paper on Education and Training, one can already trace all the neoliberal and neoconservative ideological and political elements of the Arsenis' reform. The pertaining bourgeois ideology infiltrated this reform that was aiming for "efficiency" and "competitiveness" and proposed a New High School, the abolition of the appointment system of the Yearbook[235], the establishment of the Body of Permanent Assessors and other rulings regarding assessment, the Free Choice

[235] Up to 1998 teachers in Greece were appointed based on the appointment system of the Yearbook, waiting their turn to be appointed based on the year of their university diploma acquisition. From then on, teachers (in different percentages) were either appointed from the waiting lists or based on a new appointment system supervised by the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP), that took into consideration each candidate's written examination results, their university degree grade, additional academic qualifications and teaching experience.

Curricula and the Greek Open University. Other specific goals of the reform were the attempt to disconnect the University degrees from the right to work, the creation of a "co-operative" teaching body and a "disciplined" student body permanently assessed through a series of assessing examinations throughout High School and, of course, to pave the way for the establishment of tuition fees in Greek Universities. In sum, the main goal was the formation of a school and an educational system serving the profits of the capital.

6.4.5. The period leading to the Memoranda

Soon, after the 2000 elections everybody was under the impression that PASOK had been governing the country for too long, and in the 2004 elections, New Democracy won absolute majority in the Parliament and formed a government with Kostas Karamanlis as Prime Minister, the nephew of the founder of the party. Kostas Karamanlis managed the organisation of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens but three years later, after the great Greek forest fires especially in the Peloponnese region[236], he asked for a new general election, in which he was re-elected with a diminished however majority. During his new term of governance, he promoted important privatisations, such as the Olympic Airways, the Hellenic Telecommunications Organisation (OTE) and the Port of Piraeus.

However, a number of serious scandals involving ministers and members of Karamanlis' party surfaced during this term and seriously damaged the government's public image. In 2008, the death of 15-year-old student Alexandros Grigoropoulos at the hands of a special guard[237] in Athens started a huge wave of demonstrations and riots in big Greek cities and abroad, against police violence that had been gradually growing

[236]2007 Greek forest fires: a series of destructive and lethal massive forest fires that broke out mainly in western and southern Peloponnese as well as southern Euboea during the summer of 2007. The most destructive ones broke out on 23 August, expanded rapidly and were put out in early September. The fires had consequences. The total death toll stood at 84 people, including several fire fighters.

[237]In the evening of 6 December 2008, in the Exarcheia district of central Athens, two Special Guards (a special category of the Greek police personnel, originally meant for guard duties on public property) killed Alexandros Grigoropoulos, a 15-year-old Greek student. On 11 October 2010, the Mixed Jury Court of Amfissa found the two special guards guilty. Epaminondas Korkoneas was found guilty of "homicide with direct intention to cause harm" and Vasilis Saraliotis was convicted as an accomplice.

since the beginning of 2000. The Karamanlis government resigned and in the 2009 general elections PASOK formed a new government with George A. Papandreou[238] as Prime Minister who announced the induction of the country to the IMF-ECB support mechanism.

6.4.6. Concluding remarks

Thus, a question of great political significance has to be asked as far as the case of Greece is concerned: does the Greek social morphology validate views such as the one supported by K. Tsoukalas[239] who notes that "the dominant petit bourgeois character of Greek society cannot be contested" (Tsoukalas, 1984, p. 23) or that of G. Karampelias[240] who believes that "Greece is a country where the weight of small ownership and of the bourgeoisie is of such importance, that it seals all social developments" (Karampelias, 1982, p.15).

Naturally, with the evolution and broadening of capitalist production relations, both the boundaries and composition of the working class changed. The precise definition of power and boundaries of the working class in Modern Greek society is problematic due to a number of difficulties. The Greek official statistical and other authorities do not provide concrete data as to the size of the working class. According to the empirical study performed by Sakellaropoulos (2014)[241], who relied on relevant studies by the ESYE (former name of the ELSTAT- Hellenic Statistical Authority), I can draw the following conclusions regarding the changes in Greek social structure during the period 1981-2014[242].

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[238] George Papandreou is the son of the founder of PASOK, Andreas Papandreou.

[239]Tsoukalas in *Anti*, issue 260: "The structure of the employment and the petit bourgeois miracle", pp. 21-23. *Anti* was a Greek bi-weekly political and cultural journal of the Left during the period 1972-2008

[240] In his book *Little Bourgeois Democracy*.

[241] As Sakellaropoulos himself points out, however accurate the measurements, there is always a "grey area" involving foreigners in fear of registration, never declared seamen, employees who, for a number of reasons do not wish to declare their second job etc. However, until we come up with new research practices who can address these matters, social research cannot stand still and reaching conclusions can always prove of great value, even if, in the course of research, adjustments have to be made.

[242] I should, at this point, make some methodological clarifications. Black economy was not taken into account, since from relevant studies by the ESYE, one could derive the working position and hierarchical relationships both for the documented and undocumented labour. In cases of multiple jobs, the job considered primary by the ESYE studies was taken into account. Foreign workers do not participate in the

As far as the bourgeois class is concerned, in the period 1981-2014, it almost doubled its numbers due to several reasons. A main reason for this can be found in the purely capitalist production relations that prevailed after the de-ruralisation of the economy and the subsequent restriction of own consumption. Secondly, I must underline the role of the internationalisation of the Greek economy and the important capitalist growth of the country during the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Finally, I should not fail to address the issue of the changes in the methodology followed by the ESYE; changes that, from a point on, facilitated the inclusion in the bourgeois class not only of employers, but of others as well, such as directors and senior executives of State Bureaucracy.

What mainly characterises the agricultural sector is the fading of the peasant strata's strong presence. Even though Greece still has a larger number of farmers in relation to the average of the developed western countries, this number has significantly decreased. Inside the peasant class, unequal development of the peasant strata can be observed: the rich peasant stratum greatly increases its participation in the overall GDP, while the middle stratum decreases in number and the poor peasant stratum slowly disappears, since more than three quarters of the latter abandon agriculture altogether. All these developments bring out the dynamics of the centralisation of land and the depreciation of agricultural production and will inevitably lead to deficits in agricultural balance and dependence on imports as far as consumption of agricultural produce is concerned.

The traditional petit bourgeois class, now, shrinks to less than half of its original numbers. This can of course be interpreted by the intensified rhythms of concentration/concentralisation imposed by high growth rates. Furthermore, monopoly groups diversify into all those different sectors previously dominated by crafts, small family businesses run by petit bourgeois owners who strive to compete with the products of great capitalist businesses by putting in more hours of personal labour or by diminishing their personal salary and income.

ESYE studies, which can of course be problematic since the 2011 Population Census in Greece revealed that 1,250,000 foreign citizens permanently resided in the country. Even this number can easily be contested, if one takes into account those undocumented foreigners who do not wish to be recorded (Sakellaropoulos, 2014, pp.316-317).

On the other hand, a new petit bourgeois class emerges and flourishes. Mass access to higher education resulted in a rise of the educational level, eventually laying the groundwork for upgrading the collective worker's skills, empowering thus the most powerful sections of this new petit bourgeois class (engineers, lawyers, medical doctors).

As far as the working class is concerned, an important growth can be observed when compared to 1981, with mainly three social routes affecting its rise. Firstly, it is closely linked to the previously mentioned reduction of the poor farmers' numbers, who, when failing to make ends meet, either sell their land and join the proletariat, or abandon it in order to find a job in the industry, trade and services or even continue to cultivate it, while at the same time generating income from their work in the secondary or tertiary sectors.

Secondly, the closure of small business led the owners and all their relatives working in the family business to become proletarians. Finally, the dynamics of the economy themselves forged the third social route; in the same way a number of jobs for the petit bourgeois were created, there were also new positions for the working class. Thus, a 55,3% percentage attributed to the working class in Greece during the 1981-2014 period can be a very moderate assessment, while according to Sakellaropoulos (2014, p.320) its number reaches the three fifths of the total labour force.

Therefore, the development of Greek society is characterised by a sharp reduction in the peasant class, especially its poorer strata, a dramatic drop in the traditional petit bourgeois class, a rise of the working class, an impressive expansion of the new petit bourgeois class and the reinforcement of the bourgeois class and of the wealthier peasants. As a result of all the above, we cannot characterise the Greek society as predominantly petit bourgeois, though it should be highlighted that there is a strong presence of new petit bourgeois strata. In any case, the Greek society has gone through so many changes in such a little time that it is still in the process of transformation.

6.5. Educational reforms and forms of resistance

6.5.1. First reforms after the Metapolitefsi

The most important educational reforms in Greece took place in the years after the Metapolitefsi, during the first and mainly the second period of the PASOK governments. One of the most important legal initiatives of PASOK during its first period of governance was restructuring the operation of Universities in order to significantly democratise them. The professor's seat was abolished and four grades of academic staff, the operation of departments, post-graduate studies and the participation of students and other employees in the university administration were established. Moreover, the education of primary school teachers acquired a university status with the establishment of schools of Primary and Early Childhood education.

Additional initiatives of PASOK in a similar direction were the abolition of entrance exams for high school, the adoption of monotonic orthography, the abolition of inspectors and the production of new analytic textbooks in primary and secondary education.

However, in its second four-year period, during which PASOK seems to shift to the right, the situation is different. Thus, the austerity programme of 1985-1987 is applied, while the effort of then Minister for Education Antonis Tritsis to turn the discussion to the challenges of the "new era" and the "new school", promoting a national dialogue that puts educators in a position to apologise for the problems of education, utterly failed. In June 1988, there was a strike of secondary school teachers during the Panhellenic exams. The strike was grounded on mass procedures of general assemblies, had impressive percentages of participation, lasted 35 days, brought about the resignation of Minister for Education Apostolos Kaklamanis and yielded some gains for teachers. However, the consensus in education had been breached and the dominance of traditional party union forces had come into question.

6.5.2. Introduction of neoconservatist models and first reactions

The rise of New Democracy in 1990 came hand in hand with the attempt to apply a programme which was guided by Anglo-Saxon neoliberal and neoconservatist models. The reduction of the educational budget, the abolition of the post-high school preparatory centres and, mainly, the refusal to meet the wage demands of educators led to new mobilisations of teachers of the secondary education during the 1990 Panhellenic Examinations[243]. Over the next academic year, the Minister for Education Vassilis Kondogiannopoulos tried to "restore order in schools" (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, p.26) with a series of actions including numerical grading and written examinations in compulsory education, the teaching of Ancient Greek in Secondary School, the dress code, the flag-raising, the morning prayer and attendance of the mass by the whole school.

Approximately a month later, on December 10th, 1990 there were more than 1,100 student-occupied schools in the whole country and by January this number reached 1,690. While safeguarding a school occupation in the city of Patras, the school teacher Nikos Temponeras was murdered by "indignant parents", who were trying to end the school occupation. This was the beginning of the end for all New Democracy efforts to promote the neo-liberal and neo-conservative restructuring of the educational system, starting with the discipline of teachers and students.

6.5.3. Pre-crisis reactions of Greek dominated classes and the Creation of 'Greece of the Memoranda'

The labour movement despite losing some of its revolutionary momentum, especially after the historic bend in 1989, did not however stop fighting. In Greece, in the face of the capitalist restructuring[244], considerable resistance was put forward over the following four years: mobilisations of Thessaly's farmers, long lasting teacher strikes, a

[243] By "Panhellenic Examinations" we refer to the system and examinations that Greek students have to go through in order to achieve their entrance into highest and higher education in Greece.
[244] Restructuring manifesting itself as: an expansion of flexible working relations, direct or indirect privatisations, accelerated procedures to access the EMU, the establishment of competition and Europeanism as pillars of modernisation and, finally, a harsh attitude towards social struggle (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, p. 83).

long strike in the Ionian Bank (IB), teacher mobilisations against the abolition, student occupations in schools and universities and mobilisations in 1997 against the educational reform put forward by the Minister for Education Gerasimos Arsenis[245] (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, pp.83-84).

The Chapters of this doctoral thesis so far could very well have led readers to wonder how we reached the creation of "Greece of the Memoranda". Before I attempt a brief answer, I consider worthwhile to remind once again that the view supported in this doctoral thesis is utterly different from the official bourgeois interpretations. My answer, therefore, will not be based on a reading of the crisis which pinpoints the causes exclusively in the accumulation of an overwhelming debt in relation to the GNP (Gross National Product).

It is my firm belief that such a reading of the crisis, overlooking the class dimension of public deficit and public debt, while at the same time covering the direction of public spending[246] and not taking into account a lot of other factors affecting deficit[247], cannot

[245] With the Arsenis educational reform, there is essentially a reanimation of the great student mobility of the period 1990-1991.

[246] Indeed, comparing the composition of public spending of Greece and the EU-15 during the period 1995-2009, the relevant data shows that the share of social transfers provided in Greece is smaller than the whole of the EU-15 (46.1% versus 47.7%). This is related to the fact that Greece falls behind the European average in several of the traditional fields of the welfare state. We will characteristically mention education (3.4% versus 5.2%), health (4.6% versus 6.4%), housing infrastructure (0.4% versus 1.0%), culture and entertainment (0.4% versus 1.1%) as well as social protection (16.5% versus 18.9%). On the contrary, it is worth noting that, from a class perspective of the government budget, Greece spends significantly more on defence (2.9% versus 1.6%), while at the same time interest plays a definitive role in shaping the total spending (their share in the whole of spending is almost double in Greece compared to the one recorded in the EU-15) (c.f. Argeitis, Dafermos and Nikolaidi, 2011, p.19-21).

[247] Many important factors in this direction are the low taxation of the capital and of the dominant classes in the neoliberal period, as well as tolerance of tax evasion or legal tax avoidance of businesses. Indeed, the greatest disparity between Greek (as well as Spanish and Portuguese) fiscal structure from the corresponding European one is found in terms of tax revenue. Specifically for the period 2000-2005, existing data shows that Greek tax revenue coming from income capital (interest, business profit, self-employment profit, etc.) is impressively less than the EU-17 average (c.f. Argeitis, Dafermos and Nikolaidi, 2011, p. 18). Over the following years the unequal distribution of taxes in Greece is further intensified with salaried and pensioners taking on the greatest burden of income taxation. We will characteristically mention that from the fiscal year 2006 to the fiscal year 2010 tax burden on income increased by 7.28% for salaried and pensioners, versus 1.79% for businesses and freelance workers, while business profit taxes were reduced by 9.07% (c.f. Zisimopoulos and Ekonomakis, 2013, p. 28). We can therefore reach the conclusion that the significant upward deviation of public deficit in Greece, in comparison to Europe, is due to low taxation of the capital and small business strata, which can be attributed, on the one hand, to the effort to resolve the lack of competitiveness of Greek capitalism

be but an attempt to obscure the real causes of the crisis. It is essentially an effort to ideologically legitimise the radical capitalist transformation, the application of dominant policies and the Memoranda (Sakellaropoulos, 2014, p. 66).

To answer, therefore, the question of how we were led to the political exploitation of the global capitalist crisis through the establishment of a state of accumulation even more brutal than the version of neoliberalism that we have known, automatically transforming Greece into the most recent and historically unprecedented neoliberal experiment on a global scale (Sassen, 2012; 2014; Hall, Massey and Rustin, 2013; Gounari, 2014) I will turn to the work of Ståle Holgersen.

In the *Economic Crisis, (Creative) Destruction and the Current Urban Condition*, Holgersen (2014, p. 695) makes the case that capitalism is benefited by human suffering[248]. He underlines that paradoxical as it may seem, since the rates of profit and growth determine the economic success and not human wellbeing, the economic system can actually benefit from the degradation of public services. He reaches the conclusion that the current austerity policy, contrary to various Keynesian or neoliberal claims that promote it as "an irrational ideological right-wing reflex" or as "pure madness" (Krugman, 2012a; 2012b), should be examined in terms of the needs of the capital.

It is precisely within the above framework –as has become clear in the Introductory Chapter 1 of this doctoral thesis- that the case of Greece is studied, as a case that can provide valuable insight in two main axes: regarding the generalised attack on the welfare state and the public good; and as the arena of a wider and more ambitious social experiment (social engineering) regarding the new form that capitalism will 'have' to assume.

through reduction of taxation of business profits, and on the other hand, the political deliberation which aimed at the creation of social alliances (c.f. Maniatis, 2013b; 2014; Sakellaropoulos, 2014, pp. 67-68).

[248] For a connection with the above c.f. Chapter 1 and Chapter 5 of this doctoral thesis.

What we are witnessing in Greece since May 2010 and the signing of the first Memorandum[249] and the Loan Agreement of the Greek State by Georgios Papandreou's government is the 'application of shock techniques' (Klein, 2007)[250]. This equation could not of course be missing the fear approach, an approach directly linked to the application of the neoliberal dogma. In the case of Greece, this fear was none other than the fear of bankruptcy, which was systematically intensified by means of a strategically planned media propaganda before it was finally enveloped in a national mantle[251].

Thus, the induction takes place in the name of 'saving the country', the Memorandum is unavoidable to avert a 'national disaster', while collective accountability is systematically cultivated[252]. This demonization of the victim had a twofold role to play, since, on the one hand, it justifies the dictum that "we all got a piece of the pie"[253] and

[249] It is worth emphasising, at this point, that the first Memorandum (2nd May 2010), which outlined an enormous effort for fiscal consolidation in its first three years (2010-2012), coincides with the adoption of the third consecutive package of austerity measures since the early 2010. This package consisted of, briefly: further reduction of the salaries of employees in Public Utility Organisations; increase of indirect taxation (through increasing VAT); reduction of the minimum wage and overtime; establishment of a special apprenticeship for people aged 15-18 (with salaries up to 70% of the minimum wage); changes in pensions; increased redundancy threshold for businesses; reduced notice period in regular termination of employment contracts (a measure which resulted in decreased redundancy pay by as many as 18 salaries for employees with a long service); and finally, abolition of the range of arbitration decisions on the subject of minimum wage (giving the employer the power to choose to settle work issues on a personal level). From all the above, it is made clear that the framework of the first Memorandum makes a rift compared to the previous two packages of measures, since, for the first time, the private sector enters the arena (the two previous packages of austerity measures, those of January and March 2010, involved cuts in the public sector) (c.f. Kazakos, 2011; Sakellaropoulos, 2014, pp. 76-77).

[250] I am referring to the tactics in the form of shock-treatment that have already been successfully implemented on a global scale to impose neoliberal policies. Taking advantage of a series of negative situations, such as natural disasters, wars, dictatorships, terrorist attacks and debt crises, these tactics have proved especially effective in wearing out resistance and securing a forced consent even to the most extreme neoliberal policies. Meaning to provoke collective confusion, fear and paralysis, the shock-treatment is based on overcoming social and individual resistance that would otherwise defend what is at stake vehemently (c.f. also Chapter 1 of this doctoral thesis and "creative destruction").

[251] The latter is clearly seen in the prime minister's official announcement that the country was resorting to the EU, the ECB (European Central Bank) and the IMF (International Monetary Fund), which was made on 23 April 2010 from the Greek border island of Kastelorizo, where the then Greek Prime Minister Georgios Papandreou was visiting. Citing the data on the real 2009 deficit (13.6% of the GDP), he declared: "It is a national and imperative need to officially ask our partners in the EU for the activation of the support mechanism we jointly created."

[252] C.f. Chapter 3 of this doctoral thesis regarding the dominant narratives on the crisis that demonised the people of a whole country.

[253] At this point we are referring to the notorious phrase said by the Deputy Prime Minister Theodoros Pangalos. The exact phrasing during the convention of the Standing Committee on Public Administration, Public Order and Justice on 21 September 2010 was: "We swindled [the money] all of us together". The

on the other hand, it creates dissension, since all those reacting are considered to be undermining the 'salvation'.

Similarly to the 1970s crisis, when high salaries and social provisions were incriminated as the root causes of the crisis, the system's counterattack took on the same form, aiming at the biggest possible increase of the percentage of surplus value. Education within such a framework is naturally regarded as a 'black hole' which receives money without providing 'effectiveness' and without analysing cost-profit, while it is simultaneously accused as responsible for unemployment, fall of productivity and inadequate preparation of young people for the labour market.

The above reading of 'reality' is anything but politically 'innocent'. The 'depoliticisation' of decisions on education is proposed as a measure of reform, and the market is deemed the final judge of the merits and demerits of any choice or reform. But the axis of changes in all levels of education is related with the emergence of raw class interest, it moves in the direction of serving the needs of the economy and their merit is decided on the extent to which they correspond to the demands of capitalist profit. Let me try to unravel the thread, albeit briefly.

The educational reform in Greece, in the context of a new educational vision and set of values began when, in 2010, the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs announced the complete plan for reforms in the primary and secondary education. This new reform labelled *The New School* (Diamantopoulou law 3848/2010) replicated in many aspects, according to Gounari and Grollios (2012, p. 304), the largely failed 2002 American "No Child Left Behind" Act (NCLB).

For the record, before I continue, it is worth mentioning the view expressed in a 2010 article entitled Why I Changed My Mind About School Reform by Diane Ravitch,

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issue being discussed by the Committee was the abolition and merger of services, organisations and institutions of the public sector.

Deputy Minister for Education in the Bush administration and one of the leaders of the American NCLB reform:

> …accountability turned into a nightmare for American schools, producing graduates who were drilled regularly on the basic skills but were often ignorant about almost everything else… the current emphasis on accountability has created a punitive atmosphere in schools. The Obama administration seems to think that schools are often the anchor of their communities, representing values, traditions and ideals that have persevered across decades. They also fail to recognize that the best predictor of low academic performance is poverty –not bad teachers…
>
> Most significantly, we are not producing a generation of students who are more knowledgeable, and better prepared for the responsibilities of citizenship. That is why I changed my mind about the current direction of school reform.
>
> (Ravitch, 2010)

Next came the law for Model Experimental Schools (3966/2011), the law 4009/2011, its 'disguise' (4076/2012 – 3rd Memorandum)[254] and the 4115/2013 law on higher education, as well as the "New High School" by Arvanitopoulos (4186/2013). A detailed review of school reforms may be beyond the scope of this research, I should, however, point out that the restructuring of education in Greece takes place in a general environment which can be limited neither geographically[255] nor to a specific level. It is my view that despite particularities, the effort to deconstruct public education in Greece is incorporated in a general framework which transcends them.

More specifically, it is part of a general environment which constitutes a common core in everything we are witnessing, and it is none other than the historic attack by the capital on all levels: against knowledge with its degeneration into skill; against

[254] The law 4076/2012 which ensued and attempted to present modifications as "amendments" and concessions to the academic community.

[255] The above should not be interpreted as an attempt on my part to imply that the strength of the neoliberal attack on education is the same in every country. I mean to emphasise the internationalist character of educational reforms. Beyond that, I absolutely acknowledge that the strength of the neoliberal attack on education in each country depends on the level of its capitalist development and on the correlations of class forces (c.f. Skordoulis and Hill, 2014, p. 15).

education and its social role by intensifying social inequality in education; and finally, against labour and the acquired rights of the working world by degrading teachers' work, generalising ways of labour exploitation and legitimising new areas and methods of extracting profit. The ultimate goal is a cheap educational system, submitted to the laws of the market which will prepare a backup working army for exploitation and flexible work (Robertson, 2007).

6.5.4. Resistance and protests in the 'Dark Years' of the crisis

Following the outbreak of the capitalist crisis in 2008, there were several explosive uprisings in smaller towns as well as capitalist metropolises. Popular reaction started around May 2010, after the announcement of the first Memorandum, with enormous demonstrations throughout the country. They carried on in several forms, such as the clashes in Keratea[256], the 'I Won't Pay' movement,[257] and of course the movement of the city squares (May-July 2011), which was definitely a novel form of protest in Modern Greek political history[258].

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[256] When local residents opposed the creation of a landfill on the hill of Ovriokastro, five kilometres from the town centre.

[257] It is worth noting that, until at least the movement of the squares and the large, important strikes of that time, none of the protests and the national strikes that followed reminded of the mass reaction of hundreds of thousands of people who flooded all major cities with demonstrations after the announcement of the first Memorandum (5 May 2010). It is without doubt that the tragic death of three Marfin Bank employees during the mass demonstration of labour unions on the 5th of May was shocking, but, according to Spyros Sakellaropoulos (2014, pp. 135-136), this was not the main cause of the observed decline in mobilisation. Instead, he attributes this development to two main factors: the bewilderment caused by the adoption of the first Memorandum despite the May 5 extensive national protests, and the illusions held by a large portion of the population that, despite their harshness, the measure would soon be abandoned, and the economy would bounce back.

[258] In Greece, everything started, as in many other cases, with a facebook call for a gathering of indignant citizens in Athens, in the Syntagma square, on 25 May 2011, as well as 38 more locations in Greek major cities. On the first day, there was an estimated number of 25,000-30,000 people in Syntagma, 5,000-7,000 people in Thessaloniki and 3,000 people in the third largest Greek city, Patra. The phenomenon seemed to geographically spread and intensify by the day. The demands which unified the movement had to do with the fall of the government, the refusal to pay back the debt and the annulment of Memoranda, while direct democracy was the dominant form of decision-making. Beyond that, every square had its own situation. In Syntagma, there was a separation between the 'upper' and 'lower' square, the former comprising the less politicised crowd, those of conservative background and spontaneous responses. They were people who participated in mobilisations for the first time and they reshaped the political crisis into a national one (that is where Greek flags were flying). The second part of the square mainly included the Left, apart from the KKE, who, through a co-ordinated popular assembly, attempted to give the mobilisation form and direction (Sakellaropoulos, 2014, pp. 136-139). Correspondingly, in Irakleio, Crete, there was extensive participation of the anarchist movement, in Kozani, there was the popular Right, and in Patra, the student Left which dominated the squares (Bresia, 2011, p. 95).

Three months after this movement, there was another large two-day public sector strike (19-20 February, 2011)[259], while a few days later, there were reactions during the official parades in celebration of the October 28th National Holiday[260] which led to the cancellation of the parade in Thessaloniki[261]. Simultaneously, other struggles were unfolding, some particularly forceful, like the nine-month strike in Greek Steelworks in Aspropyrgos, with employees demanding the revocation of mass unjustified dismissals which were overseen by a bailiff[262], and the rallies in Skouries in Chalkidiki[263]. There were also experiments of self-management in some Mass Media corporations, as well as examples of self-organisation, most notably in the case of Industrial Metal Mining (BIO.ME.)[264]. To counterbalance the rapid degradation of living conditions, there were

[259] Regarding social security and the establishment of the system of reserve which challenged the permanence of public school teachers.

[260] On October 28th, Greece celebrates the refusal to submit to the Mussolini ultimatum, essentially, the beginning of the Greek-Italian War in 1940. Schools and public services are closed, and the celebration involves military and student parades attended by several government, state and municipality officials in every city, town or village in Greece.

[261] These events marked the downfall of the PASOK government on 11 November 2011 and the constitution of a transition government with the technocrat Loukas Papadimos as Prime Minister, supported by PASOK, New Democracy and the radical right-wing party of Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS) (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, p. 89).

[262] I would like to say a few words on the history and importance of the Steelworks factory and the large wave of solidarity brought by the nine-month strike. Greek Steelworks S.A., the first steel industry in Greece founded in 1937 by the family of Stavros Salapatas, and one of the biggest in Greece, is located on the Athens-Korinthos road, right after Greek Oils, in the Aspropyrgos industrial zone. In 2006, it was bought off by Thessaly Steelworks, owned by the Manesis family, forming an enormous corporation. In their facilities in Aspropyrgos, Volos and Velestino, they have the capacity to produce 1,000,000 tonnes of steel per year. In the years of the crisis, the 2011 closure of the factory in Aspropyrgos was finalised in 2014, and more than 18 productive units in Greece were closed down from 2012-2016. As for the solidarity towards the strikers and their families, it should be noted that neighbourhood residents, students and unions gathered there daily, while money was collected for the Solidarity Fund from Indonesian and Malaysian workers to unpaid employees of the newspaper "Eleftherotypia".

[263] Where there was intense and constant resident opposition to the expansion of the gold and copper mines.

[264] It all started when Philkeram Johnson, parent corporation of BIO.ME., when bankrupt in late 2011, already in debt not having paid salaries and allowances since May of that year. Demanding their money and the reopening of the factory, after repeated strikes and refusals to work until the full payment of their salaries, BIO.ME employees mobilise. The Court grants them temporary property and use of existing merchandise and machinery, they occupy the factory and, by forming an agricultural association, they start their self-managed labour. Up until 2015, four different auctions were stopped by community members and supporters. Even though they were not producing construction materials, as before, but mostly organic cleaning products (soap and detergents), the venture of self-managing the factory lasted approximately five years and the products were successfully sold even abroad (France, Italy, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany). As the employees themselves claim, in an interview given to Marianna Papadakou and Fenia Tsialoukou, Argentina was the inspiration for the whole venture, where large numbers of workers had mobilised following the country's economy collapse. In fact, they received guidance by Argentinian supporters who visited the facilities in Thessaloniki offering valuable advice (Koulalis and Polychroniou, 2015).

many different solidarity practices[265], important enough to warrant at least a brief mention (c.f. Sakellaropoulos, 2014, pp. 133-144; Grollios and Gounari, 2016, pp. 83-90).

Another peak in mobilisation was reached in February 2012, when the two largest parties decided to sign a second Memorandum with even worse anti-grassroots measures. In the February 12th rallies in particular, it is estimated that the participation was the highest since 1974 and the fall of Junta. Calling elections for May 2012 instigated a limbo which lasted until the early November 2012, when the decision of the Samaras government to impose a third Memorandum gave rise to strikes and demonstrations equal to those of the previous February.

The next large reaction will be caused in the summer of 2013, following the government's abrupt decision to close down the Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation (ERT). The violence of this move on the part of the government caused new massive reactions[266] and a large wave of five months of solidarity, which was further strengthened by the fact that, even after the New Hellenic Radio, Internet and Television (NERIT) [267] started to broadcast, ERT continued to operate as an experiment of a self-managing public institution, broadcasting news and programmes that had never been publicised before (Sakellaropoulos, 2014, p. 142). Antonis Samaras' government had severely underestimated the force of the reaction this action would stimulate[268], and this

[265] For instance, soup kitchens, social food markets, social clinics and pharmacies, emotional support units, free courses, as well as exchange markets, and various forms of collaborative coffeehouses and restaurants. These were usually housed in workers' clubs and privately managed spaces, along with other activities, for instance, nurseries, libraries, dance, art and photography classes.
[266] As well as "an expression of 'profound dismay' by the European Broadcasting Union" as reported by Peter Siani-Davies, in his book *Crisis in Greece* (2017, p. 308).
[267] NERIT was established on 26 July 2013, following the closing of ERT. It was dissolved on 11 June 2015 and ERT reopened by a law proposed by the Syriza-ANEL government, in force following the elections in January 2015, which the majority of the Parliament voted for.
[268] The government's greatest mistake, as Sakellaropoulos (2014) fittingly observes, was that they underestimated the special weight that free press carries in the historical consciousness of a country with such an uneven political environment. The history of Greece itself was ignored, since it was not taken into account that the country had been through two World Wars in the 20th century, and it had become painfully familiar with the *idionymon* (special illegal act). This was the term by which the law 4229/25 was recorded in Greek history which was applied in 1928 by the government led by Eleftherios Venizelos' (1864-1936) and was essentially the first attempt to penalise communist ideas in Greece. Moreover, the country had experienced the Metaxas dictatorship (1936-1941), the German occupation, the

cost them the participation of the Democratic Left (DIMAR) in their government and resulted in loss of parliamentary majority seats.

Summing up, from May 2010 till May 2014, there was a total of 20,120 gatherings-rallies-mobilisations, over 20 national strikes, the movement of the squares, disruptions of parades, the movement in support of ERT, occupations of Ministries and social solidarity practices. It should not be overlooked, though, that grassroots mobilisation following the elections of 2012, when the political scenery changed completely and the bi-partisan system (PASOK – New Democracy) was subverted after dominating since 1977[269], was visibly weakened in relation to the 2010-2012 period (Sakellaropoulos, 2014, p. 189), as the people became more and more resigned to their fate.

The main underlying cause of this retreat was the complete reversal of political correlations, as it was made obvious in the results of two consecutive elections in May and June 2012, and the unprecedented rise in the percentage of an anti-Memoranda party, namely the Coalition of the Radical Left (Syriza)[270], which emerged from the June 14th European Parliament elections leading the results with 4 percentage units over New Democracy and began to seem a likely candidate to win the national elections. As a result, a hope began to grow in the minds of a large portion of the popular classes: that the Memorandum policies would be reversed with the power of governance taken over by a political party which openly declared that it expressed the voice of the 'Left' (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, p. 90).

In the 'eye of the Memorandum hurricane' for the eighth consecutive year, therefore, and even though Greece and its crisis have started to become old news in international

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Civil War (1946-1949), the state of post-Civil War violence and the Colonels' Junta (1967-1974). It was impossible for a country such as this to not perceive of the abolition of public television and radio as a restriction on democracy itself (Sakellaropoulos, 2014, p. 142).

[269] The two parties of PASOK and New Democracy had dominated the Greek political stage for a very long time. At times, they possessed a combined total of over 80% of the votes cast. But in the fateful elections of 2012, they had failed to convince over two thirds of the voters (Siani-Davies, 2017, p. 206).

[270] While its antecedent, the Coalition of the Progressive Left, struggled in the 80s, often unsuccessfully, to surpass the limit of 3% and get Parliament members elected, Syriza managed to obtain the 16.7% in May and the 26.9% of votes in June.

media, the reality remains harsh and the future bleak. Despite the fact that it is difficult to continue to describe Greece as being "in the throes of a crisis" after all these years (Siani-Davies, 2017) the depressing familiarity in the country's situation does not really leave much choice.

It is not just that there is no sign of 'white smoke', but also that it has become understood by even the most unrepentant sceptics that the crisis and the attack on labour gets deeper all the time (Meliopoulos, 2017). Approximately three years after the Syriza-ANEL (Independent Greeks) rise to power[271], 'the masks have slipped'. The following comment by Susan Watkins (2016) in her article "Oppositions" for the magazine *New Left Review* seemed particularly to the point:

> […] what's striking is not just the speed of Syriza's fall, covering in six months the political distance that took PASOK twenty years, but the fact that Syriza's starting point was so much farther to the right. PASOK had been responsible for real advances in health, education, national development and civil rights in the 1980s, establishing a social compact on the left of the European spectrum; Syriza's highest aim, soon abandoned, was to avoid further cuts.
>
> (Watkins, 2016)

With the false hopes and visions of the 'Governing Left' and the false promises of painless solutions scattered to the four winds, the struggle gradually began anew. Let me bring this section to a close with a brief review of the tempo of protest in the years 2015 and 2016, totally conscious of the fact that it is necessarily far from comprehensive.

There were huge mass rallies during the intensive campaigning week leading from the announcement of the referendum by the Prime Minister, in the early hours of 27 June 2015 (on television, just as Georgios Papandreou had done four years earlier) to the actual vote on 5 July. In the evening of 26 June, prior to the announcement, the Greek delegation had unexpectedly withdrawn from the talks in Brussels, while the question posed was whether the draft agreement proposed by the European Commission, the

[271] Right from the start, the choice of radical right-wing ANEL as government partners, despite the fact that the two parties shared little more than an aversion to austerity, was interpreted as a sign by many. A sign, that is, that the party would hold its position regarding the memoranda, the troika and the restructuring of the debt (Siani-Davies, 2017, p. 13).

European Central Bank (E.C.B.) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) should become accepted.[272]

A lot could be written about the referendum in question but suffice it to say that it was recorded as the most intensely polarised moment in post-war Greece, ten days during which everyone was forced to choose a side and the real opposing social forces became visible. The people answered with a thunderous 61.3% 'NO' over the 38.7% that supported 'yes'.[273] Even though the result was celebrated gloriously, its days were numbered right from the start when the Prime Minister appeared, on the very night of exuberant celebrations, and made a speech which emphasised the need to reinforce national unity and resume negotiations[274] (Charalambopoulos, 2016; Siani-Davies, 2017).

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[272] An analysis of the referendum is far beyond the scope of this doctoral thesis; however, I will briefly discuss one or two interesting points. First, let me say that this referendum was the first to be held in Greece since 1974, as well as the only one in Modern Greek history that did not concern a polity change (since Georgios Papandreou's earlier proposition for a referendum in 2011 had been rejected). The question which the electorate was called upon to answer with a simple 'yes' or 'no' was particularly lengthy and complex. The Greek people, according to the official ballot, were asked whether they wanted to accept the two documents submitted by the authorities. The first was entitled "Reforms for the completion of the current program and beyond", essentially, an outline for negotiations which stopped being valid when the second programme ended, prior to the referendum. The second, entitled "Preliminary debt sustainability analysis", contained a number of scenarios (Siani-Davies, 2017, pp. 322-323).

[273] I should not here that even though governmental circles threw a very emotive campaign, approximately 62.5% abstained from the vote. Siani-Davies (2017, p. 325) largely attributes this to the fact that a large portion of the electoral roll had already migrated during the long years of the crisis. An estimated minimum of 427,000 thousand people, based on a survey conducted by the BrainGain initiative, were not granted the chance to exercise their legal right to vote from their place of residence, as, despite it being a constitutional right (Article 51, section 4), this is not included in Greek electoral law. Additionally, we should take into account the travel expenses that discouraged many residents of places other than where they are registered to vote from making the journey. Generally speaking, apart from the referendum, a tendency to "legitimise" abstention as a political stance has begun to emerge in Greece since 2010. It is said to express disappointment, indignation and the sense of lack of representation that permeates the electorate (Kafe, Nezi and Pieridis, 2011). However, without systematic measurements and post-election surveys, these are more tendencies than scientifically proved views (Konstantinidis, 2010, pp. 9-11). Let me stress, though, that Greece is a country with a tradition of high turnouts, both in parliamentary elections and in local administrative ones, with an average reaching 80% (Blais, et. al., 2004, pp. 221-236).

[274] At this point, I agree with the interpretation given by Stathis Kouvelakis (2015), reiterated by Peter Siani-Davis (2017) regarding the reasons behind the decision to hold a referendum and the growing unease within the ranks of Syriza. In other words, Prime Minister Tsipras knew that, if he were to announce the new measures proposed by lenders, it would lead to one of two possible outcomes: there would either be a party rebellion and possible defeat, leading to elections, or they would be voted for by the Parliament, but he would not have the legitimacy to implement something so radically different from what came to be known as the "Thessaloniki Programme" (Tsipras' speech at the 82nd Thessaloniki

For the rest of 2015, the people became increasingly worried, ultimately despairing over the commitment to a third, even harsher Memorandum[275]. I will only quote, at this point, the Harvard law school which declared that the Greek government could boast the worst negotiating tactics of 2015 (Sheehan, 2016, p. 190). I should also not fail to refer to the intensification of the refugee crisis in the summer of 2015, due to the war in Syria. A very large number of refugees were stranded in Greece following the closing of the borders of other European countries, aggravating the situation further.

Closing this section and reaching 2016, I would say that, throughout the year, and while the government attempted to implement the third Memorandum, there were strikes, occupations and other forms of resistance in which several former supporters of Syriza take part. In this turbulent winter, the people react daily to proposals regarding raising taxes and contributions and reducing pensions which had already been cut eleven times. Along with the former there were mobilisations of farmers, fishermen, lawyers, doctors and engineers who were marching, and striking, while the whole country was in deadlock in the first week of February with continuous mobilisations against the new laws concerning social security.

The general strike of GSEE and ADEDY combined with organised freelancers and scientists on the 4th of February 2016 was the biggest in years, while two months later, on 7 April, there is a general strike in the broader public sector, in which primary and secondary school teachers take part (DOE-OLME) along with the Panhellenic Medical Association, administrative university employees, air traffic controllers (forcing Aegean and Olympic Airlines to modify or cancel flights) and the Journalists' Union of Athens Daily Newspapers (ESIEA). These events quite possibly mark the end of the era of calm

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International Fair on 13 September 2004, to which I have already referred, when, as leader of the opposition and on the way to winning the elections, he spoke of replacement of the Memorandum with a national reconstruction plan, a housing assurance programme and programmes of subsidised meals for 300,000 poor families, financial support for low pensioners and free medical care for everyone).

[275] I will very briefly mention that the third Memorandum, covering the period 2015-2018, was a dense thirty-two-page text, with long lists of reforms that were both flawed and reminiscent of previous agreements (Siani-Davies, 2017, p. 331).

waters, which was in any case the most worrying result of the paralytic influence of false dreams (Meliopoulos, 2017, p. 12)[276].

6.5.5. Teachers' Response

Despite the fact that the teachers' resistance is a topic that has not received adequate attention in literature, the reality is different. Even if their activity is absent from newspaper headlines or news reports, teachers do resist globally. The strangest fact is that, even when this resistance is documented, mainstream research has been reduced to a description of resistance as fault, or, at least, as an opposition to be overcome, or as an act betraying conservatism on the part of teachers, psychologically rooted in their unwillingness to change.

However, it should be stressed at this point that in the past decade, at least, the scenery has slowly changed, and more work is being done in the area of teachers' resistance, challenging the prevailing image of the psychological deficit that needs to be changed for the sake of quality education. Within that context, the tension between control-oriented policies and teachers' professional autonomy is emphasised, alongside alternative roots of teacher resistance that lie in professional principles and deep commitments (Achinstein and Ogawa, 2006). Nevertheless, despite the increased concern about this subject over the last years, little attention has been given to the imperative need for collective teacher resistance, and little has been done to illuminate

[276] The fact that Syriza, despite the deceptive promises and the 'leftist' touches, came to be the best fall-back for the bourgeois political system, the EU and the IMF, serving the great capital in exactly the same way as its predecessors, transforming a thunderous 'NO' to 'YES' in the referendum and 'saddling' the country with a third Memorandum requiring new anti-grassroots measures (related with new cuts, selling off public property and dissolving labour rights and achievements) was not a big disappointment for Greece alone (Meliopoulos, 2017). The impact was perhaps even greater on the rest of Europe which was in favour of a Left European venture, something made obvious in various non-Greek books that have been written in the past three years approaching, from various standpoints, the Syriza phenomenon and the Greek crisis. As Helena Sheehan characteristically writes in her latest book: "Syriza was a horizon of hope. Now it is a vortex of despair. This is true not only for the Greek people and the Greek left. It is true not only for the international left, but beyond that, for many people who looked to Greece as a breakthrough [….] Now Syriza stands as an affirmation that there is no alternative [….] It raises the question of whether there can be left government in an indebted country within the Eurozone. It also raises the bigger question of whether there can be a left government within an even more powerful global capitalism" (Sheehan, 2017, p. 185).

how teachers' resistance is embedded in, and shaped by, the actual reality of schools; and even less regarding how this reality may affect teachers' working lives.

Specifically, in Greece, as the following section will reveal in greater detail, it comes as no surprise that the educational movement, as an indispensable part of labour and union movements, is in fact in crisis. One the one hand, there is the violent implementation of Memoranda by a self-proclaimed Left, leading to increasingly more reactionary reforms that have sowed disillusionment among educators, and on the other hand, there is the refusal of dominant union powers, old and new, to organise even the most elementary defensive struggles[277].

As always, of course, the easiest thing is to assign responsibility to the teachers, employing excuses of the sort "they do not attend general assemblies, they do not participate or withstand strikes"[278] without investigating the causes, and thus, the requirements for a reversal of the union movement falling into disrepute[279]. It is, however, a fact that it is not only at the level of tertiary organisations GSEE-ADEDY that we find this feeling of mistrust, and perhaps rightly so. It is also at the level of federations, OLME-DOE, and primary unions (Bachti and Miltsakakis, 2017, p.59).

[277] For a better understanding, I would suggest that the reader refer to the historical review of the trade union movement in Greece (c.f. Chapter 5).

[278] To avoid being misunderstood, many of these arguments are valid, as it will become apparent later on, in the results of my research. But this not the issue. The point is, we should analyse the root causes and deal with the questions of how and why we have reached this point. The development of a powerful movement capable of subverting the current situation cannot avoid a frontal collision with these questions and the responsibilities for the union movement falling into disrepute, something which clearly serves the needs of the political forces controlling it. Every new effort will first have to identify the dominant perceptions which have now been gloriously defeated (Marxist Papers, 2017, p. 12).

[279] Intentionally, the leadership of the union movement shy away from discussing why we have reached this point and simply emphasise their disappointment, confining teachers to a resigned state. While the logic of rupture was prepared and established when people flooded the squares and went on massive strike rallies, in the end, avoiding it was the imposed course of action. Governmental and bureaucratic unionism, on the path of consent to and acceptance of the anti-educational policies, embraced the dominant disastrous philosophy of teachers waiting for the day when new measures are being voted to express their opposition with a 24-hour strike and a rally outside the Parliament building, instead of fighting against new measures being filed in the first place (c.f. Bachti and Miltsakakis. 2017, pp. 59-64).

6.5.6. Reactions of the Educational Community in the Midst of Crisis

Regarding the reactions in education, although the first Memorandum was implemented in 2010, the first reactions came with a three-year delay. They were mainly expressed by secondary school teachers, who decided through mass union assemblies to go on strike in the spring of 2013, amidst the Panhellenic exams, but were prevented from striking when the Samaras' government[280] decided to make use of the emergency 'civil-mobilisation' law[281]. I should not fail to mention that teachers participated in general employees' mobilisations, as well as protesting in numerous ways against the attempt to implement teacher assessment through the Presidential Decree 152/2013 (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, pp. 95-96). Finally, great mobilisations were also organised by other employees in the Ministry of Education, such as school guards and administrative University stuff, after their suspension, due to the "overpopulation" of the public sector.

However, I should note that, as is the case for the broader public and private sector, despite recent sporadic outbursts and protests "keeping the issue of rupture open" (Bachti and Miltsakakis, 2017, p. 60), counterattacks by the majority are subdued, hardly suggestive of the mass demonstrations in streets and squares and strike rallies of 2012. Similarly to other groups of working people, teachers are disappointed and resigned to the belief that there is nothing they can do to overturn policies.

Secondary education teachers had already struggled to impede the enforcement of the 2525/1997 law by Arsenis and had been defeated after a two-month strike that had been strongly undermined and slandered in every way possible. However, the first strong blow to the reform came from both primary and secondary teachers who united themselves against the abolition of the appointment system of the Yearbook and whose mobilisations only ended with the use of mass police violence. The final blow came from a mass wave of students occupying schools throughout the country and

[280] New Democracy had won the June 2012 election and formed a coalition government with PASOK and DIMAR. Antonis Samaras, became Prime Minister for the period 2012-2015.

[281] Civil mobilisation is the legal compulsion for civilians to work, in contrast with military mobilisation. It has been used on a number of occasions by a number of governments. This generally makes striking illegal for the duration of the mobilisation. In Greece, civil mobilisation orders were made for dock workers, teachers and workers in power plants.

demonstrating from November 1998 until January 1999[282]. The reform was politically "dead" and Petros Efthimiou, who replaced Arsenis in the Ministry of Education, began deconstructing it after the 2000 general elections.

During Kostas Karamanlis' second term (2007-2009), after facing a six-week strike of primary school teachers without having to step down from its original terms, the government turned its focus on Universities. More specifically, the Minister for Education Marietta Giannakou-Koutsikou promoted legislation, known as the "Giannakou law", in an attempt to establish internal and external University assessment procedures and to change Article 16 of the Greek Constitution, composed after the Metapolitefsi, which secured free public education, freedom in teaching and research, state funding and an autonomous public higher education, clearly forbidding the establishment of private Colleges and Universities.

This constitutional revision, aligned with the commercialisation of tertiary education, would allow private bodies to deliver degrees and would literally abolish the State's obligation to provide free higher education to all its citizens. Furthermore, it would jeopardise University funding and their autonomy in teaching and management.

6.6. Summary

After having explained why Greece cannot be considered a predominantly petit bourgeoisie society, in Chapter 7 I will outline my research methodology and justify the adoption of my philosophical position and describe the whole methodological procedure for the conduct of my semi-structured interviews.

[282] 400 schools were occupied in November and by January the number of occupied schools had reached 1050.

CHAPTER 7: Research Design: Methodology and Methods

7.1. Introduction

In this Chapter, I will support my adoption of dialectical materialism as a philosophical position. After presenting the methodological framework I used in my qualitative research, I will explain the strategies I chose to implement in order to ensure that the research I conducted is plausible. Then, I will analyse the moral principles that conditioned my research and provide a detailed description of my sampling and my fieldwork. Finally, I will analyse the coding methods I employed in the analysis of my data.

7.2. Research methodology

This doctoral thesis is a case study on Greece that investigates the perceptions of primary school teachers regarding the consequences of the crisis on their work. Its theoretical framework is that of dialectical materialism and it employs a Critical Pedagogy approach. In the following section, the Marxist research framework is outlined.

7.2.1 Characteristics of Marxist research

Before moving on to point out some important characteristics of Marxist research, I have to underline the fact that, for a Marxist researcher, his/her actual research is 'praxis' on its own. He/she is a priori sided with those who are oppressed, while at the same time employing the principle of radical critique to ensure that existing practices are not just reproducing the status quo.

The following are some intrinsic methodological elements of Marxist research that can work as guidelines in order to frame or identify a Marxist position (Matthews, 1980; Allman, 2001; Agostinone-Wilson, 2013):

i. Anticapitalim/Anti-Imperialism

ii. Rejection of Hyperrelativism (excessive relativism as well as objective truth are both rejected)
iii. Direct address of class
iv. Research as not just description, but also praxis
v. Interdependency of factors under class
vi. Necessity of collectivity in analysis and solutions

7.2.2. What is dialectical materialism?

According to materialism, all historical development is driven by material forces and interests rather than ideas. This principle that is central in Marx's theory can characterise him as a materialist, though by no means the first one. However, Marx was definitely the first dialectical materialist, which signifies that for him, historical development is not smooth, gradual, mechanical or automatic. It is a process that involves contradictions and the clash of opposing forces (Molyneux, 2012, p. 40).

Marx was introduced to dialectics through Hegel, the German philosopher who developed a philosophical system in which "history was seen as an ascending succession of conflicting ideas" (Marx, [1844] 1976; Marx and Engels, [1848] 1988; [1887] 1978; [1932] 1988; Lenin, [1895-1916] 1976; Callinicos, 2010; Molyneux, 2012, p. 40). The basic idea behind dialectics is 'change'; everything changes (a well-established fact in science as well), nothing lasts forever. Of course, for the purposes of everyday life, the element of continuity is frequently more important than the element of change. Dialectics is a logic, a science of the forms of thought designed to go beyond the limitations of formal logic. It is the logic of change, of development and evolution and therefore, also of revolution. Dialectics develops and deploys a series of "laws and principles" which express the inner logic of change and, therefore, are extremely useful for the analysis of change of all kinds, especially of social change.

7.2.3. Understanding the principles that govern dialectics

According to Krapivin, two basic principles lie in the core of dialectics: the principle of universal connection (connection and interaction) and the principle of development. According to the first principle, all objects, processes and phenomena in the world share a common material nature, thus connect with each other. Thus, change of any kind (emergence, development or transition) only occurs in connection and never in isolation, and since all objects interact, this automatically means their mutual change and motion. On the other hand, the principle of development is the lack of any stability described in the previous paragraph. The world is not 'stable', but always in a process of change, whereas this change can be reversible or irreversible, can bring "development", "progress" or "regress". Thus, there is no linearity in this change and the motion of the world and history cannot be perceived as moving in a particular direction (Krapivin, 1985, p. 142-450).

7.2.3.1. The standpoint of totality

Having these two principles in mind, theoreticians point out that dialectics deploys a series of "principles", according to Molyneux, or "laws", according to Krapivin (1985), in order to understand and analyse change in general and social change in particular. The first is the standpoint of totality, a philosophical principle of dialectics and a political principle of the worker's movement. According to it, all phenomena, especially political ones (conflicts, wars, strikes) can never be properly understood and resolved in isolation. It is always necessary to see them in a 'bigger picture', in their "context", because of their "interrelationships and not only with the events and circumstances immediately adjacent to them" (Molyneux, 2012, p.46). As far as social struggle is concerned, in order to understand, analyse and achieve it, this should only be seen in relation to the international struggle in the overall capitalist framework.

7.2.3.2. The standpoint of the concrete

A second philosophical standpoint of dialectics is the standpoint of the concrete. That means that even if one should "pay attention to the forest" as a whole (following the previous principle), he should never forget to "look at the tree", at the specific situation he has to analyse. Hence, while every event is part of a unified, interconnected whole, this does not mean that it loses its particularity and specificity. Thus, every particular issue should be concretely analysed in its time and space, without ever losing perspective of its relation to the whole. In other words, this second standpoint should be perceived as complementary and not contradictory to the standpoint of totality.

7.2.3.3. The transformation of quantity into quality

This third "law" of dialectics proves especially important for politics because it accounts for 'development' and 'the relationship between continuity and change' (Krapivin, 1985; Molyneux, 2012). Every process in the world occurs in the following way: quantitative changes accumulate over periods of time leading to a particular point when these quantitative accumulations provoke a qualitative change in the totality, that is, in the nature of the whole[283].

The importance of this principle was grasped by Trotsky who admitted that "to determine at the right moment the critical point where quantity changes into quality is one of the most important and difficult tasks in all spheres of knowledge, including sociology" (Trotsky, 1942, p. 50). In the same line of thinking, Rosa Luxemburg wondered:

> Can we counterpose the social revolution, the transformation of the existing order, our final goal, to social reforms? Certainly not. The daily struggle for reforms […] offers to the social democracy the only means of engaging in the proletarian class war and working in the direction of the final goal [...].
>
> (Luxemburg, [1908] 2008, p. 41)

[283] This principle can very well explain the onset of the 2008 capitalist crisis in the USA or the Greek crisis as well. It accounts for the feeling of "suddenness" that most Greek experienced during that time. They could not understand how the Greek economy collapsed "overnight", since they all had the feeling that they went to sleep amidst a capitalist miracle and woke up in the Memoranda era. My answer here is given through this exact standpoint of a quantitative accumulation transformed into a qualitative one.

7.2.3.4. The unity of opposites

For Molyneux, "the transformation of quantitative into qualitative change just described presupposes that the object or given totality which changes is a unity of opposites- a (temporary) balance of conflicting forces" (Molyneux, 2012, p.51. In other words, opposite phenomena exist in interdependence, but their coexistence is one of mutual negation and conflict. The unity of opposites really matters in the analysis of class struggle because they can account for the antagonistic society we live in.

> In the concept of the unity of opposites the element of 'balance' or stability is secondary and the element of conflict leading to 'leaps', to the 'break in continuity', to 'transformation into the opposite', to the destruction of the old and the emergence of the new is fundamental.
>
> (Lenin, 1915, p. 359)

7.2.3.5. The negation of negation

This last principle, the negation of negation[284], is the one that reveals the hidden connections between the different stages of development or change. It accounts for the dissolution of the old into something new and for social transition[285]. In other words, the negation of negation expresses the fact that when a given state changes because it is contradictory in its own nature, the force for change (the antithesis/the negation) is itself changed. Thus, we arrive into a new synthesis, a new state which still retains some elements of the past. From all the above it is made clear why dialectics is so important for revolutionary practice. A theory which identifies the logic of change can be useful to those who want to change the world.

[284] This last principle is one rejected by some Marxists because of its deterministic use by Stalinism[284].
[285] i.e. it can show the replacement of feudalism by capitalism and the replacement of capitalism with socialism.

7.3. Clarifying Marxist ideology: concepts and terms

7.3.1. Marxist ontology and epistemology

In his doctoral dissertation, Marx's thesis aimed at an anti-teleological materialism. The emergent materialism of Marx accepted neither the objectivity of nature (as Hegel did), nor man's active relation to nature and to each other. On the contrary, Epicurus' notion that material existence was only evident through change (i.e. evolution) was very significant for Marx, while dialectical reasoning is considered a necessary element for cognition.

From an epistemological point of view, Marx was a scientific realist. He believed that science aims to give us knowledge of the underlying structure of an independently existing materialist world. He rejected the empiricist view that science is largely concerned with systematising what is directly observable, rather than discovering underlying causes. But, in addition to advocating a realist conception of science, Marx emphasised that science can only be fully understood in its broader social context[286].

7.3.2. Marxist views on ideas and morals

For Marx, the ideas people hold, always have material roots. They are always a reflection of and a response to people's real conditions of existence. As Marx pointed, "[...] consciousness can never be anything other than conscious existence and the existence of men is their actual life-process" (Marx, [1932] 1968). The dominant ideas in a society at any particular point in time will be the ideas that express the interests of the economically dominant or ruling class. For Marx, all ideas have a class basis; the same applies to dominant and to critical ideas (i.e. the existence of revolutionary ideas, presupposes the existence of a revolutionary class).

[286] This does not mean of course that science is subordinate to science ideology; ideologisation of the natural sciences appeared in the USSR under Stalin. While positivism wanted to 'naturalise' the human and social sciences, stalinism (as inverted positivism) attempted to 'politicise' the natural sciences.

Furthermore, for Marx, all significant and worked out ideologies, are direct or indirect articulations of the interests of classes or fractions of class, while no neutral standpoint can ever be possible. In Marxism, we cannot truly achieve a neutral standpoint, not only because as human beings we cannot completely escape our social conditioning and emotions, but also because such a neutral standpoint does not exist as we live in a class-divided society. Of course, it must be made clear that not all standpoints are equal; in terms of arriving at a true understanding of both history and present society, the Marxist position can prove a valuable tool[287].

7.3.3. The meaning of truth in Marxism

There are many theories of truth, but the dominant theory especially among materialists is that 'truth' means correlation with fact or reality. However, materialism has been often attacked with the following question: How can we know if a statement corresponds to reality? Marx managed to cut through this difficult question by insisting that the question of truth is essentially a practical question.

For Marx, if an idea or theory works in practice this can only be because this idea or theory corresponds to certain aspects of reality – even though it does not and cannot give an exhaustive account of the whole of reality. As human practice expands, so it presses against the limits of existing knowledge and reveals problems in existing theories. This leads to the development of new ideas and theories which in turn need to be tested and 'proved' in practice. Thus, for Marx a continual development is possible through the schema: practice →theory→practice→theory→practice.

7.3.4. Identity and oppression

The two notions of identity and oppression are closely interwoven in Marx's theory. He defined personal identity as the awareness of oneself as a member of an oppressed group and he thought of the anger associated with that awareness as a legitimate response to experiencing oppression. For Marx, personal identity only becomes political when it

[287] For example, the standpoint of the bourgeoisie is the standpoint of a class which is trying to preserve existing society and therefore to prevent critical understanding of it.

moves beyond the realm of life experience and becomes a strategy for fighting against oppression.

At this point, I must explain that in Marxist theory, oppression is not a matter of perception but a concrete, material reality. While consciousness is subjective, oppression and exploitation are objective notions. The government is not a neutral body but serves to represent the interests of the class in power, maintaining thus the rule of a tiny minority over the vast majority[288]. This oppression must be opposed to, but he underlines that it is not necessary to personally experience oppression to become committed to opposing it.

On the other hand, Marx indicates that whenever the working class fails to recognise or oppose its oppression and accepts ruling-class ideologies including racism, sexism and homophobia, they are acting against their own class interests; failing to identify the real source of oppression they fight against each other and become victims of the favourite ruling-class practice of "divide and conquer".

Going back to the notion of identity, I must stress that Marxist theory has often been attacked for its thesis on personal identity both by Identity Politics and the Intersectionality theory. From the Marxist standpoint of view, identities are not static, naturalised entities and their attempted reification by Identity Politics can function as a trap dividing the working class instead of keeping it united; identifying with a small social group makes the workers focus on their differences as individuals, veering off their main purpose to overthrow capitalism.

The above explained Marxist thesis does not in any way attack particularity. The particular is important and must be recognised, while no argument can be made against the legitimacy of individual personal identity. It goes without saying that people's individual experiences do make up a great deal of everyone's personal identity; an

[288] Even the state is only one of the key ways in which oppression is enforced.

identity that is shaped in large part by one's own experience facing oppression in one's own life.

Moreover, each form of oppression may be different and each person's experience of it is different as well, but in the end all oppression is rooted in a system that thrives upon oppression as well as exploitation for its survival. However, Marxism is absolutely clear that a distinction must be made between the personal and the political; identity is only a one-sided expression of our total potential as human beings and prevalence should be given on the political that transcends the personal and affects society as a whole.

7.3.5. Teacher individuality and collective activity

Before closing on the theme of personal identity, I would like to make a special reference to teacher as a professional group, since they are the main focus of my research. As Kevin Harris observes, "teaching is a solitary, isolated, individualistic job"; in his/her everyday life a teacher tends to solve the problems that arise in the classroom alone rather than share them with other teachers. This individualistic nature the teaching profession may have is one of the reasons, along with the fragmented conditions of their work (small schools, individual classrooms, small staff), that teachers do not easily engage in organisation and collective action.

For Kevin Harris, teachers can organise themselves in three ways: i) in the teachers' unions who may have limited strength on their own, but are of vital importance as a first step towards organisation, ii) in the trade-union movement in general, because, as I have already discussed in previous Chapters, there can be no major change in education without a fundamental change in society and, iii) in the professional organisations, though these often have a narrow political scope that can hardly offer to effective political or ideological struggle (Harris, 1982, pp. 148-150).

7.4. Dialectical materialism as a framing research tool

The starting point of dialectical materialism is that human needs are essential and are the foundation of history. However, these needs are not natural, but social[289], and it is exactly this point that places dialectics as antithetical to ideologies of absolute individualism and autonomy. For dialectics, humans are not self-contained entities who act according to dictates of free will.

Dialectical materialism is not technically a step-by-step method, but rather a critical orientation that is inherently political in tackling how social problems are approached. As a philosophical approach, materialism is subject to the following sustained challenge: while it is a great idea, it does not come with a manual as to how to be applied.

The first task according to Marx is to comprehend the human condition through historical inquiry. That is why dialectical framing often begins with larger-than life questions that might seem unusual to those accustomed to narrowing down topics. For instance, these broad questions may sound like this: "Why are things the way they are?" Special attention should be paid, though, to balance one's questioning. On the one hand, dialectical problem framing has to be manageable enough to locate the material forces that are maintaining the existing situation, yet too much reductionism can often shut out materialist analysis. The danger with scaling back research questions too much is that it tends to create misleading solutions that fail to challenge the status quo. On the other hand, by solving the smaller problems it is mistakenly assumed that the bigger ones are addressed as well, which is often not the case.

[289] For instance, humans must eat to survive, but the growing or hunting of food to meet this biological need is a social process.

7.5. Methods

The qualitative data collection method that I used in my research project and which was closely related to the phenomena of my study (teachers as a group), to my research approach and to the articulated philosophical stance[290] was face-to-face focus group interviews. This way, the interaction among the members of the group that was encouraged throughout the process yielded better information and generated ideas. In addition, the focus groups gave me the opportunity to grasp the group consensus and the social interaction, rather than the individual meaning making, to capture a wide range of ideas held by the teachers as a group, to reveal attitudes and finally to highlight any issues and inconsistencies among them (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013, pp. 374-390). Alongside the verbal communications that were recorded, non-verbal ones and group-interactions were also observed. I should note here that the interviews were always conducted in a quiet space, usually the headmaster's office, the school's library or teachers' office, where complete privacy was ensured.

Focus groups offer a number of advantages, such as encouraging interaction and promoting group consensus rather than individual meaning making, ensuring a range of ideas and opinions, highlighting inconsistencies and offering the opportunity for engagement in different forms of everyday communication (jokes, teasing). However, despite the advantages offered by the focus group interviews, there were also several challenges and issues involved both in designing and conducting them. Groups can often veer off the task or there is sometimes one participant dominating the conversation. At times, nobody answers and there can be a period of uncomfortable silence. Data obtained this way may be more difficult to analyse and its quality determined by the dynamics of the group. Last but not least, this type of interview is more time consuming.

One of the main practical challenges was, therefore, that they required a skilled moderator in order to facilitate the discussion while keeping the group on time and focused on the topics. At the same time, the moderator had to make sure that every

[290] c.f. Chapter 1.

participant was heard, and that dominant behaviour was avoided, as well as that all key issues were addressed. Thus, based on my philosophical stance and my beliefs about the researcher's place in the research, I chose the role of an active moderator who would ask the questions, listen, observe and take notes, while at the same time prompting the discussion of the group whenever it was necessary. This involved dealing with periods of silence, identifying the cause and taking action to move the conversation along.

As a guide throughout the focus group interviews, I used a moderator's guide that I developed and that was flexible enough to allow the discussion to move in different directions, to follow ideas and to best use the available time, while at the same time it kept me on track with the topic of interest. The questions were open-ended so as to allow teachers to express their perspectives on the issues at hand, simple and unambiguously worded, short and focused on one dimension each. In addition, they were carefully chosen so as to generate the greatest possible amount of information from the participants and they did not necessarily follow a set order. In any case, directive, over-empathetic, manipulative, leading and threatening or embarrassing questions were strongly avoided.

The data of this study comes from a research project conducted from November to December 2014. To ensure the creation of a valid tool, the main research was preceded by pilot runs and a pilot study. The pilot study was conducted in October 2014 and consisted of two sessions of group discussions, one in the Attica region of Greece and one in the city of Volos. The main study was carried out in 24 public schools of different types[291] in the prefectures of Attica and Magnesia[292].

In all, 102 primary education teachers of the PE70 sector[293] and specialised subject teachers[294], of various kinds of appointment and work relationships[295], participated: 63

[291] Merged, All-day URSC (schools with Unified Revised School Curriculum), EPZ (Educational Priority Zones, downgraded areas), schools for children with Pervasive Developmental Disorder (DAD), etc.
[292] 15 schools in the Attica region and 9 in the city of Volos and its suburbs.
[293] General Education.
[294] i.e., special education teachers, English teachers, music teachers, etc.
[295] Tenured, temporary, substitutes, etc.

from the Attica region and 39 from Volos and its suburbs. The teachers taught various grades and had experience ranging from 2 months to 31 years. The total sample comprised 26 men and 76 women. Six of the participants were acting as headmasters of their schools and four as deputy headmasters; 74 were general education teachers (PE70), and the rest taught various specialised subjects.

The respondents were not randomly selected. Rather, teachers were carefully and deliberately selected on the basis of knowledge of the population of teachers, of particular settings and of the research questions (Babbie, 2011; Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013, pp. 312-318). In total, 24 focus groups and mini focus groups were formed, each composed of teachers in the same school unit. The groups were distributed across different areas, both in the Attica region and in Volos and its suburbs, being representative of areas with different socioeconomic backgrounds. One of this study's main research goals led us to the selection of face-to-face focus groups and mini focus groups. Viewing teaching as an occupational community (Van Maanen and Barley, 1984), this research emphasised the collective meaning of teachers' work rather than individual career trajectories (Agostinone-Wilson, 2013; Allman, 2001; Little, 2007; Sprague, 1992, p. 184).

Hence, the composition of the groups was the main reason behind my decision to use focus group interviews in my research project. Considering that the group dynamics in focus group interviews strongly influence the quality of the collected data, as well as my ethical obligation for equality regarding the participants, I tried to consider the participants' characteristics while assembling my groups. Factors such as age, gender, various kinds of appointment, work relationships and years of experience were considered so as to ensure the sharing of common characteristics, while at the same time I attempted to avoid extensive variation that could restrict the discussion or the grouping together of participants who were too familiar with one another.

In any case, a balance was found and the type of participants that were grouped together ensured a minimal psychological, social and economic risk for the participants. This

basically means that I did not group together teachers and headmasters, as the latter could affect the openness of teachers' responses to questions. In addition, special attention was given to the principle of autonomy and to the notion of treating people with respect. This had profound implications in relation to the ethical requirements for consent. In that sense, special consideration was given to ensure that the prospective participants were given the appropriate time, information, opportunity and place to voluntarily decide whether to enter the study or not.

7.6. Trustworthiness and validity

In recent years, there has been a controversy among researchers regarding the use of terms "validity" and "reliability" as approaches that ensure the quality of a research process. Even if they are both broadly applicable in quantitative research, their application in a qualitative research such as mine remains debatable. As Savin-Baden and Howell Major point out, qualitative researchers especially in the United States feel that that have been dominated for too long by positivists approaches claiming to reach "absolute truth" (2013, pp. 473-474). And while validity and reliability are plausible in quantitative research, many are those who believe that "the language of positivist research is not congruent with or adequate to qualitative work" (Ely et al, 1991, p.95; Davies and Dodd, 2002, p. 281).

Taking into account my positivist background as a Physics BA holder, as well as the nature of my thesis, I could not totally neglect those two criteria; instead I opted for the umbrella term of "quality" in my research following the suggestions made by Savin-Baden and Howell Major (2013, pp. 471-473).

7.6.1. Strategies implemented to ensure quality during the process and in the product

Prior to the construction of my final product, I chose to employ a series of strategies in order to ensure the good "quality" of my research. First, I attempted to ensure methodological coherence by defining a precise methodological framework and

choosing whether to strictly follow it or slightly modify it due to the non-linearity of qualitative research. Secondly, I ensured that my training in University and my extended period of staying in the field (and by this, I mean both Greece in general and schools in particular) was sufficient for me to gain enough experience over time for the research process.

As far as the quality of the final product is concerned and since I totally agree with Savin-Baden and Howell Major (2013, p. 478-450), I implemented another set of strategies in order to demonstrate the quality of my research "at an aesthetic level". To begin with, I chose to provide a dense but comprehensive description of my methodology, as well as a positionality statement that follows, in an attempt to fully describe both my role in the research as well as the various approaches I employed. Further on, I focused on a dense description of the context since my research took place in a different country. This I believe will allow the reader to fully comprehend the educational "reality" of Greece without having prior knowledge of it. Finally, I will provide in the next Chapter a dense description of data, especially in the form of quotations as "proof" of my findings and interpretations.

7.6.2. Positionality statement

I would like to clarify right from beginning that I am not pretending to adopt an objective, unbiased stance. On the contrary, it is my firm conviction that all researchers have their biases, including political ones, which, whether they realise it or not, are "both integral and integrated into their research" (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013, p.76). This has of course important implications for the research and its processes, and for their honest, plausible and effective undertaking. In other words, as Rebecca Adams and Robert Sardellio underlined in the title of their book back in 2000: "You ain't gonna learn what you don't want to know".

Thus, it appears that any effort made by qualitative researchers to exclude rather than embrace their biases, ranges from unintentionally misleading to an outright lie, since even the aspiration to absolute neutrality is in itself a political position whether they

realise it or not (Chun, 2017, p. 54). As Gitlin et al. (1998, p.245) very aptly put it: "the question is not whether the data are biased; the question is whose interests are served by the bias". That said, I should make clear that my purpose here is an unapologetic political endeavour aspiring to aid in a critical approach of capitalism, ultimately hoping to give rise to fundamental social change (Wolff, 2012; Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013; Chun, 2017).

7.6.3. Personal stance

In view of the above mentioned positionality statement I have to proceed to a second clarification that pervades my doctoral thesis as a whole. Due to the nature of my philosophical stance and the decision to use Marxist tools in the analysis of my research, I had to address right from the outset of this endeavour the complex issue of differentiating between academic and political writing; an issue that is well known to Marxist analysis that pursues activist epistemology (Seferiades, 2017, p.12).

Although I strongly feel that the political and academic discourses can and should be related, especially when attempting to change the world and not generally theorise about it, it is my firm belief as an academic researcher that they should always keep their cognitive matter separate. In complete accordance with Seferiades's position explained in the Introduction of his book: *The red thread of a Decade* (2017), I support that academic and political writing have essentially distinct functions; academic research observes, organises analyses and generalises 'reality', whereas political writing has to make the most of experience and scientific knowledge in order to incite the reader into action.

Thus, throughout my doctoral thesis, I have tried to keep my discourse clear and lucid as I ought to as an academic researcher, strongly believing, however, that academic writing of this level should always converse with 'reality' if it intends to change it.

7.7. Ethics

When a research project that will involve human participants is conducted, the researcher is faced with particular challenges that should be strongly taken into consideration. Time and space always matter and what is considered ethical in one setting may differ from what is considered ethical in another. Within that context the professional codes of ethics may not be consistent across countries and many differences may exist at a cultural, contextual and organisational level.

With respect to my project, the situation was much simpler since the research was conducted in my country of origin, Greece. Therefore, I was completely familiar with all the laws relating to research in Greece, as well as with all the cultural norms of the country, the attitudes, values and practices shared by the Greek society and the present political sensitivities. Moreover, there was no need for a translator/interpreter to be present neither during the consent process, nor throughout the study, as the research was entirely conducted in Greek, my native language.

All the required papers, such as the consent form and the focus group moderator's guide[296] were translated in Greek by me and the participants signed the translated version. At this point, it is important to note that I have the appropriate command of both languages, Greek and English, to ensure accurate translation and communication with participants[297].

As far as Greece is concerned and regarding the particular project under investigation, no procedure requiring local ethical approval via an appropriate ethics review procedure was necessary. In addition to that, I read, discussed with my supervisor and strongly considered the Code of Practice for Applying for Ethical Approval at Anglia Ruskin University (Version 1, April 2014), the relevant sections of the Data Protection Act

[296] c.f. Appendices II and IV.

[297] The recorded interviews were conducted and transcribed in Greek, my native language. Fragments and selected quotes have been translated to be used in this doctoral thesis. Upon demand, further samples translated in English can be supplied.

(1998)[298], as well as the 2014 Edition of the International Compilation of Human Research Standards[299].

According to the Ethical Approval System of Anglia Ruskin University, as my research took place within the European Economic Area (EEA), it had to comply with the laws of Greece, as well as with English Law so that research data could be transferred with no restrictions back to the UK. Finally, since I had to travel outside the UK for the purposes of my research, I had carefully considered any significant potential risks that would arise from my research and carried out a Risk Assessment (Health and Safety and Field Trip) with my Supervisor, Professor Dave Hill[300] and after a thorough examination, the risk for all considered issues was characterised as minimal[301].

Another issue requiring a special consideration of ethics was the treatment of individual participants in my study. One of my primary duties as a researcher, in compliance with the principle of beneficence, was to ensure that they were all treated equally and had equal opportunity to experience the possible benefits of their involvement. To this effect, I was engaged in a continuous and regular discussion with my supervisors and other expert advisors and I conducted a pilot research alongside with a pre-testing of my final interview questionnaire. Firmly based on my previous experience and on my in-depth and continuing training for the effective operation of the human research participant protection, every effort was made to ensure the wellbeing of my participants, as well as that the final risk associated with my study was minimal, i.e. 'similar to the risk typically encountered in daily life' (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013, p. 323).

[298] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents
[299] http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/international/intlcompilation/2014intlcomp.pdf.pdf
[300] While assessing carefully the risks, if any, which could be inherent in the activities that were to be undertaken during my research, as well as the risks that could be associated with my trip and my stay in Greece, the following were considered: risks to my personal safety, i.e. physical attack, delayed access to personal or medical assistance, security of accommodation, modes of transport, journey routes and location of visit, lone working; natural physical hazards, i.e. climate, earthquakes etc.; equipment hazards, i.e. storage of data, safety of data; risks associated with the external environment, i.e. political and economic situation; and failure to undertake the research in the time-frame and recruit participants.
[301] The fact that I had a third external supervisor in Greece, Professor Constantine Skordoulis, with whom I was closely in touch throughout my research project, played a pivotal role in that direction.

The above mentioned responsibility raises considerable questions of justice when it comes to the decision of who should be given the opportunity to participate in the pilot study and the main survey and who would be excluded. At this point, it should be emphasised that, although I was engaged in purposive sampling, which followed from the choice of the case study approach and the nature of my research objectives, the principles of justice and autonomy underpinned my selection of subjects throughout the recruitment process. Acknowledging the fact that social justice is undeniably a complex ethical issue, I tried at all times to best accomplish it by avoiding the selection of participants due to class, gender, race, political views or socioeconomic status.

Bringing this section to a close, I should stress that the consent form was written in plain language and involved full disclosure of all the necessary information, to ensure that the participants understood their right to refuse to participate and their alternatives, the procedures, the methods and the details of the research project, the purpose and the intentions of the study, the extent to which confidentiality would be maintained, the potential uses to which the data might be put, as well as the likely social and personal consequences of its publication alongside with any other factors which might be expected to influence their willingness to participate. Moreover, the participants were given the opportunity to discuss with me any questions or concerns both before entering the fieldwork as well as during the process.

Finally, it is important to note that the informed consent was treated as a continuous process which by no means ended with the signing of the form but could be reaffirmed periodically. Thus, the consent encompassed a process that started with the initial contact of the participants and lasted until the end of their involvement in the project[302].

[302] Besides, the issue as to what extent participants and consent can ever be fully informed, is a much disputed one and in some cases, participants must be reminded of their right to re-negotiate consent throughout the process (Munhall, 1988; Field and Morse, 1992; Kvale, 1996; Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013).

7.7.1. Anonymity and confidentiality

Another important responsibility of a researcher is to ensure the protection and respect of privacy and confidentiality at every stage of the research process for participants who have contributed personal information to a study. To begin with, I shall argue that confidentiality pertains to the treatment of information that an individual has disclosed in a relationship of trust and it involves the way in which data are handled, either during the collection and storage of the original data or through the identification of participants in secondary analysis and in long-term data use. In each case, it is imperative for the researcher to guarantee promises of confidentiality made to research participants, because, even when minimal harm is likely to be caused by a breach of confidentiality, the researcher's credibility is undermined and subsequently the willingness of people to participate in his/her research is reduced.

On these grounds, it is particularly important for researchers to understand their responsibilities and limitations with regard to confidentiality, to clearly inform the participants about the limitations of confidentiality protection that will be offered to them and finally, to take all the necessary provisions regarding the maintenance and the access to data at each point in the research process, from the collection and processing, to the analysis, dissemination and storage.

Although all the issues raised by the principle of confidentiality are not addressed by the concept of anonymisation, they are closely connected, and therefore the researcher has the obligation to protect the participant's privacy by removing all identifying descriptions from published data. Furthermore, whenever possible, the information obtained should not be connected with subject identifiers, even though it should be noted at this point that the latter can be complex and challenging for researchers in qualitative research who face the conflict of providing detailed and accurate accounts of the interviewees, their views and their lives while at the same time protecting their identities. In fact, there are cases where disguising the identity of the participants can cause a distortion of the data, not to mention that the removal of such kind of details can render the data inadequate for re-use. In such cases the researcher should strongly

consider the procedure so as to minimise the risk of disclosure while maintaining at the same time the usefulness of his/her data.

Despite the complexity of the above issue, ensuring confidentiality is a fundamental requirement of the ethical conduct of research with human participants, strongly founded on the principle of respect for persons and of their right to privacy and to fully exercise their autonomy (Creswell, 1998; Hammick, 1996; Glesne and Peshkin, 1992). Along these lines, the evaluation of privacy is an additional ethical consideration that researchers should bear in mind which pertains to the way that the researcher accesses information from the participants. Some of the issues related to privacy that should strongly be considered are the recruitment methods, the methods of data collection as well as the amount and the kind of data collected.

One final point to make here, strongly related to my research context, is associated with ethical concerns in respect to 'third-party' information (Lounsbury, et. al., 2007). Even though obtaining this kind of information was not part of my research goals and objectives, I always kept in mind that it was likely to emerge in the process of conducting semi-structured interviews. In practice, this meant that while interviewing teachers there was the risk of emergence of information in their responses associated with other individuals such as co-workers, students and parents who were not primary consenting participants. On grounds such as these, I was faced with an additional responsibility: to assess the risks for 'third-parties', to demonstrate a respect of their rights and to exercise all reasonable care to ensure that risks to them were minimised.

With that background behind me, I am now in a position to argue that in my research context and in order to ensure confidentiality, I did not discuss any information provided by individuals with others and I presented my findings in ways that ensure that individuals cannot be identified. The 'cleaning' (Kaiser, 2009) of my data consisting of the removal of all identifying details, such as participant's first names and the school districts, both from my paper documents (i.e. interview notes) and my audio recordings, was applied during transcription and the removed data was stored in separate protected

and locked files (concerning data held on applications) and in a locked cupboard that can only be accessed by me (concerning paper records).

The same holds for all the original documents of my study that were preserved. In addition, codes were used consisting of the site, number of focus group and number of participant, as replacement of the names of the interviewees[303]. Although, in my case revealing the name of the town in which the research was conducted is not problematic, as previously mentioned, I avoided naming the school districts. The concept behind the former statement is that someone with knowledge of the school could likely identify individual teachers based on traits such as gender, age and number of years in the school (Sieber, 1992). However, at this point, it is crucial to stress that although personal identifiers were removed the contextual identifiers remained.

Following the above discussion further, the process that I applied for my paper documents included photo-copying the originals and anonymising the copy with tippex, while for my audio recordings I chose to apply the 'search and replace' techniques for digital text, in order to carry out the removal of information, Finally, I proof-read carefully each transcript to detect any other types of information with potential harming implications that should be removed.

As for the steps that I followed in order to protect the data that was stored in my laptop, firstly, the laptop used was the one provided by my Faculty at Anglia Ruskin University which is only authorised for use by me and password-protected. The reason for using such a portable storage media, instead of a desktop computer, was determined by the fact that my research was going to take place outside of the country where I live and in which my campus is located.

Secondly, I should state that all the software contained in my laptop was licenced, authorised and procured through Anglia Ruskin's IT Unit and that the Anti-virus and

[303] E.g. Participant **ATH7.1** is one of the interviewees from a school in Athens, belonging to focus group 7.

Anti-spyware were always kept up to date. Furthermore, I conducted regular virus checks and ensured that it was strictly used only for safe browsing. I also physically secured my laptop from being lost or stolen and ensured that it was not connected to unsecured networks. With regard to my data, all my files were kept in WinRAR password-protected zip files (strong passwords were used) and the original documents were held separately from the ones with the removed identifying details. Last but not least, when there was communication through email, my secure student email facility, provided from Anglia Ruskin University, was used.

7.7.2. Further issues in the ethical conduct of the research

In concluding this section, I would like to reiterate that my primary intention and obligation was to move beyond what is just required by the ethics review board in terms of the protection of human participants, into the consideration of the most compelling ways to achieve ethical excellence in conducting research with people. This is a very challenging task for a researcher and one of the best ways to accomplish it is to follow the Golden rule: 'Do not treat others in ways that you would not like to be treated'. In that direction, I believe that respect for persons and their time may and should be accomplished in several ways beyond what the minimum required, and, as a researcher, I always keep in mind that even when every effort has been made to ensure equality, 'doing the right' and avoiding harm, my views on these issues may differ from the participant's. For this reason, it is imperative that these kinds of issues should be re-addressed constantly through 're-envisioned informed consent processes' (Kaiser, 2009).

Finally, apart from the above mentioned issues with the excellent treatment of individuals (respect for people, beneficence, justice, confidentiality, privacy), according to Maggi Savin-Baden and Claire Howell Major (2013, pp. 332-337), ethical considerations should also underpin the efficacy of the research design (contribution to knowledge, methodological basis and researcher's ability), the transparency of the process (relationship with participants and with data) and the plausibility of the research products (veracity, scrutiny, dissemination).

7.8. The fieldwork process: time, sites and sample used in research

It is an undeniable fact when carrying out a research that there is a series of basic choices that must initially be made. These are related to the specifics of when and where to conduct the research as well as the identification of the sample. To ensure the integrity of the sample and the findings, one must carefully consider the above choices (Savin Baden and Howell Major, 2013, p. 307). Furthermore, the fieldwork process is complex and time-consuming and involves a lot of preparation and hard work.

The preparation starts with preliminary visits and contacts with a lot of individuals, checking schedule availability, planning interviews and finding a suitable location. The actual fieldwork involves a series of practical tasks, with the most basic of which, such as entering the sites, often presenting a procedural challenge. In my case, hours upon hours were spent travelling between Athens and Volos, as well as across areas in the Attica region. The interviews were interesting, but time consuming, and there was a considerable psychological strain which inevitably involved sympathising with participants and sharing their struggle and frustration. This was further aggravated by the fact that, in almost all cases, I was the sole moderator/facilitator and observer.

Central to this kind of research are skills including good planning and organisation skills, and the ability to adapt to changing conditions which may emerge despite any amount of good planning. There are several responsibilities involved (moral, professional, academic) and it is important for any researcher to be able to recognise human limitations.

Finally, as the field notes are essentially the life and blood of this study, it was of vital importance to record extensive notes during and immediately after the interviews to ensure maximum retention of extra-linguistic information, such as key phrases, records of behaviour, events, surroundings of the research site, date, time, location, details of who are being interviewed.

7.8.1. Choosing the time and the research sites

One of the primary considerations concerns the time when the research is to be conducted. This may well influence the responses given by subjects and, in turn, affect the findings. (Sandelowski, 1998). The main part of the fieldwork was conducted in November and December of 2014, six whole years after the beginning of the global capitalist crisis which is still going on. Greece had already been under the support mechanisms of the European Union (EU) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and was experiencing the austerity of the programs implemented as part of the loan agreement with the Troika.

The consequences of the crisis on education, as will become apparent in the analysis of the results section, had already started to become painfully obvious. It was a school year that introduced exceptional demands on teachers right from the start, with reduced personnel to boot[304]. There had already been, among others, as I have already shown in the review of the history of education in Greece, extensive cuts in teacher salaries in the academic year 2010-11[305], the academic year 2011-12, when teachers used photocopies due to lack of textbooks, and finally, the year 2013-14, when the launch of the beta version of the integrated information system Myschool[306] had excessively burdened the headmasters with extra administrative work that they were absolutely unprepared for.

[304] Less and less substitute teachers had been hired in the previous years, while since 2012-13, transfers and secondments of permanent staff were reduced to a minimum.
[305] Especially in January to April 2011, when teacher salaries were reduced to a pittance due to unconstitutional retrospective cuts.
[306] Myschool.sch.gr is a comprehensive online platform that was designed to integrate all existing digital systems of school, grade and student roster management. While its application was a step in a much needed direction of digitisation and better management, it came at a time when teachers and headmasters had suffered many blows, it was violently introduced towards the end of the school year and created a chaotic situation affecting school operation for a period of months afterwards (mainly in terms of registration of students, leaves of absence and recording grades). Ever since its introduction, the administrative work required from headmasters has gradually increased and, on top of that, the extensive training that was absolutely necessary to familiarise them with the system never really happened. The latter also heavily influenced the local directorates, too, as there had to be provision for employees who had had to learn the system in virtually no time and were bombarded with questions from frustrated headmasters every day.

In the country's political scenery, there was a coalition government (ND-PASOK-DIMAR) led by New Democracy with Antonis Samaras as Prime Minister, well into the second year of its tenure. Considering, therefore, that there had been enough time since the events that had already begun to settle in the society, politics and education of Greece[307], I decided that it was time to concisely organise and carry out the investigative part of this doctoral thesis.

Being a firm believer in the view that space exceeds the physical boundaries of its existence and becomes a political container that plays an important part in shaping people's way of thinking and acting (c.f. the works of Olson (1987) and Lefebvre (1991)), I naturally selected the country's capital, Athens and the region of Attica, for mainly the following reasons: it is considered as one of the places in Greece that has been most affected by the economic crisis; over half of the population resides there; I was aiming at the greatest possible dispersion per area, in a city where social inequalities are the most intense and obvious; it is where the headquarters of unions as well as the state apparatus are, and it's where all major decisions are made; finally, it is, for reasons related to the former, the leading city in terms of movements and strikes.

The decision to also include a sample from a provincial city occurred as a thought, and eventually, a redefinition, following the pilot study (October 2014), where the majority referred to the differentiation of the consequences of the crisis between capital and province. The reasons why I finally decided on the city of Volos as a second research site are presented in the following paragraphs.

Volos is one of the newest cities in the Greek territory. It was built in roughly the mid-19th century on the coast of the Pagasitikos Gulf. The location of the city and its proximity to the plains of Thessaly, along with the availability of capital, access to raw materials and abundance of labour force, led from early on to what was called the

[307] At a personal level, I had of course completed the first year of my PhD research, I had enriched my research background and delved deep into the literature review, I had decided the framework of my study, the philosophical position and my research approach.

"urban wonder" of the city of Volos (Prassa, 2001, pp. 10-16)[308]. Another important factor which shaped the urban geography of Volos was the settlement of a significant number of refugees from Asia Minor from 1921 until 1924 (Hastaoglou, 2007). The turn of the century finds Volos in demographic and economic development until it becomes one of the most important industrial cities of the Greek province. In fact, soon, it becomes the second largest industrial centre of the country after Piraeus.

However, it is more than its economic characteristics that bear witness to the development of the city, its constant and rapid expansion and the swift urbanisation that happens in the early 20th century. There was in Volos, at the time, an operational municipal theatre, five schools for boys and girls and two more underway and municipal abattoirs. Reading the newspapers of that era, one can find references to a plethora of often extreme incidents of delinquent behaviour which reflect aspects of the everyday life of a lively port-city. Furthermore, the fact that around that period there was a number of charitable institutes created by private benefactors (namely, the Achillopouleio Municipal Hospital, the Maternity Hospital and the Public Nursery, the Poorhouse, the Orphanage, the Macedonian Shelter, and the First-Aid Station) indicates that this process of industrialisation, urbanisation and modernisation had created social inequalities, or at the very least, brought them to the surface.

During this period of economic development, there were several phenomena that were also common in other urban centres of Greece. Groups of destitute people from other areas, many of whom would soon become beggars and 'tramps', were seemingly attracted to the city seeking a better 'fortune'. It therefore becomes apparent that, at the beginning of the 20th century, the city enters a new era of rapid economic and social changes, as is the case for the rest of the country as well. As it has been noted, "this is no painless process, it is not a generalised rise of prosperity" (Agriantonni, 2009, pp. 11-

[308] More specifically, the development of the port, and through it, the development of transport and commerce, the construction of the railway, which had been operating gradually since 1884, the attraction of entrepreneurs from the neighbouring prosperous Mount Pelion, and the availability of labour force from areas near and far paved the way for the industrialisation and urbanisation of Volos right after its integration in the state of Greece in 1881 (Betas, 2015, pp. 21-22).

24). On the contrary, the changes occurring in this period, mainly in Athens and Piraeus, but also in "rising" urban and industrial centres of the country, like Volos, result in "conflicts", destruction and an intensification of the oppositions.

The development and gradual expansion of the secondary sector of the city with the creation of large industries resulted in the emergence of a new economic power, namely the industrialists, who became politically prominent as well (Dimoglou, 2005, p. 467). On the other hand, the formation of labour strata in the city was still ongoing. Similar to other large industrial centres at the time, a crowd looking for ways to survive gathered in Volos. This survival was ensured, albeit occasionally and poorly paid, by working in the factories. They were people who "…found it difficult to secure the right for their existence to be acknowledged, in a society which preferred to delude itself believing it remained proprietary without [significant social] oppositions" as Christina Agriantoni characteristically writes (2009, p. 15).

Thus, even though there are several historical sources which support the claim that Volos in the early 20th century and the period between the two World Wars was a society with unclear social boundaries or that its working class was not uniformly composed, I personally believe that these interpretations need to be re-evaluated. Without relevant theoretical analysis and not grounded in adequate factual proof, as Betas aptly observes in his doctoral thesis (2015), they seem to re-iterate views expressed by Greek historians regarding the history of industrialisation in Greece[309].

In direct contrast with the above, the hypothesis pervading this doctoral thesis is that the society of Volos, from the very first years of its existence until the first few decades after the war, had clear social stratification. In fact, it was a community with social groups of male and female workers, small traders and entrepreneurs, craftsmen and industrialists. It also included "jobless beggars, tramps" or whatever name these marginalised groups were called in each period, increasing or decreasing according to

[309] I am referring to the relatively popular view, supported by Greek historians, that, due to low rates of industrial development and contingent work, there was no industrial proletariat in Greece. Consequently, there was virtually no social class formation and no clear class boundaries (c.f. Pizanias, 1987; 1995).

financial and social conditions and the 'fears' of 'reputable' classes. All these social groups were constantly in the process of formation or reformation (Betas, 2015, pp. 24-26).

The first steps of the Workers' Movement in Greece were made significantly later than in the rest of Europe. Centuries late, one could say, or at least, one century, if we accept as valid the starting point agreed upon by historians, namely, the French Revolution in 1789. Seventy-five years later, in 1864, the First International (International Workingmen's Association – IWA) was founded, with Greek working people still absent. It took a long time for them to emerge in the international, European or even Greek scenery. In the years from 1885 to 1907, the so-called utopian socialist period, few and far between isolated instances were recorded.

These instances include various unions which were created, issuing pamphlets and declaring strikes. The first trade unions had a lot of systematic and persistent fighting to do[310]. First and foremost, it was imperative to form trade unions, free from employer constrictions and the nature of guilds, where employers and workers belonged to the same union. Considering the conditions at the time, one realises how difficult a responsibility was placed upon the Labour Association of Volos and the newspaper "Labourer", both of which emerged towards the end of 1907 and became the starting point of the second period of essential, and no longer utopian, work of the Greek Workers' Movement (Koliou, 1988, pp. 16-17).

The trial of Nafplio was the final of a series of events related to the efforts to improve Modern Greek education in tandem with the attempt to establish the idea of labour. This trial concluded the apparent litigation between conservative and progressive elements which defined the cultural and social character of a whole era. Furthermore, it was the last act in a judicial drama to which the pioneers of the operation of the first Girls' High School and the activists of the first Labour Centre of the country were submitted.

[310] In terms of labour conditions at the time, there were no clearly defined working hours, Sunday was not a holiday, there was no social security or labour law. There were only pitiful wages, and nothing left to secure a roof over one's head.

Finally, the trial of Nafplio became a reference point in a critical period for the movement in favour of Dimotiki (Modern Greek vernacular) and the worker-socialist movement in the country's modern history. The verdict exonerated all the defendants. However, the operation of the Municipal Girls' High School of Volos had already ceased (the Labour Centre remained active in different forms) and the great opportunity for establishing and completing the linguistic-educational reforms attempted there had been irrevocably lost.

The beginning of the 20th century finds the Greek school in a dire predicament. As Alexandros Delmouzos aptly describes, the school was dominated by unproductive memorisation, withered student critical ability, restriction of intellectual life to the classics with an emphasis only on grammar and syntax. The student-teacher relationship was simply governed by fear. (Delmouzos, [1912] 1983, p. 11). There was, therefore, an imperative need for reform that would significantly contribute to social modernisation[311].

Doctor Dimitrios Saratsis (1871-1951), from Volos, was the first to realise the imperative need to fill these gaps. He was described by Delmouzos as a "restless spirit, with wide humanitarian education, with the eyes looking towards real life and a quenchless thirst to aid in its cultivation and elevation" (Papanoutsou, 1984, p. 98). He suggested that the town council of Pagases establish a Girls' High School. The majority of councillors agreed to the foundation of the New School and its funding. The mechanism that would eventually create the school started operations in late September 1908.

[311] Secondary education for girls was not provided for by Greek law during the first half of the 20th century. Independent schools, such as the Arsakeio, its provincial branches and private girls' schools were responsible for educating future schoolmistresses and they operated with a curriculum minimally different from those of the secondary level boys' schools. However, the vast majority of girls could not attend these schools since it mainly involved relocating to Athens. Moreover, schools that had been established by foreign delegations were not in a position to cater for the girls' educational needs (Ziogou – Karastergiou, 1983, pp. 128-129).

The curriculum was designed by Delmouzos, who was not restricted by official curricula. Having studied in Germany when the Education Reform Movement emerged and developed (late 19th and early 20th centuries), he had been influenced by those new ideas and, upon returning to Greece, he attempted to exploit them in the best possible way. As can be seen in his own letter to the students of the Municipal Girls' High School of Volos (Delmouzos, [1912] 1983, p. 267), he strove to create complete personalities in terms of the child's emotional, intellectual and psychological development (Antoniou, 1999, pp. 141-142). In his view, the educator plays a decisive role in the learning process by "intervening in an advisory capacity and aiming to create, by example, independent, self-sufficient and free individuals and democratic-moral citizens" (Antoniou, 1999, p. 142).

It is, finally, worth mentioning that the social role of school is central to Delmouzos' thought. A direct relation to society itself is necessary in any educational effort and the school should not function as an isolated institution, cut off from social reality. Delmouzos places great emphasis on school life organisation and student team work, since, for him, the institution of schooling is "the continuation of life, the group effort and not the gap and the contradiction. The centre is not the child, but the children, not the individual, but the group" (Terzis, 2006, pp. 201-202).

The Municipal Girls' High School operated until its closure without an official state permit, something common at the time with most private educational institutes. However, its operation was known to the state apparatus and the school was often visited by various state authorities, who followed the work done there closely (Charitos, 1989, sec. A, p. 114).

Ever since the beginning of the M.G.H.S. there were various arguments against it from members of the local society of Volos. These arguments concerned either the morality of the venture (the young school principal) or the economic-social aspect (rich daughters studying with town money) or the linguistic issue. Things settled down during the first two years, but in the third year, an episode with the Metropolitan Germanos of

Demetrias once again sparked the conflict. From that day on, there were rapid developments. The visit was published, on the very next day, by the newspaper "Kyrix" which was openly against the school, in contrast to the newspaper "Thessalia". A series of libels against the Girls' High School followed, which roused the public.

Closing the school and Delmouzos leaving town were not enough to settle the issue. In January 1912, there was a mandate from the Court of Appeals of Larissa that indicted Delmouzos, along with eleven more people. The trial will take over two years to be held, due to the Balkan Wars, and will finally be held from 16 to 28 April 1914 in the Court of Appeals of Nafplio.

7.8.2. Method for participant selection /sampling

I chose to use the purposeful sampling method (also known as purposive or judgemental) (Babbie, 2011; Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013, pp. 312-318). Thus, my research sample was not wholly pre-specified, but sequential and inspired by theoretical sampling (Curtis et al., 2000, p. 1002; Babbie, 2011; Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013, pp. 312-318). It was designed in such a way as to make possible analytic generalisations, but not statistical ones and it involved a combination of different purposeful sampling strategies, namely: Maximum Variation Sampling[312], Typical Case Sampling[313], Critical Case Sampling[314], Extreme Case Sampling[315], Unique Case Sampling[316], Intense Case Sampling[317], Opportunistic Sampling[318] and Confirming and Disconfirming Sampling[319] (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013, p. 315).

[312] A selection to obtain maximum differences of perceptions about a topic among information-rich informants or group. I will refrain from citing specific examples of schools due to restrictions described in section 7.5.1 above.
[313] Knowing the typical characteristics, what is 'normal' or average of a group and sampling by those.
[314] Identifying the case that can illustrate some phenomenon dramatically.
[315] Choosing the extreme case after knowing the typical or average case.
[316] Choosing the unusual or rare case of some dimension or event.
[317] Selecting cases that are intense but not extreme illustrations.
[318] Takes place after the research has begun, to take advantage of unfolding events that will help answer research questions.
[319] Used to follow up on specific cases to test or explore further specific findings.

In any case, throughout the process of seeking consent from prospective participants, particular attention was paid on how, when and where subjects were approached. Different methods of recruiting subjects were used, including direct recruitment of study participants, referrals, the snowball technique, as well as announcements to key locations and to social media websites such as Facebook.

More specifically, I first contacted my former colleagues in Greece, either in person or by e-mail, in order to invite them to participate in my research study. An informed consent form, approved by the ethics review board, was provided to them and the whole activity was conducted in a manner that allowed them sufficient time to consider whether or not they wished to participate[320]. Considerable care was taken so that the colleague contacted would not feel pressured to participate and, when the contact was made in person, it was carried out in a setting free of situational or environmental influences that provided privacy to the potential participant and assured clear decision making. On top of that, supplementary information sheets were provided for my colleagues to distribute to eligible individuals who might be interested in the study.

Last but not least, print material was posted in designated approved on-campus areas in the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens as well as on my Facebook page. This recruitment material was an extension of the informed consent form and it was consistent with prohibitions of coercion and undue influence. In this process, visual effects were avoided, and adequate information was provided in sufficient detail, to allow the prospective participant to determine his/her eligibility and interest. Regarding the Facebook recruitment advertisement, it was only posted on my personal Facebook page with no reference to other webpages for additional information, ensuring that communication with prospective subjects was only possible by phone or e-mail.

Significant care was taken so that the persons contacted did not feel pressured to participate and the limitations of the snowball method of recruitment were seriously

[320] Due to the sheer number of consent forms, it is not possible to append them in this doctoral thesis. Should the committee or the examiners wish to review them, they can be provided upon demand.

taken into account. In addition to that, the influence of any potential power relations on the voluntariness of the participants was carefully considered and the 'power-based' coercion alongside with incentives of any kind was hopefully avoided. Furthermore, it was ensured that adequate content regarding the potential risks and benefits of the research was provided to participants on the written informed consent form and that it was made absolutely clear to them that there was no obligation to volunteer, as well as that there was every opportunity to withdraw at any time from the research, once participation had begun, with no need to offer any reason for doing so. Given this line of thinking, it is crucial at this point to note that the possible benefit to the participants, from taking part in the project, was not exaggerated and that the purpose of the research was clearly stated.

7.8.3. Developing my interview protocol

Following literature-based recommendations on designing and deploying focus group interviews, I made use of fifteen questions, some of which were deemed a necessary addition following the pilot study. They typically resulted in one-and-a-half to two-hour group sessions while the size of the groups varied. Generally, taking into account the principle of saturation, I tried to hold enough interviews to ensure the provision of adequate information and I ended them when I felt that the focus groups were no longer providing new or relevant information.

The interviews were semi-structured, typically lasted from forty-five to seventy minutes and were organised on the following six research axes:

1. Teaching conditions[321]
2. Employment issues[322]
3. Household income and social/personal lives
4. Effects on students
5. Initiatives and coping strategies

[321] This included questions about the general running of the school, funding, staff sufficiency, teacher/student ratio per class, school unit management and the ambiance of the school/offices/classrooms and the evaluation process among others.

[322] These were questions about labour relations, working hours, remuneration, access to professional development and self-education opportunities among others.

6. Professional organisations and teachers' collective activity[323]

Concerning the type of questions that I decided to use, they were drafted, pre-tested and further developed and re-formulated based on the findings of the pilot study, in terms of the following considerations: whether the language used was appropriate, whether they were answerable, understandable and clear in the way it was intended, whether they were appropriate and so on. I came up with a final set of questions that were grouped in the following three categories: initial questions, in- depth questions and follow-up questions (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013, pp. 357-373).

To elaborate further, the interviews began with the interviewees completing some necessary demographic questions, such as age, school district, years of experience and educational background on set forms provided at the beginning of the interview. The first group of questions were initial and simple ones, encouraging teachers to provide low-risk information and used as a warm up to make the teachers feel comfortable and at ease and set the scene for the more inquisitive, sensitive and complex questions that followed, once the group's affinity had been established. This category included descriptive questions, gathering some general and introductory information, narrative questions and finally structural questions aimed at evoking information on processes incorporated in the participants' experiences.

After the initial questions, in-depth questions followed, which were closer to the core of my research purpose and my research questions and addressed the key issues that I intended to cover in the focus group sessions. This category included evaluative questions giving teachers the opportunity to make judgements, contrast questions, meaning to encourage teachers to think about extreme cases, as well as questions that would encourage meta-thinking.

[323] Meaning by that, teachers' collective action and their participation in unions, assemblies and strikes; attitude of their union, the Teachers Federation of Greece (DOE).

Finally, follow-up questions were used throughout the interview in order to test the strength of the participants' opinions, to further stimulate discussion or to reveal more in-depth information by clarifying previous responses. This category comprised verification questions that encouraged participants to verify and expand their responses, prompts and probes that enabled participants to elaborate more upon an idea or issue, as well as exit questions that checked whether anything had been missed in the discussion.

Bringing this section to an end, I will make some final remarks concerning the order of the questions applied. As a rule, general questions were asked prior to more specific ones, which encouraged the participants to present their ideas on the topic, while at the same time leaving room for the generation of new information that I had not considered.

In addition, behaviour questions preceded attitude questions, as, based on the recommendations of Maggi Savin-Baden and Claire Howell Major (2013, pp. 380-381), this gives the opportunity to participants to discuss their behaviours more honestly. If attitude questions were posed prior to behaviour questions a danger lurked in that the participant's testimonies on their behaviours might be influenced by their effort to appear consistent with their previous responses regarding their attitudes. Finally, as a way of reducing participant bias, unaided questions were asked prior to aided ones. In that way, rather than being given the information, the participants were asked to provide it.

7.9. Data handling and coding

7.9.1. Characterisation of the data

Characterising the data is one of the first steps in the process of data analysis. In my case, my data was recorded and transcribed verbatim. Part of the process of characterisation involves the decision of what may be considered data and what type of data is significant. For instance, I chose to consider the social talk preceding and following the main part of the interviews recorded significant data. I also took into

account the speakers' tone, pauses and verbal ticks which were recorder. All these elements played a part in the interpretation of the data. In making all these decisions I considered my philosophical stance, my research approach and the aims of my research project (Tilley, 2003; Bailey, 2008).

The second step was to immerse myself in the data by listening to the recordings and reading the transcripts repeatedly in order to achieve a holistic and deep understanding. This was done in my case, even though it is not the norm for other approaches (cut is normally preferred), because of the abundance of material, the large number of focus groups and the number of participants in each one (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013). The third step included keeping a detailed journal throughout the procedure, following Adele Clarke's suggestion that "memos are sites of conversation with ourselves about our data" (Clarke, 2005, p. 202). These personal field notes proved a rich source of analysis and they were a way to "[think] critically about what you are doing and why, [confront] and always challenge your assumptions, and [recognise] the extent to which your thoughts, actions, and decisions shape how you research and what you see" (Mason, 2002, p. 5).

Having become very familiar with my material, the next step was to engage in the coding of my data. Coding essentially refers to assigning a descriptive label that captures the meaning of each segment of data. It is an important process for the following three reasons: i) it provides the opportunity to note details and incorporate chunks of data, ii) it facilitates searching, comparison and identification of patterns, and iii) it allows the close examination of data. My coding method of choice was not the most commonly used because, as Johnny Saldana (2013) says, I strongly believe that due to the uniqueness of each qualitative study, the analytical approach employed should be equally unique. I generally disagree with what is being said by most qualitative researchers that "data are not coded – they're *recoded*" (Saldana, 2013, p. 58 – emphasis in the original) and I consider the qualitative analytic process cyclical rather than linear.

I generally based my approach on Saldana, and my final choice was the eclectic method of coding that involves employing a combination of First Cycle methods of data analysis[324] and is considered a more advanced and complex approach which is difficult to categorise. I have used eclectic coding because it seemed more appropriate to my research to use a range of methods (for an overview of eclectic coding c.f. Saldana, 2013, pp. 188-193). Before I outline which combinations of methods I used, I would like to point out that it was not a random selection, but it a deliberate selection of those most appropriate methods in terms of my data and study purpose.

To begin with, I used Attribute Coding as a management technique, which is a notation at the beginning of the data of basic descriptive information. It is especially useful for qualitative analyses with multiple participants and sites (i.e. focus groups in my case). Although, as I will explain further on, I chose not to reveal personal information, it was important for my work to take into account factors such as the locality, the age, the gender and the employment relationship of participants. Attribute coding was also useful in compiling the charts provided in the Tables section.

I have also used Structural Coding, again a method suitable for studies with multiple participants and semi-structured interviews. This method applies a conceptual phrase to filter segments of the data that might relate to a particular research question. I employed this method in few special cases pertaining to specific research questions in my study.

Another method used in my analysis was combinations of Emotional Coding with Descriptive Coding, Versus Coding and Values Coding. All the above belong in the category of Affective Methods, apart from Descriptive Coding which is classified as Elemental.

[324] According to Saldana, "First Cycle methods are those processes that happen during the initial coding of data and are divided into seven subcategories: Grammatical, Elemental, Affective, Literary and Language, Exploratory, Procedural, and a final profile entitled Themeing the Data" (Saldana, 2013, p. 58). Second Cycle methods, when employed, involve more complex and demanding ways of rearranging or reanalysing the data processed with First Cycle methods.

Descriptive Coding was selected because emotional states are complex, and it is important to explore the emotion itself as well as its trigger[325]. Furthermore, it was important to place the emotion within a social context. Versus Coding proved particularly useful in my case, as binary oppositions and power relations (i.e. teachers versus parents, teachers versus the state) were readily evident in my subjects' answers. As a Marxist critical pedagogue, I believe that identifying the power conflicts among constituents and stakeholders is a vital tool to incite positive social change[326].

Moreover, I used Values Coding that pertained to the whole of my theoretical framework, as values, attitudes and personal beliefs, though not always explicitly stated, affect and colour all our statements[327]. Since my study was clearly a critical one, my intention was to capture the whole of my participants' worldview and especially their perceptions of the crisis. In any case, in every research study of this type, the results yielded depend on both the researcher's and the subjects' worldviews.

I also used Provisional Coding based on a start list of predetermined codes. These codes emerged from my literature review, as well as other relevant research on teachers' views published, and they included categories such as 'space as a political concept', 'staffroom as a sociable place', 'a sense of obligation and responsibility', 'blurred boundaries between school and home' and 'manipulation of teacher workplace culture'[328].

Finally, there were few cases where I used In Vivo Coding. As I have mentioned above, I concentrated on teachers as a community and not as individual voices, which is why I generally kept an active moderator role, recording and analysing the data while simultaneously interpreting it. However, in rare cases when a phrase used by an interviewee seemed to stand out, being for instance highly evocative, impacting or

[325] For more information on Affective and Elemental methods, c.f. Saldana, 2013, pp. 105-110.
[326] For additional information on Versus Coding, c.f. Saldana, 2013, pp. 115-118.
[327] For more information on Values Coding, c.f. Saldana, 2013, pp. 110-115.
[328] For more information on Provisional Coding, c.f. Saldana, 2013, pp. 144- 147.

particularly clever and ironic, I decided to use this coding method. Thus, in my case, it was used mainly at an initial stage, while highlighting such instances[329].

7.10. Summary

In this Chapter, I thoroughly explained the research methodology I followed before and during my fieldwork. I explained my sampling methods and presented my sample. I dealt with ethical implications and outlined my interview protocol. Finally, having coded and analysed my data, I will move on to the next chapter where I will present and discuss my findings.

[329] For more information on In Vivo Coding, c.f. Saldana, 2013, pp. 91-96.

CHAPTER 8: Findings and Discussion

8.1. Introduction

In this Chapter, I will present the findings of my qualitative analysis of teachers' responses. I will begin by outlining the axes upon which the interviews were structured and proceed to the analysis of the responses by providing substantial quotation data. Subsequently, a discussion of these findings will show how my initial research questions have been answered in my data. Finally, I will reflect on the limitations of my research and conclude with propositions for further research in the field.

8.2. Outlining the research axes

The teacher interviews were structured on six research axes, formed after reviewing relevant literature, discussing a list of topics to be investigated with other professionals and, of course, depending on their gravity concerning the investigation of my research questions.

The first axis concerned teaching conditions in school units and included questions about the general running of the school[330]; funding received by each school unit and the needs it suffices to cover; staff sufficiency and timely appointment and the teacher/student ratio per class. Furthermore, it was considered useful to include in this category questions concerning the school unit's management and the ambiance of the school, offices and classrooms, in conjunction with the effect of developments in education on all these factors. At this point, I also deemed it necessary to ask for teachers' opinions on the assessment process, which had partly begun to be applied in schools[331], and on what they believed was being pursued through these procedures.

[330] Quality and adequacy of material infrastructure and teaching tools.
[331] Evaluating the quality of the school unit and headmasters.

The second axis comprised questions regarding teachers' labour relations and access to professional development and self-education opportunities. I asked teachers, among others, about their remuneration, the direct or indirect increase of working hours, the possible intensification of their work and their autonomy at school. I also investigated the quality of teaching and possible consequences on it brought by changes in working conditions and labour relations, as well as the crisis as a whole. Finally, I examined whether the economic crisis has affected teachers' professional development and their changed priorities on the matter.

At a third level, I strove to gather information about the personal/social lives of educators and the ways they had been affected by the crisis. The possibility that the crisis has affected their mood, creativity and teaching work was another object of the research. The fourth axis had to do with the impact of the crisis on the student community. Therefore, I asked teachers whether they perceived of any differences regarding their students' academic achievement, conduct or health in the last few years.

Next, I considered it vital to collect information on how teachers and schools respond to everyday problems. The teachers were asked about the initiatives, actions and strategies they employ; at the same time, possible obstacles they face were investigated. The sixth and last axis concerned teachers' collective action and their participation in unions, assemblies and strikes. It was considered of some significance, at this point, to ask the teachers' opinion on the attitude adopted by their union, DOE[332], concerning the education policy followed in the last few years in Greece.

8.3. Same reality, different points of view

Before proceeding to discuss my findings, I would like to make a reference to the work of Dr Maria Chalari who published her own doctoral thesis on the ramifications of the Greek crisis on education in 2016. The findings I am about to present resemble those

[332] Teachers' Federation of Greece (DOE).

yielded by Dr Chalari's qualitative research, in terms of how teachers describe and articulate the effects on their professional and personal life. It is my firm belief that this convergence strengthens the validity and reliability of the qualitative method of analysis as a research tool.

However, the choice of a different philosophical background quickly highlights the methodological differentiations between the two theses. Dr Chalari's phenomenological methodology entails by definition an individualistic point of view which overlooks the social dimension of the crisis and invites us to shift our way of thinking in order to find hope. On the contrary, as a Marxist theorist, I firmly believe that it is not our way of thinking that needs to be transformed but the social reality. Dialectical materialism argues for change and this change can be achieved through close inspection and deep understanding of the social phenomena that led Greece to this state.

Hence, similar findings will be interpreted with different methodological tools in a different philosophical framework, as I am convinced that a Marxist reading is the prerequisite for social change.

After having presented my findings and properly supported them by providing extended quotations in the following section, I shall proceed to the examination of my results in an attempt to provide thorough and clear answers to the research questions I formulated in Chapter One of my doctoral thesis.

8.4. Findings

I could contend that teachers generally maintain that underfunding of the school unit is evident in every aspect of schooling and the educational reality[333]. At the same time, changes in the way funds are made available[334] has brought a series of interconnected

[333] It is worth noting that from 2009 to 2013, total spending on education has been reduced by 33%, while the total education budget reduction will have reached 47% by 2016.
[334] The school boards, who come under the municipalities, cover the operating costs of the schools instead of the Ministry of Education's regular budget.

consequences including, bankrupt school boards, municipalities withholding school budgets and a complicated, time-consuming process of fund release. These are made obvious in the following characteristic quotes:

> [because our school is EPZ] there isn't even Xerox paper or toilet paper and other classroom stuff, everything is a little tight lately.
>
> (ATH1.1)

> Yes, we're not supposed to make a lot of photocopies, they don't turn on the heating on time […] there's also a constant threat that money isn't enough, so don't ask for anything. So this directly pressures you into not asking. Also, we used to have stationery, now there's nothing, things are generally restricted.
>
> (ATH20.1)

> The greatest problem is this, the fact that municipalities merged, resulting in needs of small local communities being overlooked.
>
> (VOL10.3)

> Funding was cut to a third, needs more than doubled, so you can see that the school [is facing difficulties].
>
> (VOL10.1)

> [Changes in the availability of funds have] many consequences, because […] the city does not know – it's not easy to know the needs and particularities of each school unit in order to cope. […] There are some positive things, I mean, there's more transparency, the school isn't anyone's 'little shop' […] but it's very often dysfunctional.
>
> (ATH2.1)

> The idea to not ask for much and be grateful for what we have [is always] at the back of our mind. We stopped asking, wanting something more, we forgot what we enjoyed having in the past. This deprivation has become a way of life, living with as little as possible, the bare necessities, fearing a worse future.
>
> (VOL6.2)

As a direct consequence, in most cases school units are incapable of covering even such essential needs, as heat and hygiene, forcing teachers to look to personal contacts for

credit. With regard to covering expenses for books, stationery and other materials, a large portion of teachers state that they are forced to use their own resources, providing their financial ability allows it. As a matter of fact, the interviewees unanimously agree that the implementation of all projects promoted with "great fanfare" is contingent on individual financial capacity. As they emphatically state, there is a great disconnection between policy formulations, ambitious "imposed" projects and the funding needed for implementation.

> [We are being asked] to do things in order to do the projects that need to be done and they are not supported by anyone. Everything's hanging, it's left to us, our good will and our hard work. [And] if I may become personal, I will tell you that everything I do for my class, the photocopies I give my students, because they're so many, most of the time they come out my own pocket. […] This affects me and definitely makes me spend my own money. […] You can't just ask me to do things without [giving me the means] to do it. It's nice to say things, but everything is tested in practice and unfortunately practice has nothing to do with theory.
>
> (VOL24.1)

> And we resort to charity a lot. […] that is, we abandon the obligation of the state, which is the social policies and welfare state.
>
> (ATH14.2)

> Every day we receive circulars for even more things, I mean, do this project, do that project, take part in the other project, do this, do that, and the funds are cut in half. This is an undeniable fact.
>
> (ATH22.3)

> [We are forced to do programmes and projects] with equipment for which we have reached the point of logging onto social media groups and saying, we need a microphone, who has one? There are such websites, very active now, where we essentially beg for charity.
>
> (VOL10.2)

Simultaneously, the majority of teachers asked referred to spiralling informal costs for parents and PGA associations[335], which can range from painting classrooms to buying

[335] PGA stands for Parents and Guardian Association.

new curtains or a copier, along with the implications from a moral or practical viewpoint. At this point, it is worth mentioning the catalytic way social class determination of each area[336] seems to affect school functioning, related to the financial status of both the municipality and the parents.

> [In special education schools] there was, in terms of equipment too, a huge problem, and almost everything was done with donations, or [paid for] by the parents.
>
> (ATH18.1)

> As a result, there was a Minister at the beginning of the school year saying that lists [requiring materials bought by parents] are not allowed, and we found ourselves exposed because we had to hand out lists, that was the only way for the school to operate.
>
> (VOL10.3)

> We seek contribution from students for things that we never did before. There are cases of schools that have asked students to contribute in heating expenses, apart from materials used at school.
>
> (VOL10.2)

> [Now] parents are trying to raise the money to paint the classrooms themselves, I've never seen this before in the 31 years I've been a teacher.
>
> (VOL23.1)

> […] parents painted a classroom. Last year, they had changed the curtains out of their own pocket. Generally, parents are burdened with things that they are not obliged to do.
>
> (VOL23.3)

> [Copy paper] is no longer provided by the PGA, it's not provided by the city, it's not bought by the school, children bring it from home, one pack per child […].
>
> (ATH2.4)

[336] Both in the Attica region and Volos and its suburbs.

> No, no, parents can't afford it and all schools don't belong in the same category. I mean, of course, schools in Ekali or Kifisia (**researcher's note:** more affluent areas in Athens) are certainly more active, the schools in the centre of the city, how? With what materials?
>
> (ATH21.1)

Another undeniable conclusion is that schools are facing severe difficulties stemming from their inability to fully implement their curriculum because of understaffing. With afternoon schools being staffed after morning schools, the problem of staff deficiency is particularly obvious there. At the same time, teachers overall point out that the greatest adversity faced by school units in terms of sufficiency or timely appointment of staff is primarily in covering specialised subjects.

To be more specific, close to zero new appointments of permanent staff during the last few years of the crisis[337], along with reduced hiring of substitute teaching staff, have heightened a long-standing problem. Teachers largely speak of "virtual staffing" of schools, "bad management of human resources" and "unorthodox ways of covering positions" that do not lead to realistic solutions. In this view, the almost exclusively National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) funded[338] hiring of substitute teachers, apart from the insecurity they instil in educators, the degradation of labour relations and the internal division of labour[339] also bring a chain of negative consequences to the proper function of a school unit and the quality of teaching.

> The colleagues took a long time to come, there were transfers, there was a lot of fuss, it's been barely a week (**researcher's note**: late November) that we've been able to fix our timetable.
>
> (ATH17.1)

[337] While at the same time there are more and more retirements and resignations of existing teachers.
[338] National Strategic Reference Framework (ESPA): "The European Union implements cohesion policy objectives as part of the seven-year programming period, for which the Member States always draw up new programming documents. These stipulate the budget and define and lay down new objectives and priorities that Member States in the given period try to achieve and fulfil in compliance with basic strategic documents."
[339] This includes workers with flexible working relations who have been hired with different rights from those appointed via the state budget.

> In the afternoon school there is a problem. Out of the nine classes that we should have, we can only teach four. The afternoon school is not fully [operational] due to lack of staff, I mean, we need three more colleagues, only the first and second grade are having classes.
>
> (ATH2.2)

> The hiring of temporary teachers has significantly decreased, so many vacancies that were previously covered this way, because they involved a few hours here and there, now they can't be covered or take a very long time to do so.
>
> (VOL10.2)

> Yes, we've got a problem with Physical Education, because they're not hiring substitutes. The girl who is supposed to fill the position of the second PE teacher has been seconded from Alonissos (**researcher's note:** a small island near Volos). For her to leave Alonissos, a substitute teacher needs to go in her place. The Ministry isn't hiring, so we have to make do.
>
> (VOL7.1)

> [Staff] was more than adequate, we were overstaffed this year, and this due to bad management of human resources and nothing else, because there are schools lacking staff. Even schools in the neighbourhood."
>
> (ATH20.3)

As teachers emphatically point out, moreover, in these last few years the efforts to bridge the gap using existing staff, as well as the efforts for savings in the number of employees[340], have led to fragmented schooling, inability to plan ahead for the school year and a less holistic teaching experience. Teachers are forced to cover lessons so that the school 'appears' to be functioning properly; scientific fields are breached; tenured teachers are made available to an increasing number of schools to fill their working hours; and it is not uncommon to see redeployments of staff members, even those in key positions, during the school year[341].

[340] i.e., merging and closing schools, abolishing teacher training, teacher transfers.
[341] Referring to transfers of teachers in the middle of the school year, even those teaching first grade, which supposedly should never be disrupted.

> No way, we're not [fully staffed] yet. They took two people, the first-grade teacher […] to put her in another school, and another teacher from the afternoon school to take her elsewhere. This happened just a month ago (**researcher's note:** early November), so there still schools with vacancies.
>
> (ATH21.1)

> No, it wasn't done on time. There was a teacher missing, a drama teacher who came just recently (**researcher's note:** mid-December). At the beginning of the year we didn't have a music teacher and the class teacher had to take on these classes.
>
> (VOL23.1)

> There are crazy thing happening, I mean, it's December and they're going to take the teacher of the afternoon school to a morning school, and the afternoon school will shut down and "that's OK, it's not really necessary"!
>
> (ATH14.2)

Simultaneously, there seems to be great differentiation between large schools in metropolitan areas and those in the country, especially in terms of staffing. Namely, smaller countryside schools are rarely wholly staffed and even when this happens, it is very late in the school year. Teachers say there have been great shortages of specialised staff[342] in the past few years, which are now increasingly covered through NSRF programmes. Schools that do not belong in the URSC category[343] and are largely staffed with permanently tenured teachers are a notable exception. Nevertheless, it would be useful to point out that teachers in these schools invariably start describing their situation by admitting they are "the lucky ones" and consider these school units "the exceptions to the rule". Even in these cases, however, the almost complete lack of supportive staff[344] in schools and management creates problems in cases of emergency[345].

[342] i.e., special education teachers, English teachers, music teachers, etc.
[343] URSC stands for all-day schools with Unified Revised School Curriculum.
[344] Referring to extra teachers, as well as clean staff, administrative staff, medical staff, etc.
[345] i.e., a need for replacement caused by sudden illness, pregnancy, etc.

> We are one of the lucky schools, at least in terms of general education teachers, we have tenured teachers here […] but specialised teachers took a long time.
>
> (VOL7.1.)

> We are a privileged school, because we're so close to the centre. All the schools in the area of the centre generally work very well [in terms of staff]. It's just, this year was a bit particular, there were many secondments, there weren't many new appointments, there was shortage of teachers, especially in cases of temporary substitution.
>
> (VOL.10.3)

Combined with this, the forthcoming evaluation[346] has evolved into a major cause for concern in the teaching community, with many implications. It appears to be a catalyst in forming school ambiance as well as teachers' relationships within their working context. The extent to which it affects teaching and the final result is highly dependent on the type and dynamics of every school, as well as the stance assumed by the headmaster. Thus, considerable differentiation among school units becomes evident.

In this context, there are schools in which lack of unanimity among teachers and/or agreement between staff and management has led to serious conflict, which teachers say is greatly aggravated when the two sides are forced to agree on a stance. A characteristic common theme can be observed in teachers' descriptions of these schools' ambiance.

[346] The first form of evaluation in Greece, which was at the same time one of the longest-running institutions in the history of Greek education, was the so-called Inspector (1895). With his judgement deciding whether a teacher would remain in service or not, the Inspector essentially controlled the degree to which the government education policy was applied, punishing or rewarding teachers accordingly. The object of great controversy in the field of educational politics, it was finally abolished in 1982, when it was replaced by the School Advisor. Ever since, even though the issue of evaluation in education frequently resurfaced in discussions or proposed laws, it was never until 2013 practically applied on the Greek educational reality (two-fold evaluation encompassed in Greek law 2986/2002). When this research was conducted, in 2014, the evaluation process had partly begun, in terms of quality of the school unit and evaluation of headmasters. Following the latest political developments in Greece (the third Memorandum on 14 August 2015 and the second electoral victory of SYRIZA on 21 September 2015) the political leadership of the Ministry for Education, enlisting the help of 'independent specialists' from international Organisations, had to set the new teacher and school unit evaluation framework by May 2016 in an updated plan of action. The leadership of the Ministry of Education, to maintain its leftist façade, has successfully been stalling for two years against pressures by the Troika, but the new evaluation framework is expected to be announced before spring of 2018.

They all outline a state of managerial pressure and authoritarianism, and a context in which evaluation is used as a means of intimidation and threat of imminent consequences and dismissals. On the other hand, teachers in some schools say their relationships with colleagues and headmasters remain cordial. According to their interpretation, this happens because the teachers unanimously oppose evaluation and the headmaster shows solidarity with their opinion and demands.

> Apart from that, we are in a state that, while it hasn't assessed its own educational policy, it wants to assess teachers through institutions and people in key positions. […] On principle, I do not accept being assessed by a school advisor, for instance, or a headmaster who both have a lot less classroom experience than me.
>
> (ATH17.1)

> Our school is the exception, it's a different school […] it's a school where all colleagues are united.
>
> (ATH22.4)

> There is obviously a state of fear, though, for the headmasters as well as us, and it is transferred to us, and there's definitely pressure.
>
> (ATH20.1)

> I don't know if there is [an effect] in other schools, here, I feel like, [I shouldn't] do anything irregular, anything that might be… not illegal, but … seeming unusual, that they'll come and ask, why this number of kids and not that, I mean, details that you shouldn't have to worry about.
>
> (ATH20.3)

> Teachers' opinions differ on the issue of assessment. I mean, in our group there are some – very few- who may be for an assessment, and others who are against, and there is a dispute when the issue is raised because there are different opinions.
>
> (ATH12.4)

> Perhaps, the specifics aren't clear, for instance, how the assessment will specifically be done, but there is the ghost of the assessment over teachers' heads, and this weighs down the feet, the hands, the thoughts of all teachers.
>
> (ATH12.1)

> Indirectly, directly, [the work of teachers] is very much affected. I see colleagues terrified, panicking, […] stressed, anxious, not because they don't do a good job, but because they don't know what this is, what its purpose is. […] It's that we don't know exactly what they're asking for […].
>
> (VOL7.1)

It is equally noteworthy that teachers as a group, both those who are experiencing change in their working environments and those who aren't, express similar concerns. They speculate that if this evaluation proceeds, at least on the basis set in the Presidential Decree, it will inevitably affect the workers' relationships as much as schooling culture in general. In fact, they maintain that it will contribute to the formation of a competitive and individualistic context, while at the same time obedient towards management. For these and a multitude of other reasons[347] teachers almost unanimously oppose this particular Presidential Decree.

> Of course, there's pressure, from top to bottom, tremendous pressure. […] Now it's getting to an individual basis, I am being evaluated [instead of the school unit as a whole] anytime now the evaluation of teachers will occur. We're going to have issues, it's certain, depending on the stance each one of us takes. Personally speaking, there's not a chance of me evaluating a teacher […].
>
> (ATH11.1)

> There is no good and bad assessment, there is what an economic-political authority intends to do and which way they want to 'turn the boat' in the area of education.
>
> (VOL4.1)

> We are becoming increasing suspicious with one another. Everyone tries, and often in secret, to do more so that we are in a better position than the others. This creates a suspicious and uncooperative climate, and it's not good […] because we are dealing with personalities, we try to shape free personalities, unfortunately, in these conditions, they'll be anything but free.
>
> (VOL23.1)

[347] As described by teachers, they include its hierarchal and punishing character, the vague criteria, the lack of pedagogic value, the lack of transparency in the process, and the political and ideological purposes it serves.

> There's a state of fear among teachers, there's stress, but it hasn't got competitive yet. Maybe it's latent, maybe it will show later.
>
> (VOL24.2)

> Furthermore, the relationships between the headmaster and the school teachers have been disturbed, they are alienated because they change sides, in the sense that, one side becomes the evaluators and the other the evaluatees. This creates many problems in communication, relationships, the consensus regarding the operation of the school, and a sort of fear.
>
> (ATH14.1)

Nevertheless, it should be noted at this point that it is not the general idea of evaluation that all teachers oppose. Many, identifying shortcomings, problems and flaws in the existing system, assert that it is high time for a serious discussion – a discussion they say will most probably give rise to a different form of evaluation 'from the bottom up', as they characteristically describe it, which will be multifactorial and include an evaluation of existing structures, tools and teaching policies.

> I mean, if [the Minister] speaks of changes in education, he needs to admit first that the previous one has failed. Changes only occur when something has been studied, has proved good or bad and we seek to go from good to better and from bad to good.
>
> (ATH17.1)

> I believe that [the assessment] is something that should definitely happen, it should have happened already. In any case, we must assess our work somehow and our presence in this field.
>
> (VOL23.1)

> The latter is one of the many causes of the majority of teachers' dissatisfaction with their union, DOE. As they remark, it is not enough that teachers oppose evaluation. What is needed, they emphasise, is a viable alternative offered by the union, justifying this thesis with the argument that resistance without an alternative solution cannot lead to an essentially active stance.
>
> (ATH20.4)

> What we constantly talk about is that we say no to assessment, but, as a professional group, we never suggest an alternative.
>
> (ATH20.3)

> They're disappointing. A union representative can't just say "no to everything", you need to hear a suggestion for the future. I mean, DOE says we are against the evaluation. Fine, which evaluation? This one, they say, it shouldn't have dismissals. I agree, it shouldn't. But when something starts to happen, "don't post on the website, don't enter the self-evaluation group". Then what do we do? Again, we're left with "no to everything". We can't work that way. […] Now comes Tsipras, he promises to abolish [it]. Everyone's happy. I mean, it hasn't even started, now we're shutting it down. What can we say about this country? It's shameful…
>
> (VOL24.6)

It is worth saying that a large percentage of teachers underline the sector's inability to anticipate problems or condemn irregularities - an inability to a large extent associated with what they say are the doubtful morals of union ideology and ethics of its representatives, the bureaucratisation of unionism and partisan interests.

> On the other hand, I believe union members don't listen to the base, that is, the higher they are in union positions, the less they comprehend the needs and the demands of the base, they always promote those issues that are popular, the ones they think will get them re-elected.
>
> (ATH17.2)

> I mean, what did you do to be prepared, especially when you saw that things were coming, because they themselves said 'things are coming', but what do you do? I refuse, passively –I will call this passive- even though they consider it an active stance, it makes you an active citizen when you resist what's coming, but I feel that refusal is a passive stance. I want something beyond the obvious.
>
> (ATH20.4

> I would also appreciate it if the union condemned things that were happening, unfairness which is covered up, things that go on with headmasters, advisors, which are simply allowed to continue. Publicity is not given, but obviously our union is also controlled by political parties, which use it according to their own interests […] I believe there's no objectivity or transparency.
>
> (ATH20.1)

> I think every profession deserves what it gets. A professional group that does not support itself by itself should reasonably expect this kind of treatment [from outside]. […] Every union is a reflection of a professional. When our union does not address these issues…
>
> (VOL10.3)

> It is a union whose majority is subordinated, they essentially back governmental [policy].
>
> (ATH14.2)

> We shouldn't have a union that is dominated by PASOK or New Democracy, it's not possible in 2014, after everything we've been through.
>
> (ATH11.1)

> I think the strikes that are organised are set up, they don't really mean to fight. What bothers me is one party gathers at one place and another party at a different place. […] We have the same goals, why should some go to this place and other to that place? Just to be different?
>
> (VOL23.2)

> Let me tell you something, it's our fault. [When the province] elects specific forces, government-friendly, who will promote these particular measures and they get majority in DOE every year, nothing will ever change. […] The truth is that Athens votes differently, the 1st district of Thessaloniki votes differently, large urban centres vote differently, but there's an issue with provincial areas.
>
> (ATH13.2)

> Teachers as a professional group don't seem very eager to fight, nor have they ever been, right? In any case, it is obvious that the main load of strikes is carried by large urban centres, mainly Athens, Thessaloniki, Patra, to a lesser extent, maybe Volos a little.
>
> (ATH17.1)

However, the discussion of changes in teachers' work brought by new data in the recent years of the crisis can never be complete without reference to a number of other administrative reforms. As teachers overall emphatically remark, the intensification of

their work and the overwhelming pressure have escalated to dangerous levels. Teachers present themselves as burdened with administrative form filling and "unnecessary bureaucratic tasks" that distract them from teaching.

> So, now, making a timetable is a priority, and the pedagogy comes second.
>
> (ATH17.1)

> I'd also say that there's a 'bureauplethora', I mean, we try to have as many papers as possible, because that's how we ensure that stuff is being done, as if you can see what actually happens in pieces of paper.
>
> (ATH20.4)

> There is intensification, I would say, regarding the broadcasting of school activities and their reduction to a centralised activity or a centralised level. It seems simple, but it's not, because you always have to redefine or simplify anything that happens in a school, within a school unit, so that it can be recorded.
>
> (ATH12.1)

> The demands of the administration have increased by 80% this year. The documents we receive are different daily and you need to respond within short deadlines.
>
> (VOL10.3)

> What's more, the responsibilities of headmasters have dramatically increased, now they've also added leaves of absence. […] We are constantly assigned responsibilities that we didn't have before, and we should never have in the first place.
>
> (VOL10.2)

> Secondly, many responsibilities have been reassigned to headmasters, now they have taken on leaves of absence, so we're moving to a model where the headmaster is a manager controlling everything, they will be accountable, this differentiation we find in the private sector will be transferred here.
>
> (ATH14.2)

At the same time, they underline that time available to socialise with colleagues had been cut to a minimum, and the staffroom no longer represents the team spirit of the school community. Several teachers also identify conversion of schools to follow URSC as a defining factor leading to the latter. Comparing those schools to factories, they argue that they have significantly contributed to the loss of essential communication among colleagues.

> I am one of those who said, since the beginning of the crisis, that maybe we will emerge better people from the crisis, change our relationships, our perspective. But I now see that, instead of coming closer together, we are drifting apart […].
>
> (VOL23.1)

> This is so wrong, that everyone's relationships in schools have disintegrated since 2008. The headmasters have made a mess of everything, where will this go?"
>
> (ATH2.1)

> Yes, we've got a problem, we became a URSC without a dining room, without the corresponding infrastructure and staff. Like so many schools, but the fact is, it wasn't supposed to be like this, the schools had to be properly equipped so as to be able to meet the demands this type of school raises.
>
> (ATH20.4)

> They asked us to designate a teacher responsible for [raising awareness about] rabies […] who would obviously have to read up, learn, get informed, prepare his own material, because they didn't send us anything, prepare a PowerPoint, a seminar […] And all these would happen when? At what time?
>
> (VOL10.2)

At the same time, the majority of teachers refer to bureaucratic control mechanisms that raise the visibility of individual performance, secretly cultivate a climate of suspicion and antagonism among colleagues and promote an individualised work environment. In this context, there is pressure to make some procedures compulsory, such as school advisors "urging" teachers to participate in paid seminars and the delivery of projects.

> It's that lust for measurable goals, scientifically supported like this, in the sense of standardising some methodologies, where processes can be defined and controlled. […] I mean, there is this new philosophy of making teachers adequate, effective and productive, indirectly placing blame after all, while the teacher faces students and has to bell the cat. […] "[These are] the tools to establish a state of insecurity and PR careerism, they say, see how companies compete with each other? […] That's how labourers should compete.
>
> (VOL4.1)

> We happened to have school advisors here who are detached, they are isolated, they have retreated to their personal space and they don't come out to ask forcibly. There are prefectures where teachers receive enormous pressure from advisors.
>
> (VOL10.3)

> They also pressure us to participate in many seminars, outside working hours, 'optional' yet compulsory, […] there is pressure from advisors because these papers will go into our portfolio. And this creates the necessity to attend them without having the time, because our free time for our family, for ourselves has been cut to the minimum due to the crisis.
>
> (ATH17.2)

> I humbly believe that the state will at some point take [headmasters] out of the classroom completely and they will tell them to be managers, though – because this is education and not a corporation – this would be a disaster in my opinion. Education cannot work in the same conditions as an industry.
>
> (VOL24.6)

All of the above seem to cause significant concern for teachers, who describe their situation as dominated by fear, anxiety, insecurity, disappointment and a targeted approach of "divide and conquer". They say it is the first time they have felt so divided into categories and sides; - a strategy they interpret as an attempt to weaken the professional community by undermining common interests.

> Many different camps are created. A very basic one is headmaster versus teachers. When your headmaster becomes responsible for approving a leave of absence, there's nothing to talk about.
>
> (VOL10.2)

> There's a lot of 'divide and conquer'. Now we're making on social group chase after another. Why does the tax collector take 1,500 euros, why do you, teacher, sit at home for three months a year, that's social automatism.
>
> (VOL24.6)

> We don't believe in collective action, we don't believe in cooperation, we have stopped believing in this, so we function as individuals, I mean, if I can make it, I don't care what happens beyond that.
>
> (VOL23.4)

> They have divided us in so many degrees of seniority, so many specialisations […]!
>
> (VOL7.1)

> And [though our salaries have been cut] the next guy tells you "I don't have any salary" or "I take half as much as you do". Still, I'd like them to get paid, maybe even more than I would, but I would like to have a proper salary, so I can live with dignity.
>
> (ATH13.2)

> Doesn't the crisis create a lot of competition? […] I mean, when competition acquires high social status, isn't this a result of a crisis? When the school becomes a merchandise to produce the results it does, isn't that the result of a crisis?
>
> (ATH12.3)

The interviewees, however, also place a lot of emphasis on the "new" climate recently been created between teachers and parents. The majority of those asked point out that in recent years parents have become much more invasive, demanding and judgmental of their work. At the same time, a highly problematic situation seems to have been induced

by formal complaints by parents, 'employee reprimands'[348] and disciplinary actions taken, as the teachers say, for trivial reasons.

Regarding the last, several teachers confess that the new legal framework, which significantly enables parents to make official complaints against teachers, has greatly contributed in this direction. Many refer to the underlying purposes of this framework concerning the further bullying of teachers and the illegal assignment of financial burdens on parents, which go hand in hand with their "active participation" in the evaluation and teaching process. Some even emphasise that confrontation with parents is nothing less than a miniature sample of the general conflict society has entered, and they emphasise that to parents, teachers represent the "public sector," and "a part of the state." Thus, parents behave this way due to their frustration and fury at these institutions.

> Parents have the tendency to intervene and judge much more easily and rudely.
>
> (ATH13.1)

> There is definitely a change [in the relationship with parents] and the teacher is highly suspicious of the parent, they don't who they're dealing with, what problems each family might be facing, so we are now trying to balance difficult situations, very often being constrained in how we do our work.
>
> (VOL23.3)

> Our very Ministry gives the impression that teachers don't work. Parents don't feel that they bring their children to school and they are protected, because the Minister himself publicly says things that are not really true.
>
> (VOL10.3)

In addition, a large number of interviewees point out that the core underlying cause of their tension with parents is the personal problems and life changes being faced by parents[349]. More specifically, teachers observe that the parents' inability to cope with the

[348] Here I am referring to employees' names being mentioned in formal reports addressed to the management with the employees then called to explain themselves.
[349] It should be noted here that families are losing their jobs, homes and medical coverage, while at the

demands of their role[350], their emotional state, their rage and depression make them lash out at "easy targets." There are, of course, those teachers in our sample who say the crisis, common difficulties and problems have brought them closer to their students' parents. Close relationships in smaller communities where people know one another seem to contribute significantly.

> The parents themselves come [to school] burdened with problems. […] And the teachers are also burdened with the same problems, and tensions run high, that's what I see.
>
> (VOL10.4)

> Yes, because when [parents], in turn, cannot cope, when they feel that they cannot help their child in other ways –with money, clothes, food, or many other things – they definitely say "why can't you help my child?" and there may be tension.
>
> (ATH18.2)

> They need guidance, too, the parents need guidance, too.
>
> (ATH1.2)

> I believe that parents have entered this general conflict that exists in society and they are a little more suspicious towards us, more aggressive.
>
> (ATH22.2)

> I think that parents generally don't know the boundaries, they have just been given a power, which is not real, they just think they have it.
>
> (ATH20.1)

> The educational system has turned the parent into a home tutor. That happens even more because of the crisis, since parents can no longer afford private tuition and have taken this burden upon themselves, a burden that is not their responsibility and, the way they do it [is wrong], it is not their domain."
>
> (ATH17.1)

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same time first-time use of food banks, transience and homelessness have all increased.

[350] i.e., to feed, dress, care for or help their children with their studies.

Teachers overall contend that this new climate has given rise to exceptionally counter-productive conditions. They say it creates stress, conflict and competition among colleagues, as well as between teachers and management, while affecting their relationship with students and their teaching. Dominated, as they say, by fear and anxiety for a false 'legitimacy' and pressure to 'present', which is completely irrelevant to the learning and teaching process, they see their work becoming increasingly 'dysfunctional'.

The consequences of the crisis, always according to teachers, are now especially evident in the student community. A majority of teachers interviewed say children are the recipients of negative situations experienced in their home and family environments, on a physical as well as emotional level, and this is reflected in their behaviour and academic achievement. The interviewees point out that most children, despite their young age, are aware of what is going on around them and bring this anxiety into the school. Children's responses vary, but teachers constantly refer to aggressiveness and depression.

> It doesn't normally manifest as aggression, more often than not, they become depressed, the children turn to themselves, they can't understand, quite possibly, they even blame themselves, in some cases, for what is happening, without knowing why.
>
> (ATH17.1)

> The children bring [negativity] to school, too. All this aggression, all this violence among children, the way they speak, the name-calling, I believe they are coming from somewhere, what they experience at home, the pressure, the deprivation, their parents fighting, the nagging, they lash out here, because most of these children are abused at home, to be frank. And all this ends up here, you see that the way they instinctively react is either to swear at each other, using horrible language, or to strike.
>
> (ATH1.2)

> It's not possible- the children can't deal with tons of problems at home and the next minute they're at school and they are happy, well-prepared, well-fed, clean. […] Also, with parent unemployment, dad is at home all day with mum and they're fighting. Financial difficulties bring arguments that affect the children 100%.

(ATH20.3)

> I see that it has had a significant effect, but not in a direct way, not visible, if you like, or hard to interpret. Our interpretation and evaluation is this, that the general crisis – mainly financial, but not exclusively financial, it is also social, ultimately ideological – is generally reflected in the attitude of children at school and their general attitude towards school.
>
> (ATH12.2)

> Children have definitely changed, […]. I believe in the last five years, maybe it is the crisis or maybe it is anything else, children are disoriented. They are not as organised as they used to be, maybe the parents were more organised before, maybe what they had to do was clear and now they have lost their sense of direction in the family, they've lost money, they've lost jobs, so there's not a lot of desire to spend as much time with their children as they used to.
>
> (VOL10.3)

> You see notebooks untidy, children neglected, you can see no one is taking care of them, parents are either always out, or they don't spend as much time as they should […].
>
> (VOL24.6)

At the same time, teachers remark that there is a worrying increase in the number of students who face hunger or the risk of it, as well as widespread malnutrition[351], and a constantly increasing number of students cannot pay to participate in any events organised by the school[352]. It is particularly important to emphasise the great differentiation concerning the extent and intensity of cases in different areas, depending on socioeconomic background but also on the fact that conditions are far better in the country than in the capital.

> Last year, when I was working at an all-day school, there were kids at school from 07:00 –because they were enrolled in the school's early arrival zone- until 16:15 with only a sandwich.
>
> (ATH17.3)

[351] i.e., children who do not eat meat, fish or chicken, but rely on pasta and rice instead.
[352] i.e., daily excursions, visits to museums, etc.

> "[The children] are hungry, they're waiting to eat something, if we give them some bread, or there are other children that have realised that some of their classmates –at least in my class, I don't know about the other classes- are hungry and deprived and they take care to bring two or three sandwiches to give to the next kid and you can see the other one waiting. They're hungry, there is this problem.
>
> (ATH1.2)

> [I knew a teacher] who bought bagels because she worked at the afternoon school and they didn't have lunch. She bought bagels and she handed them out at lunchtime.
>
> (VOL23.1)

Concerning whether the crisis has affected the mood, creativity and work of teachers, most seem to agree, stressing that personal stamina, creativity, sense of achievement, relationships with students and efficiency cannot remain unaffected. On the contrary, teachers are highly dependent on social climate, working conditions, their ability, as they describe it, to "make a decent living" and the overall context. They seem to be struggling to maintain balance because children, as they characteristically mention, "need them more than ever" and "are not to blame for any of this." They appear dominated by a strong sense of responsibility to their students, while at the same time, they feel frustrated and angered at being attacked by the media, parents and the government. A majority of interviewees express intense dissatisfaction with the hypocrisy hiding, as they point out, under the pretence of invoking teaching as a "vocation."

> If I'm depressed because I can't pay, because I'm weighed down by my loan payments, anything, if I'm hunted down by the banks, all these people, it is reasonable to assume that I won't be able to perform in my work as well as I otherwise would.
>
> (ATH20.1)

> And this pressure also takes a toll on our personal life, our mood and, up to a point, it could also eventually affect our relationship with the children. I mean, if I go to work with my stomach tied up, this can easily show in my face.
>
> (ATH20.3)

> No, I can't be relaxed and comfortable in my personal, social and family life, I can't fulfil my needs and the needs of the people around me, and as a result, I'm not as dedicated, happy and motivated as when I started work and I had my living ensured. I used to say, I'm not going to be rich, but I'll have dignity […].
>
> (ATH1.3)

> Ultimately, [pursuing personal development] feels vain. So, if you don't decide to think that what I do, I do only for myself, for my own personal reasons, I think you're only left with disappointment in the end.
>
> (ATH17.2)

> [Following an expensive training programme] is my choice, I'll give you that, but with the money I make right now, I'm 32 years old and I can't rent my own flat, because I choose to be educated, to be trained on something else, essentially to develop [professionally] but some other things stay behind. I mean, on the one hand, in education and training I am moving forward, but I feel I'm behind in terms of my personal development.
>
> (ATH18.1)

> Sometimes, I've heard colleagues say, "with this salary, I won't even try". But they never do it in the classroom. It's just talk.
>
> (VOL6.3)

Despite the difficulties, teachers do not remain inactive, at least at the school or neighbourhood level. In many respects, teachers have become students' and families' frontline crisis caregivers. Among others, they organise "bazaars" to raise money, collect clothes for students' families facing serious financial problems, organise book and clothing exchanges, and take the initiative for targeted breakfast provision through personal contacts with supermarkets. It is noteworthy that a majority of teachers do not consider themselves to be aggressively reacting as an occupational community against the neoliberal practices applied in education or in the "war declared on the working world."

> The [education] space is indeed exhausted, it's taken many blows, it's undervalued, even on its own, for mistakes made, but also by the surrounding atmosphere. There is a concept that any public good, when it is mercilessly struck by a commercialisation of everything, leads to a teacher who has to be effective, he has to pass on the tinned knowledge received from above.
>
> (VOL4.1)

8.5. Discussion of the results

8.5.1. A school ravaged by the crisis

The selected data and the abundance of teacher discourse my interviews provided me with confirmed my original belief that Greek education suffered a severe blow by the ongoing economic crisis.

The spectre of the crisis seems to affect teachers to such a degree that they tend to refer to the beginning of the crisis as a point zero in their working life constantly contrasting the pre-crisis period with the obscure today reality. The lack of school funding was obvious in all sectors of the school life starting with the Ministry's cuts in appointments and hiring of temporary teachers which resulted in severe lacks in teaching personnel, or in teachers being moved around two, three and even five schools in order to fill staff gaps.

Moreover, all interviewees expressed their disappointment over education underfunding, which has led to severe shortage of materials such as pens or Xerox paper. They all felt accountable to their students about this situation and even tried at times to take on themselves the state's responsibilities. However, as interviewed teachers admitted often, they had to resort to parents for covering school needs either financially or by volunteer work, in order to keep a minimum standard in schools for children's sake.

8.5.2. Repercussions of the crisis: suspicion and isolation

I have to underline here that I was particularly surprised by the initial reluctance of teachers to meet and participate in the interview. While they were not negatively predisposed about taking part in my research, in order to actually proceed, they wanted to know all details concerning my identity, the reason I was conducting the study and the institution I was representing. This reluctance often subsided when they identified me as a student and colleague and even expressed their enthusiasm about participating because they wanted to be heard. This was obvious in my speech sample which was abundant in quantity, often without my having to incite conversation and in the encouragement, they gave me to communicate their voices and beliefs on their behalf through my research.

This observation takes me back to two important notions that have already analysed in my previous Chapters: that of assessment and of organisation in trade unions. My first remark is closely linked to the idea of formal assessment promoted by the government of the time as leverage for pressure on teachers. Their original misgivings stemmed from their hesitation to openly express their opinions about the imminent evaluation of their teaching work. Not only did they often evade my questions on the issue, but they also used specific vocabulary when referring to government plans. Their discourse repeatedly manifested vocabulary of fear with words such “afraid”, “terrified” and “pressure” appearing in all interviews. This expressed sentiment of anxiety was closely linked to their fear of dismissal especially, during an extremely difficult period financially.

Furthermore, in their majority, teachers rejected the government’s view of assessment, especially on the grounds of inefficiency and distrust as to who would conduct the procedure. Teachers did not seem to completely reject the notion of assessment, especially because they had a strong belief in their theoretical background and their competencies. They strongly questioned, though the framework within which this assessment was designed, and expressed a complaint about being assessed by governors

who had proved themselves unworthy and often corrupted in the scandals of the previous decade.

A point that brings me back to my original thesis, is teacher attitude on the 'provenance' of the assessment. Most of them described assessment as being imposed on them, without always being conscious of the source that demanded their immediate assessment. However, a distinction can be made here among teachers who were unionised and those who were not part of any association. The teachers who were active members of trade unions appeared to be more informed about the 'requests' and the guidelines of the OECD and were much more aware of the idea of supranational organisations implementing neoliberal reforms in the Greek education system.

At this point, I must underline that strong unions like the Greek ones, often make their members feel secure. This feeling stems from the fierce fights that teacher unions have given and won in the past[353] and the difficulty in the implementation of educational reforms over the last decades certainly proves it.

Thus, I discovered that these specific teachers appeared to be less afraid of the announced reforms thanks to their knowledge and understanding and also thanks to the feeling of camaraderie this association offered to them. I believe that a particular reference has to be made here to the experienced and often explicitly expressed isolation that many interviewees seemed to experience. I have already mentioned the isolation factor as a feature of teachers' work, but this feature appeared to be heavily accentuated by the crisis and its repercussions.

While all teachers appeared positive regarding the importance of having a pleasant atmosphere at their workplace, they all noted that since the beginning of the crisis there has been a great shift in their relations with colleagues and parents. As far as other teachers are concerned, many of my interviewees noted that a lot of colleagues became

[353] C.f. Chapter 6 for Teacher union resistance.

more distant due to their own personal or financial problems and to the division caused by their opposing opinions on the soon to be implemented assessment.

8.5.3. Teacher unions: a wager lost

Having discussed in the previous section trade unions and the advantages of information and solidarity unionisation offers to socially active teachers, I have to treat the issue of union disillusionment. The vast majority of the teachers I interviewed expressed a deep disappointment in trade unions and a growing suspicion over their intentions and practice. In the framework of my extensive analyses on clientelism and partisanism, two serious "ills" inside Greek trade unions, teachers' growing disbelief was made evident. Teachers felt abandoned by high rank union members, openly accusing them of promoting their personal interests over the public good.

Similarly, when the issue of protest was raised, all participants rejected striking as a means of advocating rights and benefits. They all felt that the strike was a redundant way of protesting, closely linked to old unionism and strongly contested its effectiveness. At this point, I want to stress that they were not against the idea of protesting and demanding their rights, but a lot of them aspired to new forms of unionising especially at a more local level. Teachers proved eager to try new inspiring structures that would propose something new, away from the sterile old unionist language constantly rejecting everything.

In this direction, I strongly believe that Critical Pedagogy can fill the existing gap, since it could apply the Marxist approach and articulate a scientific discourse that could unmask and expose the real causes behind the intensified pressure for the implementation of the OECD toolbox.

8.5.4. Regional and provincial variations: double standards

The issue of unions discussed in the previous section, also has a local/regional character. There seems to be a correlation between the density of the working class in the regions of the schools and the number of unionised teachers. Thus, in the regions of Attica with

a long tradition of union action, where the concentration of working class strata seems denser, teachers appeared more prepared to engage in forms of social struggle and less critical of unionism and strikes.

Exactly the opposite was true of the more bourgeois regions of the capital where schools seemed to face less severe problems, usually due to the financial contribution of their student's families and teacher initiatives (bazaars, fund raising events, and charitable action) whose burden could be carried by the local community.

A parallel can be drawn with central areas and schools in the provincial city of Volos which, according to the interviewees, seemed to have favourable treatment in terms of timely and adequate staffing. Consequently, in these areas, teachers appeared less informed and more reluctant to join the union movement. In any case, in relation to the capital, Volos, though traditionally a working class region with a long history of unionism and great strikes, seemed less involved in the current union movement.

8.5.5. Can teachers be perceived as intellectuals?

The concept of teacher-intellectual emerged from the movement of critical pedagogy and works in conjunction with the need of education employees to achieve self-realisation within their educational work. It is founded on the perception that teaching must be linked with the struggle to reform schools and society itself.

In other words, I am referring to the particularity of educational work in this context, which, in order to be creative and effective, requires teachers who bear a high intellectual culture that they can fully and variously activate in their work. It is exclusively teachers with a highly developed social consciousness, a deep understanding of the importance of their social work and a relentless attitude towards those who manipulate and distort it, who can offer knowledge to their students necessary for the latter to be able to function as critical subjects contributing to the emancipation of the whole of society (Pavlidis, 2012, pp. 237-242).

Unfortunately, under this scope, the answer to the above stated question is negative. My data analysis revealed a severe proletarisation of teachers due to the harsh blows inflicted on their salaries by the implementation of the IMF-EU prerequisites. Teachers, especially younger ones, witnessed severe cuts on their wages which left them disillusioned about their professional future. At the same time, older ones complained about not making ends meet and having difficulty supporting their children through their studies.

From the above dark picture, one can easily perceive that all those activities that could contribute to teachers qualifying as intellectuals cannot be pursued anymore. Instead, teachers, who should be striving to achieve a high intellectual culture for their students to benefit from, have difficulty fulfilling their basic needs.

8.5.6. Abandoning further training

Even though most of the interviewed teachers appeared confident in their theoretical background and their teaching practices, most of them expressed the wish and the need to pursue further training and expand their knowledge in order to be able to provide more current knowledge to their students.

However, most of the time, this need for further professional development may in fact conceal a latent fear of becoming redundant. At the same time, teachers appear overwhelmed by all the new methods and "imported recipes" they are pressured into incorporating. This feeling of fear can of course be traced back to the assessment and the discourse of "terror" promoted by headmasters, advisors and the Ministry itself. Thus, an urge for constant pursuit of the next seminar or certificate was evident among teachers, especially the younger ones. This of course proves that the new generations, who grew up in a capitalist environment and attended universities in the thick of the crisis, are more affected by this discourse of fear and readier to accept this dangerous reality as "normal".

One could assume that the so desired further training could be provided by the state itself. However, this is hardly the case, because as teachers confess their Ministry has never been very "generous" with their in-service training. What is completely different nowadays is the lack of means: whereas some years ago a teacher could afford training fees, nowadays this seems to be a 'luxury' that must be left aside in the face of daily needs. This situation of course results into stressed, anxious teachers who feel overcome by the directive to implement methods and projects they have never been properly trained for.

Of course, this distinction between teachers who cannot manage and others who have other means apart from their salary and can 'enrich' their CV with the so-promoted certifications awarded by the Ministry and European institutions, creates a dangerous division among teachers. Ultimately, this division may prove dangerous for the whole school atmosphere which is already burdened by the rest crisis-related implications.

8.5.7. The fragmented teacher

It is common knowledge to all those who deal with educational studies that teachers are asked to take on multiple roles while at school and particularly in the classroom. A primary school teacher has to be simultaneously: an instructor, a mentor, a resource provider, a curriculum specialist, a moderator, a learner, a facilitator. And while this daily practice may be challenging but rewarding, what teachers are experiencing in the Greek primary school of the Memoranda era is exhausting and overly frustrating.

The paradox of the teaching profession described earlier in this doctoral thesis[354] revealed the impossible situation societies and governments tend to put their teachers into: while teachers are asked to provide their best in order to instruct and shape personalities, at the same time they are deprived of the means that could facilitate their work, while, as my interviewees stressed, they constantly feel as society's scapegoats being blamed for everything.

[354] For a better understanding of the paradox faced by teachers in the 21st century, c.f. Chapter 4.

Most of the interviewed teachers admitted to feeling burnt out by the number and the multitude of tasks they were asked to take on inside their workplace. Lack of means in the Greek schools equals lack of supportive staff, with teachers pointing out that they have to heat meals for the children, clean their classrooms, fill in for colleagues who are ill or absent, because there are no substitute teachers, and of course, take on subjects that would normally be taught by a teacher of a different specialisation (physical education, music, theatre or arts). The above situation adds to the feeling of isolation leading to the fragmentation of teachers who are asked to be as effective as they can in order to meet the expectations of the "new school".

The vast majority of the teachers I interviewed, irrespective of their other social characteristics, admitted bringing this distress into their personal life that was extremely affected by the pressure inflicted on them due to the crisis. However, it is worth mentioning that despite the abandoned infrastructure, the frequently demanding headmasters and the interfering or indifferent parents, most teachers claimed that going to school every day was therapeutic. A lot of them state that the poverty, which the ongoing neoliberal and austerity measures have brought on many of their students, their parents' unemployment, the misery and even the hunger they experience, have significantly affected student behaviour and psychology. However, being with their students, teaching them and often comforting them as if they were members of their family, made them forget about their personal problems and appreciate the social dimension of their role.

8.6. Limitations of the study

My main goal and directive, while conducting this research, was to achieve the most holistic approach possible. The multiplicity of viewpoints that such an endeavour necessarily involves was the biggest challenge this thesis had to face right from the start and it took a toll on the composition and coherence of this doctoral thesis. However, it was impossible to limit the overview of the crisis to only one sector, since it encompasses all aspects of social life. Finally, we should not forget that the research was

conducted in 2014 and the transcriptions and the analysis based on them have not been tampered with in any way since. While being in their original condition means that they might already be considered outdated, at the same time they capture the essence of that particular moment in history. This contributes to the highest possible accuracy in the depiction of that period. It also irrevocably puts them under the ultimate test of time.

8.7. Implications for research study and suggestions for further research

Approaching the completion of this doctoral thesis, I would like to emphasise the aspect of social class, which, even though pervading the whole thesis implicitly or explicitly, could be deemed unconnected. This is not true, at least in my line of thinking, for two important reasons that I will explain in the following paragraphs.

The first reason, and in my opinion, the more evident one, stems from the general framework which underlies this research as a whole: the emphasis placed on developing a radical view of burning current issues, such as the causes of the crisis, as well as the theoretical and empirical approach to social stratification (Sakellaropoulos, 2014).

The second reason has to do with the fact that, while we are facing a crisis that is neither one of the knowledge economy, nor one of the post-modern society[355], but instead a deep and structural crisis of the capitalist system itself, social class, as well as the conceptual framework of Labour Process Theory (LPT), in both sociology and education literature, are so marginalised (Reed, 2013). A typical example in this direction, regarding social class, is the testimony of the editorial team of the journal

[355] The economy narratives have played a crucial role in the formation of the described trend in sociology. I will only indicatively mention here that in the 1980s we had the emergence of different post-modern variants, drawing mainly from Bourdieu (with the work of Savage et al., 2013 as the most recent example, c.f. Bradley, 2014) and Foucaudian notions of power and identity. More recently, the centrality of knowledge is the new economic narrative. However, I need to stress at this point that my contention is that all these 'trends' are outcomes of intellectual choices and not reflecting objective developments (Thompson and Smith, 2009, pp. 914-915).

Sociology that was based on the diversion of submissions in the journal since at least the mid-90s. So, in their foreword in 2014, titled *Class Debate*, they stress that:

> The legacy of identity politics, the politics of race and feminist and gender studies' approaches might have suggested a reorientation of emphasis and a move from class as a central to sociological critiques and social analyses. The empirical actualities of class remain, and often underpin the inequalities of social relation which have been identified in articles in the journal, but the attention given to the theorisation of class and its deployment as part of an explanatory framework have decreased. Class is sometimes the unstated absent presence, or its definitions are assumed and not developed in work.
>
> (Woodward et al., 2014)

However, the question of teachers as an occupational group and their social class is a crucial issue with major implications for education research in general. In essence, it is my firm belief that it is crucial to "table" and seriously consider the following two questions: Do we have an adequate theoretical framework for analysing teachers as class workers and actors (Robertson, 2000)? And why does the understanding and explanation of teachers and their class matter so much?

Starting from the latter, I would like to point out that our understanding and explanation matters precisely because teachers as a social collectivity are engaged in both social reproduction and social action and thus have the potential of greatly impacting on social change (Robertson, 2000). In fact, according to Glenn Rikowski (2005), teachers are afforded a unique social power, that of potentially awakening their students' vision towards the possibility of an equitable and classless society; what for Marx was the crucial shed towards a revolutionary future. Or, as Paula Allman has so eloquently put it:

> It is conceivable that politicised, class-conscious, socialist teachers, embedded in schools amongst volatile young working-class people who live in a society where the gap between the rich and the poor has widened considerably, can find the flames of resistance and have enormous potential.
>
> (Allman, 2002)

At this point, however, and before I proceed to the philosophical framework required by such an analysis, I believe it is important to clarify the reasons for which I extensively referred to the concepts of productive and unproductive labour. This could also possibly be considered irrelevant or redundant, even within the Marxist circles. I emphasised this part, therefore, because such limiting viewpoints regarding the formation of social classes support very popular opinions on the voluminous petit-bourgeois class, the elimination of the working class and the exclusion of teachers from the working class. In this doctoral thesis, I initiated a discussion which I consider necessary in the issue of studying social classes. My goal in this initial stage was to prove that, on the one hand, the element of productive labour cannot be considered basic in the formation of social classes and, on the other hand, that even when it is, it is not presented in way that reflects the Marxist approach (Dedousopoulos, 1983; Sakellaropoulos, 2014).

Which theoretical and philosophical framework could support such an analysis in educational research, however? Surely one which on the one hand brings social class back in as an explanatory variable, and on the other hand, considers teaching as a form of labour, giving thus the opportunity for the depiction of the deteriorating conditions under which teachers work today (Mac and Ghaill, 1996; Weber, 2007).

Thus, as I will make clear further on, I totally agree with Adolph Reed when he stresses the usefulness of the adoption of a Marxist perspective:

> A Marxist perspective can be most helpful…insofar as it perceives capitalism dialectically, as a social totality that includes modes of production, relations of production *and* the pragmatically evolving ensemble of institutions and ideologies that lubricate and propel its reproduction.
>
> (Reed, 2003, p. 49-emphasis on the original)

Even though I discuss the characteristics of Marxist research, as well as the philosophical framework of dialectical materialism more extensively and analytically in Chapter 7 of this doctoral thesis, I would like to reiterate here that the basic tenet of dialectics is none other than the constant move and change of the world. Under the

latter, objective events can always create eruption in what otherwise looks like "a stable surface" (Lambirth, 2010, p. 221).

In this sense, even if we take for granted that at this stage, the majority of teachers do not adopt a revolutionary approach in their teaching, this does not mean that the latter does not change, especially since teachers are a cross-class category. On the contrary, as Andrew Lambirth (2010) claims with reference to teachers in his article *Class Consciousness, Power, Identity and the Motivation to Teach*:

> […] powered by and advanced form of class-consciousness like that expounded by Freire and others, their awareness of their class, coupled with future events and actions that may impact profoundly upon them and others around them, may be the most powerful lever for a fundamental change in society.
>
> (Lambirth, 2010, p. 221)

In the above line of thinking teachers are not perceived as individualised actors and reactive subjects, but are agents and social actors who resist, transform and create discourses, practices and structures in order to mediate antagonistic and exploitative relations (Robertson, 2000). It goes without saying that all the latter must be recorded by researchers. However, as it will become clearer below, this can prove to be a challenging endeavour.

Having said that, I want to stress that the need for recording must not be interpreted as a need for sociology education research to return to the 1970s and 1980s, when school experiences of particular groups were privileged at the expense of social class, and the latter was simply perceived as part of the context that needed to be statistically controlled (Angus, 1993). By doing so, we merely keep perpetuating the cultural deficit thesis, particularly popular in the 1990s, where class was perceived as an index of disadvantage.

Having answered, albeit briefly, why the understanding of teachers and their class is so crucial, I will now proceed to the second question that I posed at the beginning of this

subsection, namely: Do we have an adequate theoretical framework for analysing teachers as class workers and actors? However, before I proceed to any kind of analysis, I would like to start by underlining the vital importance of the study of labour, at least for any sociology that aspires to be perceived as radical.

As I have already mentioned in more detail in Chapter 4 of this doctoral thesis, with the exception of Antonio Gramsci's essay on Fordism (1971), Harry Braverman's work (1974) was the first major work in the Marxist tradition to engage with labour process changes in the 20th century. Of course, LPT is not a complete sociology of work, in terms of coverage, and there is a kernel of truth in the complaints about limited boundaries of analysis (c.f. Salaman, 1986; Bradley et al., 2000; Strangleman, 2005).

However, whatever the limitations[356], I strongly believe that LPT's role in maintaining space for a critical sociology of work was crucial, since it has been a source of resilience and innovation in thinking about work and its contexts, offering thus a connection between workplace and the wider system (Thompson and Smith, 2009).

Despite what has just been said, I have to stress that undoubtedly the class structure has changed and is still changing. The 'categorisation' of institutions of social relations is not a static and mental process, but instead, it is a process that presents alterations depending on the results of the class struggle (Sakellaropoulos, 2014).

It makes sense, thus, that there is a need for LPT to expand its conceptualisation of labour power and deal with issues, including, among others, trade unions, social movements connected to work, unemployment, as well as divisions within labour and within the working class itself. It also needs to take into account particular contexts as well as special circumstances.

[356] I would very briefly like to mention here that there are limitations varying from LTP's little engagement with other dimensions, such as, among others, the reproduction of labour process, community, class and professions (c.f. Crompton, 2006; 2008). However, I want to stress at this point that selectivity is inherent in any conceptual framework, and within that line of thinking the use of a particular theoretical resources in order to explain specific empirical problems is not a problem on its own. It becomes problematic if the privilege given in those theoretical resources becomes the means of undermining the significance of others (Thompson and Smith, 2009).

This of course does not automatically mean, as many claim, even within Marxism itself, that LPT is 'out of date' as a theory. In fact, we could claim that:

> the orientation of LPT towards capturing and connecting work/place dynamics and their multiple forms of embeddedness in the broader political economy makes it highly relevant for our times.
>
> (Thompson and Smith, 2009, p. 921)

Therefore, my answer to the question of possessing an adequate theoretical framework for analysing teachers as class workers and actors is negative. Our work has only just begun. It is not enough anymore to just critique the work and reveal oppressions and limitations, since we run the risk of falling into a nihilistic despair. Our theoretical work will now have to liberate the masses revealing the real causes and the underlying mechanisms.

According to Marx, the role of the intellectuals is to assist in the creation of a higher type of knowledge, on the basis of the social practice of the working class and in collaboration with it. A theoretical knowledge that will allow the conception of reality as it truly is, not its distorted version. Such a framework opens up possibilities for situating life experiences and life concerns in a wider social context, for exploring how they are linked to social processes and structures.

Naturally, this endeavour is not an easy one for education researchers. Undoubtedly, teachers' insights must surely be recorded and greatly considered, since they are the result of their intimate knowledge about teaching. In any case, even in this smothering context, as it has become for teachers, the daily reality of schools and classrooms cannot but be mediated by the multitude of decisions teachers make every day. In that sense, their insights are invaluable.

But to get the most out of it, researchers should not forget that these insights are primarily set on the so-called 'common sense' of teachers and are mediated by their own interpretative frameworks, ideologies and perspectives. They should also carefully

consider the fact that workers' consciousness can be both fluid and contradictory. As Antonio Gramsci stressed in the *Selections from Prison Notebooks*:

> The active man-in-the-mass has a practical activity but has no clear theoretical consciousness of his practical activity which nonetheless involves understanding the world in so far as it transforms it. His theoretical consciousness can be historically in opposition to his activity. (Gramsci, 1971)

Summing up, what is being proposed in this doctoral thesis is the need for the development of a coherent project that takes into consideration the above, as far as its empirical part, and a literature that does not deny the contradictory function of contemporary schooling, nor the economic, social, cultural, and political processes that lay at its heart, as far as its theoretical part. It is suggested that this endeavour will involve the re-engagement with both earlier sociological traditions and current developments in the social sciences (Mac and Ghaill, 1996; Robertson, 2000; Bradley, 2014). I do not of course purport that I provide this. All the questions prompted by my analysis need further exploration. I do not suggest a dictate, but rather a potential to follow up.

As far as the case of Greece is concerned, there are still some very crucial questions to be raised and answered; I will address, before closing this subsection, a few with special focus given on the historical course of the Greek working class:

- Under which conditions was the working class of Greece ideologically formed?
- How did the training and specialisation of a large part of the Greek working class (inside the production process itself and outside educational mechanisms) affect its ideological formation?
- What was its relation to the Orthodox Church, since this is quite different from the relations historically present in other Western countries where a strong anticlerical sentiment prevails?
- How are gender relations shaped inside the Greek working class, mainly composed out of first generation male and female workers with a peasant or small property background inside which the role of the family was pretty strong?

- Does proprietorship (stronger than all other European countries) affect the shaping of the ideology of the working class?
- Does the attempt to integrate in the traditional or new petit bourgeois class indicate an attempt of social ascent?
- Is teacher resistance to change indeed connected to an inherent conservatism or are they the most reliable source of information concerning the reality of the classroom and the applicability of reforms?
- Do the waves of immigrants looking to be integrated in school daily life aggravate the already tense reality?
- Now that the Leftist government SYRIZA-ANEL has been tried and tested, has it reinforced teachers' will to fight or has it further disappointed them?

8.8. Conclusion

Following the onset of the crisis, it is impossible for most areas of education not to be affected by the developments at high positions of economic policy design and crisis management. The decisions of the European Central Bank (ECB) and national ministers greatly impact on local decision-making, whereas European experts tend to avoid highly controversial agendas (Jones, 2013, p. 2).

The requirements of the Troika for budgetary cuts represent the greatest part of the effects of 'Europe' on education, but as I have shown in this doctoral thesis, there also more lasting influences. When it comes to education, it is not just about a short-term reduction in funding, but the goal is to apply a major paradigm shift that has long been planned, with the economic crisis serving as the perfect excuse. This is mainly expressed by an intensified focus on the relationship between education and economic competitiveness. As António Nóvoa (2013, p. 112) points out, the new *Programme Education and Training 2020* is an attempt to compensate for the shortcomings of the Lisbon Declaration of the European Council (2000) to enhance global competitiveness and increase social inclusion of policies that have a "tendency to reduce educational

issues to the 'needs of economy' and to the preparation of professionals capable of joining the job market" (Jones, 2013, pp. 4-5).

Thus, a much more profound, ideological and fundamental discussion concerning the future of education and of our society in general underlies all the cuts, proposals and counterproposals in endless negotiations. Even though it is very important, this debate is not always conducted overtly. In an attempt to disguise the long-term restructuring that is happening behind the scenes, specific debates around the crisis deficit are employed (Canadel, 2013, pp. 40-41).

Within this framework, it is possible to discern a pattern in the reforms that have been implemented since 2008-2009: they were never introduced as significant changes. On the contrary, they strive to disguise themselves as minor, technical and limited devices, whose implementation is a matter of common sense. The underlying general philosophy is never clearly articulated, and this is the main reason why the work of decoding and critical analysis becomes such a vital component of oppositional strategy. It has the potential to uncover the true nature and connection of these reforms (Dreux, 2013). Of course, as I have already pointed out, the unified Europe was a product of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. That was the beginning of the rise of a transnational policy orthodoxy, developed particularly through the work of the EU and the OECD, and incorporated in systems of comparative assessment[357] and mechanisms of governance like the Open Method of Coordination (OMC)[358], which served to standardise the individual policies of member states regarding European-level objectives (Laval and Weber, 2002; Alexiadou and Lange, 2010; Lawn and Grek, 2012).

[357] Like Pisa, for instance.

[358] The Open Method of Coordination (OMC) was introduced in March 2000 by the Lisbon European Council. The only reference to OMC is in the EU Treaty regarding the coordination of economic policy, in the general instructions for economic policies established with the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. Its main objective was to implement reforms in areas of social and economic policy in the form of encouragement, i.e. without the power to legislate as such. The reason it was quickly adopted in the space of education must be sought in the way it is implemented: it is usually employed when the official institutions possess limited power to develop policies under the guidance of the EC and the EU, or when there is strong political opposition to the expansion of EU activities (Alexiadou and Lange, 2010, pp. 23-48).

This way, for over 20 years, we have defined education according to objectives set by economic policy and the requirements of the labour market. Base-level reforms were usually designed and supported in terms of their contribution to economic development strategies, designed within the Lisbon framework. The fact that it took so long to respond was a result of a specific strategy employed in the introduction of neoliberal reform: the so-called 'incremental method'. Instead of radically transforming or abolishing existing provisional models, in order to avoid creating discontent and causing reaction, social agents and institutions were encouraged "to adopt new forms of behaviour" (Dreux, 2013, p. 25).

To use England as an example of an 'advanced' case of neoliberalism[359], its progress should not, in my opinion, be attributed to some sort of ideal model, but rather to a particular combination of forces that helps overcome significant difficulties encountered elsewhere when implementing reforms (Jones, 2013, p. 14). Conservatism has laid the foundations of a mind-set that generated a new set of institutions and a new philosophy on the part of parents, teachers and students. Therefore, in terms of curriculum design, assessment processes, inspection and school management, their system's effectiveness remains, as Rosalinda Innes (2013) and Anna Traianou (2013) stress, in sharp contrast to countries such as Italy and Greece, where some reforms were obstructed by strong oppositional reaction, while the corrupt and inefficient state managed to undermine the ones that were implemented[360].

The fact remains that in countries like France, Greece, Italy and Spain, national education cultures have clashed with neoliberalism more forcefully that in the rest of Europe. The force of this collision is a result of the striking contrast between two very different educational and social models which goes well beyond a mere clash of

[359] As Guy Dreux (2013) writes, neoliberalism is not simply an ideology, present in thought and language. It is also "a rationality which is embedded in an ensemble of techniques and practices, which, without issuing explicit orders or demands, bring into being certain types of conduct. In this way, neo-liberalism creates a specific kind of environment where the principle of competition is generalised, and also internalised at the level of the individual. It is within this framework that individuals construct a sense of their own interests".

[360] Under no circumstances should my reference to obstructing some reforms be interpreted as my desire for their implementation.

programmes, becoming a battle of social forces. The first model based itself "on equal opportunities reform and a state that provided a measure of social security, while the second [emphasised] markets, choice and selectivity and lower levels of public spending" (Jones, 2013, pp. 6-7). This was the case before the crisis of 2008 and continues to be the case now.

Therefore, when the question of school reform is put in perspective, as changes in the very nature of the state, one understands how the 'new' capitalist school emerged from these general transformations. The state's intention to make the whole of public services available to business for use is evident throughout the public sector, and in doing so, public services are represented "either as economic assets or "brakes" on competitiveness (Dreux, 2013, p. 32)

In order to accomplish all this, the state uses the crisis and the deficit as a pretext to appear unable to attend to some of its most vulnerable citizens: students, children and young people at the most formative stage of their lives. However, it has been pointed out by numerous voices that the state's alleged inability to follow the constitution and provide public education for all citizens is not real and that funds are available. It is merely a question of collection and allocation. We reach the conclusion, therefore, that what is important right now is to make a political decision to deal with this crisis and set the terms for coming out of it, instead of dealing with imaginary, insurmountable threats. Rather than securing this exit, the majority of measures implemented since the beginning of the crisis seem "ideal for dismantling all public spaces, imposing extortion on workers and the lower classes and increasing the rate of profit for capital" (Canadel, 2013, pp. 39-40). The economic crisis has simply intensified a pre-existing crisis of the education system, seriously aggravating both student life and teachers' working conditions.

Considering the above, we reach a paradox. It is an undeniable fact that teachers, along with a large portion of public opinion, have realised that policies across Europe are significantly similar (Fugier, 2011). Meanwhile, while our understanding of the

philosophy of neoliberal policies increases, social actors are becoming alert to the possible alternatives. This is where the paradox lies, and a question reasonably arises: at a time of unprecedented criticism of the actual effects and the motivations of neoliberal policies by large portions of the public opinion, combined with negative outcomes, how is it possible that they are still being designed and increasingly implemented? It is imperative that this paradox be resolved if we are to comprehend the difficulty in resisting the resulting transformations (Dreux, 2013, p. 24).

Undoubtedly, the institution of the school and the teaching profession, regarding its status and activity, have suffered grave repercussions due to the direct connection of school and economic life and the fact that the school has become subject to the needs of the economy. In this context the process that we have called the proletarianisation of teachers becomes relevant and concerns more than a mere aggravation of the material working conditions or the loss of social status that teachers have suffered in acknowledged ways over the past 20 years.

It is more a question of the extent to which teachers have been deprived of the "meaning and the content of their work, their missions"[361] (Dreux, 2013). This systematic transition to a more dependent state is in direct proportion with the rise of neoliberal policy. The educational system is now regulated in terms of competitiveness. Management techniques have invariably sought to incorporate competitive logics, subjecting each and every teacher to "responsibilisation" in the name of 'autonomy', evaluation and effectiveness. "Competition, new public management and economistic utilitarianism are now the new order that dictates more and more precisely the character, ordering and meaning of teachers' work".

[361] For Marx, the analysis of capitalist exploitation cannot be reduced to mourning the pauperisation of the working class. It also involves an attempt to understand a process through which workers' own intellectual and productive powers are removed to the advantage of capital (Dreux, 2013, p. 32).

All the above occur in conditions that, while requiring teachers to be public and transformative intellectuals[362], they are treated instead as if their sole purpose is to deliver the curriculum which is conceived, planned and designed by some central agency. Teaching, rather than being reckoned as a process that demands the integration of thinking and practice, is thought in technical terms based on the simplistic logic of improved teacher training and methodologies.

However, teachers seem to be largely aware of the importance of education and of their mission in providing students with what they need to become critical citizens in the difficult terrain of today's turbulent social, political, economic and ideological environment. A mission that is in fact a responsibility[363] instead of a badge they have been forced to wear by some academic or education functionary[364].

Nearly 20 years ago, Ivor Goodson (1991, p.35; 112) argued that in order to understand teachers' development we "need to know more about teachers' lives" and that teachers' voices should be "heard both loudly and articulately". Goodson (2004, p. 48) also advises that such research should incorporate what he refers to as the "genealogy of context". This means that the researcher has to discover the voice within wider social and political contexts, so that teachers' experience can be transformed from a collection of stories to "representation which can be generalizable to broader contexts" (McIntyre, 2010).

[362] That is "intellectuals who are part of a specific class, group or movements and who serve to give it coherence and an awareness of its own function in the economic, social and political fields" (Giroux and Aronowitz, 1983, p. 155).
[363] For some, this responsibility is a burden, and they could hardly be blamed considering the conditions they have to work in. We should not forget that the role of teachers as intellectuals means that they must "take responsible roles in shaping the purposes and conditions of schooling", a task "that is impossible within a division of labour that teachers have little influence over the ideological and economic conditions of work" (Giroux and Aronowitz, 1983, p. 40)
[364] Building on the work of Cornelius Castoriadis and Raymond Williams, Henry Giroux argues that education, in the broader sense is a principal feature of politics because it provides the capacities, knowledge, skills and social relations through which individuals recognise themselves as social and political agents (Giroux, 2004, p. 115)

In this sense, my analysis was not just confined to the level of policy making but was also informed by empirical data incorporating teachers' perspectives and voices as an important part of a macro debate. It is my firm belief that, when working at a very densely theoretical level, the actual experience of teachers cannot be captured. On the other hand, I do not believe that the solution to this is to delve into ethnographic and extended observational studies that limit themselves to just honouring daily experiences.

Quite the contrary, it seems to me that it is more important than ever to write national chapters on educational reforms in times of crisis, which place local detail[365] inside a broader picture. Is it a coincidence that all national examples across Europe speak of major processes of transformation? It seems that, in the context of construction of a politics of austerity, emphasis on an existing set of neoliberal policy has skyrocketed. Processes of marketisation and privatisation are accelerating, while educational resources are restricted and social inequalities are increased (c.f. Jones, et. al, 2013).

Keeping all the above in mind, in this doctoral thesis, teachers were conceived as an occupational community (Van Maanen and Barley, 1984), as a social collectivity, engaged in social reproduction, but at the same time in social action, and thus, as having an impact on social change. Consequently, emphasis was put on the collective meaning of their work and not on their personal trajectories[366]. At a time when the strong reliance on education psychology tends to analyse all problems in terms of individual personalities, pathologies and traits of individual teachers and students, it is more imperative than ever to identify, analyse and critically present the structural and systemic causes. In other words, the empowerment of teachers is more needed than ever for a movement such as liberating critical pedagogy whose strategic socio-political goal is the abolition of exploitation and oppression.

[365] With 'local detail' I identify the particular histories with which neoliberalism has collided and interacted, as well as the ways in which it has accordingly mutated into different country-specific shapes.
[366] My focus was not merely upon the world of sense, impression and events, or in other words upon a simple account of daily realities of classroom life, but mainly on the underlying economic, political, social and ideological structures that gave rise to the events and the effects.

On the one hand, some could argue that to 'empower' is in one sense to perpetuate dependency. But on the other hand, as critical educators, we cannot turn away and leave the empowerment to the individual teacher. The tactical goal of critical pedagogy, directly linked with its strategic socio-political and pedagogic objectives, is none other than raising critical awareness[367]. As an act, however, raising critical awareness is certainly not an individual but a collective matter, contributing to one's liberation from bourgeois ideology (Grollios and Gounari, 2016, p. 289).

Bringing this section to an end, I want to stress one last thing: the need for the Left to point to internationalism. For the Left, the problem with the EU is not just the latter's appropriation of the policy making powers of national states, but the undemocratic character of the supra-national entity to which it transfers them. It is indeed important to defend what we have gained within the framework of the nation state, but it should be completed by Europe-wide action (Jones, 2013, pp. 10-11). In any case, we should always bear in mind that there is no blueprint for the future, but there is always the past as a "yardstick with which to evaluate the present" (Jones, 2013, p. 9).

[367] In the sense of understanding experienced circumstances and the whole of reality.

TABLES

Table 1.1 Demographic Description and Educational Characteristics of Participants in Attica Region

Variables	Male N=15	Female N=48	Total N=63
Age			
Under 25	0	1	1
25 to 34	1	10	11
35 to 44	6	15	21
45 to 54	8	21	29
Over 55	0	1	1
Service Years			
Mean (SD)	19 (8.60)	16 (7.30)	17 (7.58)
Min-Max	7-31	0.16 (2 months)-31	0.16-31
Marital Status No			
Single	7	21	28
Married inc Civil Partnerships	7	26	33
Divorced	1	1	2
Widowed	0	0	0
Single Parent Family	0	0	0
Employment Status No			
Permanent (Tenured Status)	15	43	58
Temporary Substitute Teacher	0	5	5
Temporary Substitute Hired on Reduced Timetable	0	0	0
Hourly-Paid Teacher	0	0	0
Hourly-Paid on Reduced Timetable	0	0	0
Teaching Discipline/Post No			
Teacher	12	34	46
Physical Education Teacher	0	2	2
Music Teacher	0	1	1
Computer Science Teacher	0	2	2
Special Education Teacher	0	3	3
Theatre Studies Teacher	0	0	0
English Teacher	0	3	3
Deputy Headmaster	1	1	2
Headmaster	2	2	4
Teaching Position in School No			
Organic Position (Permanent Tenured)	13	33	46
On Secondment	1	6	7
Available to PYSDE (Regional Service Councils for Primary Education)	0	2	2
Appointed	1	2	3
Temporary Substitute Placement	0	5	5

Educational Attainment No			
Two-year degree (College of Primary Education)	7	13	20
Four-Year University Degree	8	35	43
Master Degree	6	16	22
Doctorate Degree	0	1	1
Second Degree	5	8	13

Table 1.2 Demographic Description and Educational Characteristics of Participants in Volos Region

Variables	Male N=11	Female N=28	Total N=39
Age			
Under 25	0	0	0
25 to 34	1	2	3
35 to 44	1	10	11
45 to 54	8	15	23
Over 55	1	1	2
Service Years			
Mean (SD)	19 (8.04)	19 (6.66)	19 (6.97)
Min-Max	5-31	10-31	5-31
Marital Status No			
Single	2	0	2
Married inc Civil Partnerships	9	27	36
Divorced	0	1	1
Widowed	0	0	0
Single Parent Family	0	0	0
Employment Status No			
Permanent (Tenured Status)	10	27	37
Temporary Substitute Teacher	1	1	2
Temporary Substitute Hired on Reduced Timetable	0	0	0
Hourly-Paid Teacher	0	0	0
Hourly-Paid on Reduced Timetable	0	0	0
Teaching Discipline/Post No			
Teacher	6	22	28
Physical Education Teacher	1	0	1
Music Teacher	0	1	1
Computer Science Teacher	0	0	0
Special Education Teacher	0	2	2
Theatre Studies Teacher	1	0	1
English Teacher	1	1	2
Deputy Headmaster	1	1	2
Headmaster	1	1	2
Teaching Position in School No			
Organic Position (Permanent Tenured)	8	23	31
On Secondment	2	3	5
Available to PYSDE (Regional Service Councils for Primary Education)	0	0	0
Appointed	0	1	1
Temporary Substitute Placement	1	1	2

Educational Attainment No			
Two-year degree (College of Primary Education)	5	9	14
Four-Year University Degree	6	19	25
Master Degree	3	5	8
Doctorate Degree	1	0	1
Second Degree	2	4	6

Table 1.3 Demographic Description and Educational Characteristics of Participants in Attica and Volos Regions

Variables	Male N=26	Female N=76	Total N=102
Age			
Under 25	0	1	1
25 to 34	2	12	14
35 to 44	7	25	32
45 to 54	16	36	52
Over 55	1	2	3
Service Years			
Mean (SD)	19 (18.96)	17 (7.08)	18 (7.38)
Min-Max	5-31	0.16 (2 months)-31	0.16-31
Marital Status No			
Single	9	21	30
Married inc Civil Partnerships	16	53	69
Divorced	1	2	3
Widowed	0	0	0
Single Parent Family	0	0	0
Employment Status No			
Permanent (Tenured Status)	25	70	95
Temporary Substitute Teacher	1	6	7
Temporary Substitute Hired on Reduced Timetable	0	0	0
Hourly-Paid Teacher	0	0	0
Hourly-Paid on Reduced Timetable	0	0	0
Teaching Discipline/Post No			
Teacher	18	56	74
Physical Education Teacher	1	2	3
Music Teacher	0	2	2
Computer Science Teacher	0	2	2
Special Education Teacher	0	5	5
Theatre Studies Teacher	1	0	1
English Teacher	1	4	5
Deputy Headmaster	2	2	4
Headmaster	3	3	6
Teaching Position in School No			
Organic Position (Permanent Tenured)	21	56	77
On Secondment	3	9	12
Available to PYSDE (Regional Service Councils for Primary Education)	0	2	2
Appointed	1	3	4
Temporary Substitute Placement	1	6	7

Educational Attainment	No		
Two-year degree (College of Primary Education)	12	22	34
Four-Year University Degree	14	54	68
Master Degree	9	21	30
Doctorate Degree	1	1	2
Second Degree	7	12	19

Table 1.4 Focus Groups Demographics and Key Characteristics of Focus Group Interviews-Attica Region

Focus Group	School Locale	Type of School	Interview Location	Date	No of Participants	Interview Media	Interview Length (mins)	Sex Ratio Male/Female	Service Years Min-Max	Age Range
Group 1	**Exarcheia**	State Six-Post Primary School/ Merged/ All-Day School ZEP	School/ Office for Teachers	4/11/2014	**4**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	68 mins	**2F/2M**	**9-20**	35-54
Group 2	**Nea Smyrni**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School Library	6/11/2014	**7**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	63 mins	**5F/2M**	**5-31**	25-54
Group 3	**Kaisariani**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Office for Teachers	14/11/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	50 mins	**2F/1M**	**12-25**	35-54
Group 4	**Pagrati**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ Merged/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Office for Teachers	24/11/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	42 mins	**2F/1M**	**18-30**	45-54
Group 5	**Pagrati**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School Library	24/11/2014	**5**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	48 mins	**4F/1M**	**11-28**	25-Over 55
Group 6	**Menidi**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Office for Teachers	26/11/2014	**4**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	43 mins	**4F**	**7-15**	25-54

Group 7	**Pagrati**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ Merged/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Office for Teachers	2/12/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	38 mins	**2F/1M**	**15-18**	45-54
Group 8	**Vyronas**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ Merged/All Day	School/ Office for Teachers	2/12/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	37 mins	**3F**	**15-29**	45-54
Group 9	**Zografou**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	Participant's Home	5/12/2014	**4**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	45 mins	**4F**	**10-17**	35-54
Group 10	**Tavros**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School ZEP	School/ Headmaster's Office	8/12/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	51 mins	**2F/1M**	**6-30**	25-54
Group 11	**Kolonaki**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School	School/ Office for Teachers	9/12/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	39 mins	**3F**	**8-12**	25-44
Group 12	**Glyfada**	State Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School	School/ Headmaster's Office	10/12/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	45 mins	**3F**	**14-29**	35-54
Group 13	**Kerameikos**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ Merged/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Headmaster's Office	11/12/2014	**5**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	46 mins	**2F/3M**	**9-29**	25-54
Group 14	**Neos Kosmos**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ Merged/ All-Day School	School/ Office for Teachers	12/12/2014	**6**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	55 mins	**5F/1M**	**12-28**	35-54

Group 15	**Kato Patisia**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Headmaster's Office	15/12/2014	**7**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	60 mins	**5F/2M**	**2 months-31**	Under 25-54

Total

15 Focus Groups	**15 School Sites**	**15 State Primary Schools in the Attica Region**			**63 Participants**		**12 hr and 10 mins**	**48F/15M**	**2 months-31**	**Under 25-Over 55**

Table 1.5 Focus Groups Demographics and Key Characteristics of Focus Group Interviews-Volos Region

Focus Group	School Locale	Type of School	Interview Location	Date	No of Participants	Interview Media	Interview Length (mins)	Sex Ratio Male/Female	Service Years Min-Max	Age Range
Group 16	**Volos' Suburb**	Less than Six-Post State Primary School	School/ Headmaster's Office	17/11/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	55 mins	**2F/1M**	14-30	35-54
Group 17	**Nea Ionia**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Office for Teachers	19/11/2014	**5**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	65 mins	**3F/2M**	5-16	45-54
Group 18	**Nea Ionia**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School	School/ Office for Teachers	20/11/2014	**6**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	54 mins	**4F/2M**	13-31	25-54
Group 19	**Nea Ionia**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Classroom	20/11/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	38 mins	**3F**	20-29	35-54
Group 20	**Nea Ionia**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School (mainly Roma Children)	School/ Headmaster's Office	21/11/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	35 mins	**3F**	13-15	35-44
Group 21	**Nea Ionia**	School for Children with Pervasive Developmental Disorder (DAD)	School/ Headmaster's Office	21/11/2014	**2**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	32 mins	**2F**	11-18	45-54

Group 22	**Volos' Suburb**	State Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School	Participant's Home	22/11/2014	**7**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	60 mins	**5F/2M**	9-24	35-Over 55
Group 23	**Volos**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Office for Teachers	18/12/2014	**4**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	57 mins	**3F/1M**	17-31	25-54
Group 24	**Volos**	State Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School	School/ Office for Teachers	19/12/2014	**6**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	57 mins	**3F/3M**	11-20	45-Over 55

Total

9 Focus Groups	**9 School Sites**	**9 State Primary Schools of the City of Volos and the Suburbs**			**39 Participants**		**7 hr and 33 mins**	**28F/11M**	**5-31**	**25-Over 55**

Table 1.6 Focus Groups Demographics and Key Characteristics of Focus Group Interviews-Attica and Volos Regions

Focus Group	School Locale	Type of School	Interview Location	Date	No of Participants	Interview Media	Interview Length (mins)	Sex Ratio Male/ Female	Service Years Min-Max	Age Range
Group 1	**Exarcheia**	State Six-Post Primary School/ Merged/ All-Day School ZEP	School/ Office for Teachers	4/11/2014	**4**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**68 mins**	**2F/2M**	**9-20**	**35-54**
Group 2	**Nea Smyrni**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School Library	6/11/2014	**7**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**63 mins**	**5F/2M**	**5-31**	**25-54**
Group 3	**Kaisariani**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Office for Teachers	14/11/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**50 mins**	**2F/1M**	**12-25**	**35-54**
Group 4	**Volos' Suburb**	Less than Six-Post State Primary School	School/ Headmaster's Office	17/11/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**55 mins**	**2F/1M**	**14-30**	**35-54**
Group 5	**Nea Ionia**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Office for Teachers	19/11/2014	**5**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**65 mins**	**3F/2M**	**5-16**	**45-54**
Group 6	**Nea Ionia**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School	School/ Office for Teachers	20/11/2014	**6**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**54 mins**	**4F/2M**	**13-31**	**25-54**
Group 7	**Nea Ionia**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Classroom	20/11/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**38 mins**	**3F**	**20-29**	**35-54**
Group 8	**Nea Ionia**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School (mainly Roma Children)	School/ Headmaster's Office	21/11/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**35 mins**	**3F**	**13-15**	**35-44**
Group 9	**Nea Ionia**	School for Children with Pervasive Developmental	School/ Headmaster's	21/11/2014	**2**	Face-to-Face Audio	**32 mins**	**2F**	**11-18**	**45-54**

		Disorder (DAD)	Office			Interview				
Group 10	**Volos' Suburb**	State Six-Post Primary School/All-Day School	Participant's Home	22/11/2014	**7**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**60 mins**	**5F/2M**	**9-24**	**35-Over 55**
Group 11	**Pagrati**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ Merged/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Office for Teachers	24/11/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**42 mins**	**2F/1M**	**18-30**	**45-54**
Group 12	**Pagrati**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School Library	24/11/2014	**5**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**48 mins**	**4F/1M**	**11-28**	**25-Over 55**
Group 13	**Menidi**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Office for Teachers	26/11/2014	**4**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**43 mins**	**4F**	**7-15**	**25-54**
Group 14	**Pagrati**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ Merged/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Office for Teachers	2/12/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**38 mins**	**2F/1M**	**15-18**	**45-54**
Group 15	**Vyronas**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ Merged/All Day	School/ Office for Teachers	2/12/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**37 mins**	**3F**	**15-29**	**45-54**
Group 16	**Zografou**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	Participant's Home	5/12/2014	**4**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**45 mins**	**4F**	**10-17**	**35-54**
Group 17	**Tavros**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School ZEP	School/ Headmaster's Office	8/12/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**51 mins**	**2F/1M**	**6-30**	**25-54**
Group 18	**Kolonaki**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School	School/ Office for Teachers	9/12/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**39 mins**	**3F**	**8-12**	**25-44**
Group 19	**Glyfada**	State Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School	School/ Headmaster's Office	10/12/2014	**3**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**45 mins**	**3F**	**14-29**	**35-54**
Group 20	**Kerameikos**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ Merged/ All-Day School with	School/ Headmaster's Office	11/12/2014	**5**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**46 mins**	**2F/3M**	**9-29**	**25-54**

		EAEP								
Group 21	**Neos Kosmos**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ Merged/ All-Day School	School/ Office for Teachers	12/12/2014	**6**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**55 mins**	**5F/1M**	**12-28**	**35-54**
Group 22	**Kato Patisia**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Headmaster's Office	15/12/2014	**7**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**60 mins**	**5F/2M**	**2 months-31**	**Under 25-54**
Group 23	**Volos**	State Over Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School with EAEP	School/ Office for Teachers	18/12/2014	**4**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**57 mins**	**3F/1M**	**17-31**	**25-54**
Group 24	**Volos**	State Six-Post Primary School/ All-Day School	School/ Office for Teachers	19/12/2014	**6**	Face-to-Face Audio Interview	**57 mins**	**3F/3M**	**11-20**	**45-Over 55**

Total

24 Focus Groups	**24 School Sites** (15 in the Attica Region and 9 in the City of Volos and its Suburbs)	**24 State Primary Schools** (15 in the Attica Region and 9 in the City of Volos and its Suburbs)			**102 Participants** (63 in the Attica Region and 39 in the City of Volos and its Suburbs)		**19 hr and 43 mins**	**76F/26M**	**2 months-31 years**	**Under 25 - Over 55**

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Participant Information Sheet

Anglia Ruskin University
Cambridge Chelmsford Peterborough

Letter of Invitation to Participate in Research Project

Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, United Kingdom

Participant Information Sheet

The Effects of the Economic Crisis on the Professional-Social/Personal Lives and the Teaching Practices of Primary School Teachers: The case of Greece

Theopoula (Polina) Chrysochou, PhD student, Anglia Ruskin University
PhD Student at the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education

You are being asked to take part in a research study which forms part of a PhD Research. This study is called The Effect of the Economic Crisis on the Professional Lives and Teaching Practices of Primary School Teachers: The case of Greece. This study is being conducted by Theopoula (Polina) Chrysochou, PhD student at Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, UK. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it

is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

1. What this study is about

This study is being conducted to explore in service primary teacher's experiences, views and perceptions on their working conditions in times of economic crisis.

Approximately 40 individuals who come from a range of school districts and post/sector of work will participate in this study. The research will employ a basic qualitative design and will involve a questionnaire-based focus group interview.

The interview will be carried out with regard for mutually convenient times and negotiated in a way that seeks to minimise disruption to schedules and burdens on participants. With your consent, the interview will be arranged to take place in a private area (for confidentiality reasons) on voluntary organisation premises where you work (or at a suitable venue in the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens if you prefer).

You are being asked to participate in this study because of your current role as a teacher, and therefore, your understanding of your working environment and working conditions is significant to this study. The research results will be used in the researcher's PhD thesis and in related scholarly works, such as publications and conferences.

2. What you will be asked to do

If you decide to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following:

1. Participate in a recorded face-to-face focus group interview composed of six to twelve participants lasting between 40 minutes and 1 hour in length.
2. Possibly participate in follow up interviews.
3. Review and respond to transcription of interview.

3. Risks and benefits

Risks for participating in this study are minimal. The main disadvantage to taking part in the study is that you will be donating around 40 minutes to one-hour of your time to take part. It is possible that you may find answering some of the questions challenging. This is unlikely but if it were to occur the interview could be terminated at any time.

There may be no direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. You will not be paid for the study, and this research does not involve funding from external sources. However, the information you provide may prove beneficial to the understanding of the effects of the economic crisis on the working conditions and teaching practices of primary school teachers, as well as to the understanding of the ways that changes in education, in the nature of schooling and in its institutions may affect or not the daily work in the classroom. It should yield information about the changes that teachers experience and how these relate to the levels of their job satisfaction, to educational quality and to effective schooling.

This information will help educational leaders understand what happens at schools on a practical daily basis from the teacher's perspective. Ultimately, students, parents, teachers and administrators may benefit if the information uncovered leads to educational proposals that will secure the future and quality of public education and of the schoolteachers' profession.

4. Your participation is voluntary

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. You may refuse to answer any of the questions. If you start the study, you can stop at any time with no need to offer any reason for doing so either by contacting the researcher via the email listed above or by returning to the researcher a slip, that will be provided at the start of the study, saying you would like to withdraw. Not participating or choosing to leave the study will not result in any penalty or loss of any benefits you would otherwise receive. However, as focus group interviews will be carried out in case of withdraw, once participation has begun, it will not be possible to withdraw data.

5. Your answers to questions will be confidential

The researcher will maintain confidentiality of study participants as far as possible. The researcher will not discuss any information provided by participants with others. All identifying information relating to participants such as the school district will be removed prior to dissemination and the participant's names will be replaced by pseudonyms. Interviews will be conducted in a private setting and all interviews transcripts will be kept in WinRAR password-protected zip files on the researcher's password-protected computer. The recording of the interview will be deleted after transcription. All paper records will be kept in a locked cupboard that can only be accessed by the researcher. Reports on the research will not name or otherwise identify individuals. Data generated by the research will be used purely for the purposes of the research project (including dissemination of findings) and no-one other than the researcher's supervisors will have access to data in an anonymised format.

The Anglia Ruskin Research Ethics Sub Committee is the committee that protects the rights of people in research studies. The Research Ethics Sub Committee has reviewed and approved this research study, alongside with the participant information sheet and the participant consent form. The Research Ethics Sub Committee may review study records from time to time to be sure that people in research studies are being treated fairly and that the study is being carried out as planned.

Contact information

If you have questions about the study right now, please ask them. If you have questions about the study later on please call the investigator Theopoula Chrysochou at the contact information listed above.

If you have any concerns regarding the study you can contact the researcher's supervisor, Professor Constantine Skordoulis using the details below:

Constantine Skordoulis, Professor, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens
Department of Primary Education

If this research has harmed you in any way or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the research you can contact Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, UK using the details above:

Jennifer Powell, Board Executive Assistant, Office of the Secretary and Clerk

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this Research.

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS TO KEEP, TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF YOUR CONSENT FORM

Appendix II: Participant Consent Form

Anglia Ruskin University
Cambridge Chelmsford Peterborough

Participant Consent Form

NAME OF PARTICIPANT: _____

Title of the project: The Effects of the Economic Crisis on the Professional-Social/Personal Lives and the Teaching Practices of Primary School Teachers: The case of Greece

Main investigator and contact details:
Theopoula (Polina) Chrysochou, PhD student, Anglia Ruskin University
PhD Student at the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education

1. I have read the Participant Information Sheet which is attached to this form. The study has been explained to me. I understand what I will be asked to do in this research, and

all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I freely agree to take part in this research.

2. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time, for any reason and without prejudice.

3. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded.

4. I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.

5. I have been provided with a copy of this form and the Participant Information Sheet.

Data Protection: I agree to the University[369] and to the main researcher as identified above processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the Research Project as outlined to me, for the researcher's PhD thesis and in related scholarly works, such as publications and conferences.

Name of participant (print) _____

Signed _____ **Date** _____

Name of investigator (print) _____

Signed _____ **Date** _____

[369] "The University" includes Anglia Ruskin University and its partner colleges

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP

If you wish to withdraw from the research, please complete the form below and return to the main investigator named above or contact the investigator via the email listed above.

Title of the Research Project: The Effects of the Economic Crisis on the Professional-Social/Personal Lives and the Teaching Practices of Primary School Teachers: The case of Greece

I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix III: Demographic, Educational, Professional Characteristics

The Effects of the Economic Crisis on the Professional-Social Personal Lives and the Teaching Practices of Primary School Teachers: The case of Greece

Date: _____

I. Demographic Characteristics

Gender:

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Other (please specify)

_____

Age:

☐ Under 25

☐ 25 to 34

☐ 35 to 44

☐ 45 to 54

☐ Over 55

Marital status:

☐ Single

☐ Married inc civil partnerships

☐ Divorced

☐ Widowed

☐ Single parent family

Total number of children (if any): _____

II. Educational Characteristics

Educational attainment:

☐ Two-year Degree (College of Primary Education)

☐ Four-year University Degree

☐ Master Degree

☐ Doctorate Degree

☐ Second Degree (please specify)

_____

III. Professional Characteristics

Years of service (in total): _____

Teaching Discipline/Post: _____ _____

Employment status:

- ☐ Permanent (tenured status)
- ☐ Temporary Substitute Teacher
- ☐ Temporary Substitute Teacher Hired on Reduced Timetable
- ☐ Hourly-paid Teacher
- ☐ Hourly-paid Teacher Hired on Reduced Timetable
- ☐ Other (please specify)

_____

Size and Type of school:

- ☐ Less than six-post Primary School
- ☐ Six-post Primary School
- ☐ Over six-post Primary School
    - ☐ EAEP (Unified Revised School Curriculum)
    - ☐ Not EAEP
    - ☐ ZEP (Zones of Educational Priority)
- ☐ Experimental Primary School
- ☐ Other (please specify)

_____

Was your school consolidated/merged recently;

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please specify the year and the antecedent conditions.

_____

Teaching position in school:

☐ Organic Position (Permanent Tenured)

☐ On Secondment

☐ Available to the PYSDE (Regional Service Councils for Primary Education)

☐ Appointed

Position of responsibility:

☐ Deputy Headmaster

☐ Headmaster

☐ Responsible of all-day school

☐ Other (please specify)

_____

Appendix IV: Focus Group Moderator's Guide

Focus group moderator's guide

Title of the project: *The Effects of the Economic Crisis on the Professional-Social/Personal Lives and the Teaching Practices of Primary School Teachers: The case of Greece*

Logistics

- Date of Interview: _____
- Time of Interview: _____
- Town of Interview: _____
- Location of Interview: _____
- School unit (geographic locale): _____
- Number of focus group: _____
- Total number of participants for focus group: _____
- Composition of focus group: _____

_____

_____

Research goals

- Examine the role played by the economic crisis and the austerity measures in the organisation, structure and experience of teachers' work
- Account for teachers' perspectives on how the economic crisis impacted their professional school life and their teaching practices, as well as their social/personal lives, their households and their professional and personal development
- Identify and describe the changes in teaching and learning conditions in the years before and after the 2008 crisis, along with the implications on the school level, on the primary education sector as a whole, and on the practices and relations that constitute schooling, resulting from the economic crisis
- Explore teachers' concerns about the challenges they face on a practical daily basis in schools at all levels, as well as about the effects on the education delivery and on pupils and their families
- Examine whether or not there are spatial differences of potential practical importance in the effects and their severity, such as regional and provincial variations (capital and peripheral provinces)
- Learn about the ways teachers are organized at school level and beyond, as well as teachers' and schools' responses, initiatives and coping strategies

Primary research questions and sub-questions:

Primary research questions

1) How do teachers see the organization, structure and experience of their work being affected by the economic crisis? Do other factors appear to be involved, contribute?

2) Which practices and relations that constitute schooling do teachers see as being affected by the economic crisis?

Sub-questions

1) How do teachers see their personal lives, along with the lives of their pupils and their families being affected by the economic crisis?

2) How do teachers feel about the quality of the learning and teaching conditions?

3) How do teachers organize and bargain collectively at school level and beyond?

4) How do teachers and schools respond? What kind of strategies are being introduced and what kind of initiatives are being taken?
5) What influence do regional and provincial variations have on the severity of the effects?

Respondent profile

In-service primary school teachers, belonging to sector PE70 and specialist subject teachers of primary education, representing different types of employment status and a variety of teaching positions, who are placed in state primary schools that vary in type and size and which are spread across the Prefectures of Attica and Magnesia.

Topics to cover

- School Conditions and Resources (Teaching and Learning conditions)
- Employment Issues
- Household Income and Social/Personal Lives
- Effects on Students
- Initiatives and Coping Strategies
- Professional Organizations (Teachers' Association, Federation of Primary Education Teachers)

Timing guide

• Introduction	5 minutes
• Effects on teaching and learning conditions	10 minutes
• Employment effects, changes	10 minutes
• Effects on social/personal lives	10 minutes
• Effects on students	10 minutes
• Teachers' responses	10 minutes
• Collective activity and teachers' participation	10 minutes
• Close	5 minutes
• Total	70 minutes

Purpose of the session

Good morning/ Good afternoon. My name is Polina Chrysochou, I am a PhD researcher at Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, UK and I will be facilitating our discussion today.
I would like, first of all, to thank you all so much for volunteering your time to join me today.
Have any of you ever participated in a focus group?
We're going to be talking today about the effects of the economic crisis on your working and social/personal lives. You have been invited to participate as your point of view is very important and I would be really interested in hearing about your daily experiences in the classroom. It's a way for you to provide me with information about your professional lives and your teaching practices for the purpose of understanding what happens at schools on a practical daily basis from your perspective.
Your input is much appreciated.
Our session should last for about an hour and a half.
Right now, I want to let you know a few things about what we're doing today.

Procedures

I will explain the methodology of the focus group. I will ask you a series of some general questions about the implications of the economic crisis to facilitate the discussion.
The questions are very general, there are no right or wrong answers and they require no specific knowledge, just your experience. What I want, is to hear your personal perspectives.
Each of you is free to express your own opinion and if there are any questions that you do not feel comfortable to answer or participate in, you should not feel obliged to do so. However, please try to be as involved as possible and do answer as accurately and honestly as possible.
You do not have to speak in any particular order, try to let the conversation to flow naturally, but only one person should speak at a time.
Everyone doesn't have to answer every single question, but I'd like to hear from each of you today as the discussion progresses, so be considerate of others if you notice that you are talking too much and others are contributing less.
If you agree, I will tape this discussion as it will help me to recall what has been said and to prepare a transcript of the session. Thus, it would be really helpful for me if you could speak in a clear and loud voice.

Please do not hesitate to ask for clarifications during the discussion if required and let me know if you need a break.

Disclosure

Only one last very important issue. This is a confidential discussion and I will ask you all to uphold this confidentiality when leaving the room. Your opinions will be transcribed anonymously and they will be used by me purely for the purposes of my research project.
All identifying information relating to you, such as the school district, will be removed prior to dissemination, and your names will be replaced by pseudonyms.
Although the discussion being taped, I would like to assure you that the recording will be kept safely in in WinRAR password-protected zip file on my personal password-protected computer until transcribed, and then will be deleted. All paper records will be kept in a locked cupboard that can only be accessed by me and all my personal notes of the meeting will contain no information that would allow you to be linked to specific statements.
I stress confidentiality because I want an open discussion. I want all of you to feel free to comment on each other's remarks without fear that your comments will be later taken out of context.

Demographic-Educational-Professional Characteristics

You will find a brief demographic and educational, professional characteristics questionnaire on your seats. Please could you kindly fill it in and return it to me at the end of the meeting?

Consent form

Do you have any question about me, my research or the interview before we begin? Are you happy to participate in the study and start the audio recorded interview?
Thank you. Could you please sign and date this copy of the consent form?
Ok, let's begin.

Question guide

School Conditions and Resources (Teaching and Learning conditions)

1. Could you tell me if there are any changes in the funding of your school/schools?

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- **Probe:** Could you tell me a bit more about that to help me understand the funding changes?

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- **Probe:** Practical impacts on a daily basis

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- **Probe:** Do you believe that these changes have occurred as a result of the economic crisis or not?

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2. Could you describe the effects of the economic crisis on the school's daily operations?

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- **Probe:** Impact on the quality and adequacy of the infrastructure of educational facilities, (building conditions, heating, libraries, laboratory classrooms, safety, sanitation) and of the educational supplies, resources/materials (teaching materials, stationery, office equipment, cleaning and maintenance resources)

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- **Probe:** Can you tell me some more about that? Could you give me an example?

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3. Is your school adequately staffed?

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- **Probe:** Was the staff appointed to schools on time?
  If no, was the latter directly or indirectly associated with the crisis?
  If yes, was it related to the type of school?
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- **Probe:** Has the teacher-pupil ratio changed? If yes, how? Why?
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4. Have interpersonal and professional relationships at school changed (school climate)?
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- **Probe:** In what way? You said…, can you tell me some more about that?
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- **Probe:** Your relationship with your colleagues, the headmaster? The atmosphere in the staffroom?

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- **Probe:** Your relationship with your students' parents?

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- **Probe:** Your relationship with the students? The atmosphere in the classroom?

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- **Probe:** Why? Do you believe it is associated with the economic crisis?

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5. Has the way the school is managed changed?

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- **Probe:** How would you describe the changes?

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- **Probe:** Have the headmaster's, and the educational advisor's roles changed? Your professional relationships with them?

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- **Probe:** What do these changes mean for your daily practice?

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6. Do you believe that the economic crisis has affected in any way, directly or indirectly, your teaching practices, the quality of your work, the educational outcome?

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- **Probe:** If yes, how?

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- **Probe:** What are the causes?

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- **Probe:** What consequences do you anticipate?

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- **Probe:** Hidden curriculum

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<u>Employment Issues</u>

7. To what extent has your remuneration been affected in the intervening six years since the onset of the economic crisis in 2008?

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- **Probe:** Pay differences among teachers (seniority-based pay scale)

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- **Probe:** Need for second job and extra income?

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8. Do you get as tired as you used to?

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- **Probe:** Are you working the same number of hours as you used to? (work carried out in school and work carried out elsewhere, off-the-clock work)

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- **Probe:** If no, why does this happen, what's the reason?
  Where are your extra working hours distributed?

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- **Probe:** Projects

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9. Has your professional development and your self-education been affected by the economic crisis (purchase of books, studies, attendance at cultural events)?

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<u>Household Income and Social/Personal Lives</u>

10. Has the economic crisis affected your social and personal lives?

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- **Probe:** In what way? Could you tell me a bit more about that?

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- **Probe:** Do you think that this consequently affects your daily classroom instruction or not?

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- **Probe:** How do you think your professional life would differ if you were employed elsewhere?

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<u>Effects on students</u>

11. Based on your daily experience, do you think that the economic crisis has affected the student community?

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- **Probe:** How? To what extent? In which domains?

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- **Probe:** Have learning difficulties (i.e. dyslexia) been intensified?

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- **Probe:** Apparent differences in health and nutrition?

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- **Probe:** Are their concerns reflected in classroom discussions, in their writings and statements? Could you give me an example to help me better understand this?

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<u>Initiatives and Coping Strategies</u>

12. Could you tell me whether, either as a school or as a teachers' association, you have taken steps in order to confront problems?

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- **Probe:** What kind of problems?

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- **Probe:** Could you tell me a bit more about your actions? Could you give me an example to help me better understand this?

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- **Probe:** Prevention or coping strategies?

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- **Probe:** Do you think that there is something else that needs to be done? What does it require? What are the potential obstacles?

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Collective activity and teachers' participation

13. Do you think you have a good picture of your professional issues (evaluation, upcoming changes, and professional rights)?

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- **Probe:** If yes, how are you primarily informed? By the headmaster, your colleagues, the collective organs, through the media? If no, why not? What are the main causes?

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14. How often are teacher assemblies held at your school?

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- **Probe:** What are the main topics discussed? Do the discussed topics meet your needs?

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- **Probe:** Are you satisfied with the frequency and the way the assembly is conducted? Does it reflect your concerns at school and sectorial level? If not, what would you like to change?

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15. How often do you participate in the assemblies of your associations?

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- **Probe:** If rarely, why?

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Conclusion

I think this has been a very successful and informative discussion.

Does anyone have anything else they want to add to our discussion today?

Thank you very much for your time and for your help today.

Your opinions will be a valuable asset to this project. I hope you have found the discussion as interesting as I have.

If you have any questions after this session, or if there is anything you are unhappy with or wish to complain about, please contact me later.

You may reach me by phone at XXX or via email:

XXX

I would like to remind you that any comments featured in this report will be totally anonymous. Please do keep contents of today's discussions to yourself.

Before you leave, please hand in your completed demographic and educational, professional characteristics questionnaire.