HERITAGE, CULTURE, EDUCATION

NATIONAL IDENTITY AND EDUCATION IN THE EARLY MODERN STATE OF GREECE

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Greeks are those who have a Greek education.
Isocrates

Introduction

This paper is a historical study that looks at early education in Greece and the development of a Greek identity in schools. This paper finds that it was the Greek school that linked the Modern Greek to the Ancient Greek past and thus shaped a Modern Greek identity. The concept of nation and national identity is no doubt a modern one. We can say with accurate precision that the concept of nation in Greece at the time of the Greek Revolution was not the same as it was in Ancient Greece. Organized around small city-states where borders and territories were not well defined, the Ancient Greeks identified themselves according to which city or town they lived in rather than a universally understood Greek nation and identity. Certainly, the Ancient Greeks were aware that the people living in these various Greek city-states shared many cultural similarities, such as religion, language and many common cultural traditions, but at the same time their differences became apparent when the cities were at war with one another.

According to several historians, the modern concept of the nation-state and national identity emerges in Europe as early as the 18th century and is mostly a modern construction.[1] However the idea of nation, or of belonging to a community of people that share similar cultural attributes has historically existed in the world for some time. At first, a nation consisted of small communities or groups of people living in small towns and villages. As a village or town's population grew to become a city, so did its nation or people. Borders were drawn as national living spaces and national boundaries became better defined on political maps. People and governments also found that nations or peoples who shared common cultural

[1] Norman Davies, *Europe: A History*, New York, 1998; R.R. Palmer, Joel Colton, Loyd Kramer, *A History of the Modern World*, 9th ed., London, 2001; John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe from the Renaissance to the Present*, 2nd ed., New York-London, 2004; Ernest Renan, *What is a Nation?*, in vol. *Becoming National: A Reader*, ed. by Geoff Eley, Ronald Grigor Suny, New York-Oxford, 1996, pp. 41-55.

and historical characteristics generally lived in greater peace with one another (within the prescribed confines of their nation-states) than if they lived outside the borders of their respective national state amongst those who were not part of their nation.

The First Greek Schools

Education in Modern Greece dates back several centuries. During Byzantine times, the so-called *Patriarchal Academy*, one of the first Greek institutions of higher learning, was opened.[2] During Ottoman times the school became known as the *Great School (Megali Scholi)*. Many of the Orthodox priests trained at the school would be assigned throughout the empire's communities as religious guiders, teachers and community leaders. The priests were also responsible for executing any requests that came from Constantinople. This included informing local citizens about any regulations passed by the Church or Empire. The local priests lived and worked amongst the people of their community. Their religious services were performed in *koine* Greek and community members looked to the priests as both spiritual and personal advisors.

Some schools were better known than others. The better known schools such as the *Great School* in Constantinople, the *Patmias School* on the island of Patmos, the *Small and Great Schools* in Ioannina and the *Evangelical School* in Smyrna focused most of their pedagogical attention on the training of priests, but also provided a religious and secular education for lay people.[3] Although no accurate figures exist on the number of schools in rural areas of Ottoman Greece,[4] historians agree that most of the local Greek speaking communities had makeshift schools,

[2] Debate still continues today as to whether the *Patriarchal Academy* truly existed. Some scholars claim that the *Academy* merely referred to the church of the Hagia Sofia. Others say that there was no school and that late Byzantine descriptions of *didaskali*, or teachers at the school actually referred to preachers. See C.N. Constantiniadis, *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries (1204 – ca. 1310)*, Nicosia, 1982; Sophia Mergali, *L'enseignement et les lettres pendant l'époque des Paléologues (1261-1453)*, Athènes, 1996; Michael Angold, *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni: 1081-1261*, Cambridge, 1995.

[3] Constantine Cavaros, *Cultural and Educational Continuity of Greece from Antiquity to Present*, Belmont, Massachusetts, 1995. Cavaros' book is an analysis of Saul A. Tovar's lecture in 1993 on the cultural and educational continuity of Greece from the Antiquity to the present. However, Tovar's lecture seems to be more on the discussion of Greek education from Byzantine to contemporary times.

[4] For purposes of clarification, Ottoman Greece refers to the Ottoman dominated areas of the Greek peninsula.

which were usually housed in a church or local town building.[5] The French traveler François Pouqueville gives a detailed description of education in Ottoman Greece. Pouqueville wrote: "As soon as their [Greek students'] reason begins to develop, they are sent to the school of the papas [priests] to learn to read; but when the method of teaching is examined, it is impossible to conceive how the children can even learn their letters. The master hears his scholars while sitting in an easy chair, in the attitude of a man afflicted with vapors of opium; and holding a long cane, which with he strikes boys promiscuously. One of them begins to read, on which they all follow the lesson with high voice, and the most opposite tones; but the most singular circumstance is that the [students] possess the art of deceiving their master by reading with effrontery in different books, while he supposes that they are reciting one general lesson."[6]

As seen from Pouqueville's description above, the Greek priests were responsible for the daily operations in the school and served as the main teachers. In this capacity, the priests focused a good deal of their lessons on religious education, history, arithmetic and basic reading and writing.[7] Children attended the schools mainly at night since they worked on farms during the day.[8] The schools included mostly children aged 6 to 12.

Most books in the schools and other supplemental materials were written in atticized Greek, *katharevousa*, rather than the spoken vernacular *demotic. Psalms* (*Psaltiri*) and chronicles like *Hronografos* attributed to Pseudo-Dorotheos of Monemvasia, which were also used in schools, were written in *koine* and vernacular Greek.[9] The books written in *katharevousa* were not easily understood by students, who spoke vernacular Greek, so the priests probably helped translate them for the students. Students practiced their reading, pronunciation and spelling skills with the help of these books. They were also often asked by the priests to memorize and recite lines from the books. Since priests played the role of educator in the classroom they were both spiritual guiders and historical illuminators in the

[5] For some time it was believed in modern Greece that the Turkish authority prohibited Greek schools from functioning freely during Ottoman rule. Greek history has been recently revised to downplay Greek Ottoman persecution of Greek education.

[6] F.C.H. Pouqueville, *Travels through the Moreas, Albania, and Several Other Parts of the Ottoman Empire, to Constantinople during the Years 1789, 1799, 1800, and 1801*, London, 1806, p. 55.

[7] Peter Drinis, *Pre-Independence Education: The Secret School*, in "Holy Trinity Hellenic Orthodox Church," vol. 35, 2005, nos. 5-6.

[8] David Brewer, *The Greek War of Independence: The Struggle for Freedom from Ottoman Oppression and the Birth of the Modern Greek Nation*, Woodstock, NY, 2003.

[9] M. Philippides, *Patriarchal Chronicles of the Sixteenth Century*, in "Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies," vol. 25, 1984, pp. 87-94.

classroom. Lessons on history most likely focused on Church and Byzantine history and were taught by the priests in a storytelling form. The priests themselves knew bits and pieces of the historical past and may have blended accounts from Ancient and Byzantine Greece with those found in the *Bible*.

For most of the Ottoman rule, the sultans did not prohibit the local Greek schools as had been claimed in Modern Greece for some time. The schools were the responsibility of the community and priest. They were of very little concern to the sultan in Constantinople. At best the Empire was indifferent to the issue of *millet* schooling. Funding of the schools depended on where they were located and who was part of the community. Even so, some education organizations as the *Society of Friends of the Muses* had been founded with the help of Ioannis Kapodistrias (or John Capodistria) and funded at first primarily by Tsar Alexander I of Russia for the sole purpose of expanding Greek education. Although the organization was initially established with the mission of opening more Greek schools in Ottoman Greece, instead it ended up financing Greeks to study abroad in Western Europe.[10]

Greek schools located in large trading towns, such as Constantinople, Smyrna and some of the islands in the Aegean and Ionian Seas were better funded than those located in the peninsula's rural areas.[11] This was primarily because the schools in the major Greek trading centers had the benefit of receiving financial support from both the Church and wealthy Greek elites. However, in rural areas most of the school financing remained dependent on the local community.[12] By our modern standards these schools would not even be considered as such, since they lacked the organization and facilities to function properly as schools.

In the 1860's absenteeism was also quite common, as the respective local authorities were not enforcing government mandated compulsory education. No accurate figures exist on the percentage of students who actually attended school, but it is known that parents at the time had not yet grasped the importance of basic education in improving their children's social and economic status since these were expected to become farmers and nothing more.[13] Therefore, many of the Greek students who were registered at school may have never attended. Although these

[10] C.W. Crawley, *John Capodistrias and the Greeks before 1821*, in "Cambridge Historical Journal," XII, 1957, 2, pp. 162-182.

[11] G. Chassiotis, *L'Instruction publique chez les Grecs*, Paris, 1881; Hyde Clarke, *On Public Instruction in Turkey*, in "Journal of the Statistical Society of London," vol. 30, 1867, no. 4.

[12] Stefanos Papadopoulos, *Education in Macedonia and Its Contribution in the Development of the Preconditions for Success of the Macedonian Struggle*, in vol. *O Makedonikos Agonas: Symposio*, Thessaloniki, 1987, pp. 21-27.

[13] Kallia Kalliataki-Merticopoulou, *Literacy and Unredeemed Peasants: Late Nineteenth-Century Rural Crete Faces Education*, in vol. *Greek Society in the Making, 1863-1913: Realities, Symbols and Visions*, ed. by Philip Carabott, Aldershot, 1997.

rural schools were not properly funded and lacked the support from the local community, by the late 19th century more funds were allocated to these schools, especially in the areas where various ethnic groups competed to make their language dominant. Some of the local Greek priests working as teachers sought to Hellenize non-Greek speaking populations through the mechanism of schooling. With the support of the Church and government, the schools thus began to mobilize the population in Greece using the rhetoric of a commonly shared Greek nation and common brotherhood and bloodlines based on a common religion, language and history.

We find examples of this as early as the late 18th century. In 1770 the Greek Orthodox monk Kosmas of Aetolia helped curb mass conversions to Islam in the northern Greek territories, by founding schools in small rural villages where Greek was no longer the dominant language and where Islam had become the dominant religion. According to some scholars, Kosmas' attempts seem to have been successful, since these groups were eventually re-Hellenized or outright Hellenized when they converted to Christianity and adopted Greek as their primary spoken language.[14]

Almost a century later, another Greek Orthodox churchman, Metropolitan Dorotheos Scholarios of Demetrias, was concerned with the *Vlach* or *Aromanian* language (an Eastern Romance language related to Romanian) dominating his region of Thessaly.[15] Fearing that these northern regions could be lost to Slavic and Romanian territorial ambitions in the Balkans, Dorotheos opened a Greek school in 1866 in the predominantly *Vlach* speaking village of Vennitsa in the region of Thessaly.[16] The school was free and locals from the village, both children and adults, were encouraged to attend. Eventually with time and a well-established

[14] Phanis Michalopoulos, *Kosmas o Aitolos*, Athina, 1940.

[15] Dorotheos himself was a native Vlach speaker. The Vlachs lived in what is presently the Macedonia region of Greece. The language is Indo-European, but more similar to a Latin based language than Greek. Some linguists argue it is merely a Romanian dialect. Today many of the Vlach speakers of Greece have been assimilated into mainstream Greek speaking society. On the Vlach people (Gr. *Vlahoi*, Alb. *Vlleh*, *Armânj* in their own language) see M.D. Peyfuss, *Die Aromunische Frage: Ihre Entwicklung von den Ursprüngen bis zum Frieden von Bukarest (1913) und die Haltung Österreich-Ungarns*, Wien, 1974; T.J. Winnifrith, *The Vlachs: The History of the Balkan People*, London, 1987; N. Trifon, T. Kahl, S. Beis, *Les Aroumains, un peuple qui s'en va*, Paris, 2005; T. Kahl, *Gia tin Tautotita ton Vlachon: Ethnopolitismikes Prosengiseis mias Valkanikis Pragmatikotitas*, Athina, 2009.

[16] Theodoros A. Nimas, *I Ekpaideusi sti Dytiki Makedonia kata tin Periodo tes Tourkokratias*, Thessaloniki, 1995. See also John C. Koliopoulos, Thanos M. Veremis, *Greece the Modern Sequel: From 1821 to the Present*, New York, 2002, and especially Chapter 5 *Education: The Mighty Greek School*, pp. 157-164.

Greek national school system, these groups would choose Greek over their *Vlach* native language as Greek schools gradually sprung up in the area.

Similarly, Anastasia Karakasidou found that in the town of Assiros in Greek Macedonia, schooling played an important role "… in forging a Greek national consciousness among the residents of Guvenza."[17] The residents of Guvenza (Assiros) in the region of Thessaloniki had been teetering at one time in adopting a Slavic identity over a Greek one, but the Greek school eventually forged a Greek identity amongst the town's residents in the late 19th century. Generally, the schools in these rural areas of Greece offered a venue for the popular transmission of a standardized national Greek identity as education helped raise literacy rates, encouraged the use of Modern Greek over other languages, identified a common history, and opened new channels for social and economic mobility.

Moreover the schools would help strengthen ties between Greek speaking communities living inside and outside Greece by promoting a common Modern Greek identity and creating a sense of a broader Greek identity based on common cultural, historic and linguistic ties. At the same time, a sense of the "other" and "unknown" became more relevant when the school was used as a national propaganda tool during times of international conflict as in the First and Second Balkan War (1912-1913), when Greece was at war with several of its Balkan neighbors.[18] But it is only when propaganda was transmitted in the Greek schools that differences between Greece and its neighbors became more apparent. At the same time, the Greek schools strengthened Greek national identity by magnifying common religious, linguistic and historical ties among the Greek people, being thus able to mobilize its citizens against the nation's enemies.

The Case of Prosymni

In the town of Prosymni (Berbati) in the Argolis in the Peloponnesus, by the early 20th century, when the Greek school system had been reorganized and expanded its reach into the town, children were encouraged by their teachers to

[17] Anastasia N. Karakasidou, *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood: Passages to Nationhood in Greek Macedonia 1870-1990*, Chicago, London, 1997.

[18] The expansion of Greek borders into the present day Northern Greek frontier after the Balkan Wars included within the new Greece a number of linguistically diverse groups. Many historians argue that these groups were allowed to move freely within the confines of the Ottoman Empire. Thessaloniki, for example, a port city, was the most cosmopolitan of the Turkish controlled cities in Southeastern Europe and attracted a number of ethnic groups due to the city's economic success. After the annexation of the city by the state of Greece, Greek leaders were surprised to find that many of the people who lived at the city's periphery did not speak Greek.

speak Greek at home over their preferred *Arvanite* language.[19] The *Arvanite* language has its linguistic roots in Albanian and is most similar to the Tosk Albanian dialect. One of the locals, a 99-year-old woman, commented: "Teachers told us to tell our family to speak to us only in Greek. It made no difference to us what language we spoke at home. To us we were all still Greeks."[20] Even so, the inhabitants of the town preferred the *Arvanite* language to Greek, but still identified themselves as Greeks.[21]

Even though the *Arvanites* (Alb. *Arbereshe*, Gr. *Arvanites*) are of distant Albanian origin,[22] to call an Arvanite speaker in Prosymni today an Albanian would be considered offensive by most of the locals. This may be because of the recent xenophobic feeling in Greece against its illegal Albanian immigrant population, but the inhabitants of Prosymni are still very adamant that they are Greeks even though they are aware that the *Arvanite* language is not Greek and more similar to modern Albanian than Greek. They have gone so far as to suggest that it is a form of Ancient Greek.

Moreover, elusive tales are prevalent on the town's origins. The town borders the ancient city of Mycenae. Archeological excavations have even found the town to date back to prehistoric times.[23] The town's agricultural fields (*kambos*) are sparsely marked with Ancient, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman ruins. This has given rise to more versions of the town's origins.

Some locals suggest they are the descendants of the *Souliotes* (a warlike Albanian speaking and Christian Orthodox group that inhabited the region of Thesprotia in Western Epirus and were champions of the Greek national idea and independence movement), who after loosing a battle in Epirus to the army of the provincial Albanian ruler, Ali Pasha, some twenty years before the Greek Revolution, settled down in the village as refugees.[24]

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[19] Some fieldwork for this project was done in the village of Prosymni in Greece in the fall of 2008 and summer of 2009. Although this study is not an ethnographic project, some research from Prosymni offers a glimpse of the state of Greek education in the late 19th and early 20th century.

[20] Eleni Zervas, Interview, August 12, 2008.

[21] Dimitra Gefou-Madianou, *Cultural Polyphony and Identity Formation: Negotiating Tradition in Attica*, in "American Ethnologist," vol. 26, 1999, pp. 412-439, contends that the Arvanites have shown a marked preference for claiming a role within Greek culture and history for themselves, rather than emphasizing differences.

[22] Titos Jochalas, *Über die Einwanderung der Albaner in Griechenland: Eine zusammenfassende Betrachtung*, München, 1971; Alain Ducellier, *Oi Albanoi stin Ellada, 13-15 Aiona: I Metanasteusi mias Koinotitas*, Athina, 1994.

[23] Berit Wells, Curtis Runnels, *The Berbati-Limnes Archaeological Survey, 1988-1990*, Stockholm, 1996.

[24] Katherine E. Fleming, *The Muslim Bonaparte: Diplomacy and Orientalism in Ali Pasha's Greece*, Princeton, N.J., 1999.

Others have even suggested that they are the descendants of an Ancient Greek clan called the *Seloi*, who were absorbed by the Mycenaean civilization around the time of the Trojan War.[25]

Whatever the case may be, no one in the town is sure how the locals learned to speak *Arvanite*. But be that as it may, the *Arvanite* language in Prosymni has survived till today, spoken now mostly by a generation of elders born in the early to mid 20th century. These elders speak both Greek and, as they call it, *Arvanitika*, but still prefer the *Arvanite* language when communicating with those of their generation. Many of the locals, even those of the oldest generation suggest that the townspeople have always spoken Greek.

However, it is unlikely that both languages had always been spoken. The *Prosimiotes* (*Berbatiotes*) presumably learned Greek when systems of communications and commerce had been extended to neighboring towns and cities as Argos and Nafplion, which are the two major trading towns near the village. We also know that schooling in some form or another had existed in the town since Ottoman times and that some years after Greece's independence a national Greek school had been established in the town.[26]

We must remember though that Prosymni and the other neighboring *Arvanite* speaking villages in the region had not been in an area of expansion of the Greek state in the late 19th and early 20th centuries since they were already included as part of the Greek kingdom after the revolution. Therefore, the *Arvanite* language survived because the state did not try to interfere and assimilate the inhabitants of the *Arvanite* speaking towns and the latter already spoke Greek and identified themselves with being Greek.

Most state resources on the other hand went to schools located in those unclaimed Greek territories in the northern margins of Greece, such as Thessaly, Epirus, and Macedonia. This is where groups had not yet established a national identity for themselves or more simply did not think in terms of belonging to a broader national group.

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[25] Aristides Kollias, *Arvanites ke i Katagogi ton Ellinon*, Athina, 1983. It is unlikely that the people of Prosymni are the descendants of the Seloi since ancient records show that the Seloi inhabited the region of modern day Epirus and not Mycenae.

[26] Georgios Pichios, *Historia tou Berbatiou*, unpublished (2000). Pichios is described by the locals of Berbati as the town historian. Although trained as a lawyer and not as a historian much of the information from Pichios' work helps confirm what other sources say on education in rural Greece in the mid to late 19th century.

Table 1

Education in Modern Greece: A Historical Chronology 1821-1913			
Period	**Type of Education/Origin/ Organization**	**Sponsorship**	**Historical Context**
The first Greek schools 1821-1833	– Informal to more formal – Education in Greece – Attention to primary schools	– Privately financed then state sponsorship	– Greek Revolution – Independence – First national schools
Looking to the West 1833-1862	– Formal education – Based on the French model – Formation of a government department "Ministry of Education" – Paparrigopoulos' *History of Greece*	– State sponsored – Tied to the Greek Church	– Reign of King Otto – Expansion of the Greek school system
Beginning of irredentism 1863-1913	– Expanding schools in Greece – Primary, secondary, higher education	– Greek Government	– Thessaly and Arta (Epirus) become part of Greece (1881) – Rule of King George I (1863-1913) – Struggle for Macedonia (1904) – Crete joins Greece (1908)
Expansion: *Megali Idea* 1909-1913	– Exponential growth of schools with the territorial expansion of Greece	– Greek Government	– Greek irredentism – Balkan Wars (1912-1913)

The above table shows some major historical events in Greece that had an impact on the Greek educational system. The period taken into account stretches from 1821, when Greece declared its independence from the Ottoman Empire, to 1922, when Greece's dreams of territorial expansion ended with the Smyrna catastrophe.

In 1821-1833, the first Greek schools were opened and a distinctly Greek educational system began to take shape. In 1833-1862 the Greek educational model underwent foreign influences, while Greece was forced to adopt a neutral foreign policy and refrain from expanding its territory. By

1863-1908 we have the beginnings of Greek irredentism and the incorporation of major territories in the region to the Greek state. New Greek schools were opened in these areas by the Greek government to help Hellenize non-Greek speakers and unify a Greek population across Greece under a common identity. Finally, 1909-1922 is a period of a continued, but more aggressive Greek expansion into Macedonia, Thrace and Asia Minor. Slavs, Albanian, Turks, Vlachs and Sephardic and Greek Romaniote Jews, along with Greeks, all have a strong presence in the area, and no group dominates. As one can imagine, it was a major challenge for the Greek government and school system to Hellenize these areas. By 1922 the Greek expansion ended with the Smyrna catastrophe. Refugees from Smyrna were forced to relocate to Greece. Moreover, the population swaps between Greece and Turkey forced Greece to accommodate a large immigrant population.

Educational Turning Point: Koraes' and Velestinlis' Vision of Greek Education

In the early 19th century, the French scholar F.C.H. Pouqueville urged the Modern Greeks that the best way for them to achieve their independence was through an education that looked to classical Greece. Pouqueville declared: "Abhorrence is not enough: it is necessary to sap his [the Ottomans'] power, and general information is the only means of ruining that colossus of despotism, by discerning knowledge among the Greeks."[27] Pouqueville as well as other European contemporaries would help shape Rigas Velestinlis' (1757-1798)[28] and Adamandios Koraes' (1748-1833) vision of creating a Modern Greek national state through an educational system that magnified Modern Greece's cultural links to Ancient Greece. These ideas would be generated outside of Greece and brought into Greece largely by Velestinlis and Koraes, who would become Modern Greece's first educational thinkers and help set the foundation of a Greek educational system for much of the late 19th century and early 20th century.

We know today more about Koraes than Velestinlis. Velestinlis' life is glorified by legend and in many ways his legacy has become more mythological than historical. Both Koraes and Velestinlis are linked together as Modern Greece's first intellectual educational nationalists. Both of them lived around the same time. Koraes spent his early life in Smyrna, while Velestinlis spent his childhood in

[27] C.H.F. Pouqueville, *Travels through the Moreas*.

[28] Velestinlis is also known as Rigas Feraios. We know that his surname Velestinlis comes from the name of his home village of Velestino in Thessaly. Later Velestinlis used the name Feraios in several of his writings. It is thought that this name derives from the Ancient Greek city of Pherae, which is near Velestinlis's hometown of Velestino and that Velestinlis may have adopted this name because it sounded more Greek. See C.M. Woodhouse, *Rhigas Velestinlis. The Proto Martyr of the Greek Revolution*, Limni, Evia, 1995.

Thessaly. Both men attended Greek schools in their Greek-speaking communities and came from well-to-do merchant families. They knew of each other during their life times, but never met in person. Koraes found his political and educational inspiration while living in Paris during the tumultuous events of the French revolution, while Velestinlis found his while living in the capital of Wallachia, Bucharest. Both men also understood that education was central in developing the notion of a Greek nation and identity.

Velestinlis is remembered as the first martyr of the Greek Revolution (even though the Greek Revolution began some 15 years after his death).[29] Velestinlis' failed attempts to start a revolution in the late 18th century in Budapest cost him his life by an Austro-Hungarian administration that feared a disruption of Europe's status quo. To Austria-Hungary a nationalist break-up of the Ottoman Empire could inevitably mean a break-up of its own territory since it too was composed of several multiethnic communities.

Velestinlis' vision of a Modern Greece was based more on unity around Christian Orthodoxy rather than classical Greece. Just as Nikolay Danilevsky dreamed in the 19th century of a pan-Slavic state, Velestinlis too envisaged a large multi-ethnic Balkan state united around Christian Orthodoxy.[30] He found it difficult to unite the Modern Greeks around classical Greece because, as Velestinlis put it, "Greece suffer[ed] from two faults: respect for and indifference to Antiquity."[31] But Velestinlis still believed this would be later possible if the Modern Greeks recognized their cultural connections to Ancient Greece. The Modern Greeks would rule Velestinlis' Balkan state since they were already in prominent political and administrative positions within the Ottoman political hierarchy and since a Greek merchant elite controlled much of the commercial wealth in Southeastern Europe.

Velestinlis' state would be likewise inclusive. Orthodox Christians of various linguistic backgrounds would live in harmony and unity and form a powerful European state in the southeastern margins of the European continent. Velestinlis gave priority to the nationalist and psychological preparation of the enslaved Greeks under Ottoman domination. He wanted to raise their moral spirits so that they would have the urge and energy to start rebel war. He also tried to link the Modern Greeks to the great legacy of the Ancient Greeks by focusing on the military and political power shared by the Ancient Greek city-states.[32]

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[29] *Ibidem*.

[30] Leften Stavros Stavrianos, *Balkan Federation: A History of the Movement toward Balkan Unity in Modern Times*, Hamden, CT, 1964.

[31] Konstantinos Dimaras, *A History of Modern Greek Literature*, London, 1974.

[32] Dimitrios Karaberopoulos, *Introduction*, in R. Velestinlis, *Revolutionary Scripts, Revolutionary Proclamation, Human Rights, The Constitution and Thourios*, ed. by Dimitrios Karaberopoulos, Athens, 2002.

Aside from his vision of a large Balkan state, Velestinlis believed that education, specifically educating the youth was the source of liberation for the Modern Greeks. In his articles for "Human Rights" Velestinlis asserts: "Everybody, without any exception, has the duty to be literate. The country has to establish schools for all male and female children in villages, since the education brings the progress, which makes free nations shine. The old historians should be explained in the big towns. French and Italian languages should be taught while the Ancient Greek language must be indispensable."[33]

Velestinlis also believed that education should be open to all citizens. It is unclear though who the "old historians" that students should read are. It certainly leads one to speculate that Velestinlis is referring to the Ancient Greek historians Herodotus and Thucydides, two historians (and their works) that Velestinlis was familiar with. If this is the case, Velestinlis then was seeking to help boost Modern Greece's historical and cultural connection to Ancient Greece. We could also say that this is reaffirmed when Velestinlis suggested that "Ancient Greek" be taught in all the schools. Velestinlis suggestion that the French and Italian languages be taught in schools is also dubious. However, French in the 18th and 19th centuries was the *lingua franca* of European politics and diplomacy. Knowledge of French would therefore prove helpful in international politics and diplomacy. Finally, Velestinlis' reference to Italian may have been an appeal to the Italian speakers living mostly in the islands of the Aegean and Northern Ionian Seas and the island of Malta to join his cause. Velestinlis was aspiring to include these groups as well into his grand Balkan state. Aside from this, both the French and Italian languages are symbols of westernization and modernization, a path that Velestinlis would have liked to see a free Greece eventually move towards.

Velestinlis was advocating a public education system in Greece that would be funded by the Greek government.[34] He found many of the pre-existing Church run Greek schools to be outdated and inadequate and advocated the creation of independent schools based on French and Prussian educational models.[35] He also saw that the Church operated Greek schools were not connected with one another.[36] This posed a problem since the schools varied in their daily instruction (if instruction took place daily). Velestinlis also concluded that the topics being covered were religious in focus and that the teachers, who were often priests, were untrained and uneducated. Nevertheless, compared to the Turkish schools on the Greek mainland, Velestinlis was happy to find that the Greek Church schools were

[33] R. Velestinlis, *Human Rights Article 22*, in vol. *Revolutionary Scripts*, p. 87.

[34] *Ibidem*.

[35] Apostolos Daskalakis, *To Politevma tis Ellinikis Dimokratias tou Rhiga Velestinli*, Athina, 1962.

[36] *Ibidem*.

still better organized, better funded and had better prepared students than the Turkish schools.

While in Vienna in 1790, Velestinlis wrote an educational textbook in Modern Greek titled *Anthology of Physics*,[37] containing 24 chapters, 18 of which were concerned with astronomy, meteorology and terrestrial science, while the last six chapters dealt mostly with biology and zoology. It is still unclear what the purpose of his book was and whether Velestinlis intended it to be published as a standard science textbook for the Greek lower and middle level schools. The book appears to be too difficult to be handled by students at these levels. His audience however seems to be an already educated Greek population. Thus Velestinlis' message is implicit, suggesting to his readers that the Greek educational system was not meeting the high educational standards, methods, and pedagogical practices of the school systems found in the West. Children were thus being neglected. Financial and community support was therefore necessary for the Greek schools and the schools needed to be better organized under a central administrative body. This of course could not happen until there was an independent Greece.

Another important measure for Velestinlis in promoting his vision of an independent Greece was the publication of his *Charta* or *Map of Greece.* His map consisted of twelve pages that when put together showed one big map of Greece, which included much of the Ottoman Balkan territories.[38] His map was enriched with topographic diagrams of important historical events and places from Ancient Greece such as Olympia, Sparta, Salamis, Delphi, Platea, Thermopylae. His map also included lithographs of six coins. Three represent Ancient Greece and the other three, the Byzantine Empire. It is evident that the coins symbolize a Modern Greek identity based on the traditions of classical and Byzantine Greece.

Koraes would also be active in Greece's struggle for independence and the formation of Greece's school system. This may be due to the mere fact that Koraes would live a long life, working tirelessly to see his dream of a bona fide free Greece and Greek school achieved. What is significant about Koraes and his early work is that he was able to convince a large body of intellectual Europeans that the Modern Greeks were culturally linked to the Ancient Greeks. In 1787 Koraes printed four hundred copies of his doctoral dissertation on the medical accomplishments of Hippocrates and distributed his thesis to close friends and associates in Paris. His action served two purposes, to help him gain recognition in European intellectual and academic circles, and to show to European elites that the

[37] R. Velestinlis, *Fisikis Apanthisma*, Vienni, 1790, in L.I. Vranoussis, *Rhigas: Erevna, Synagogi kai Meleti*, Athina, 1953.

[38] R. Velestinlis, *Olympia*, Vienni, 1797, in L.I. Vranoussis, *Rhigas: Erevna, Synagogi kai Meleti*.

Ancient Greek spirit was still very much alive in the Modern Greeks. Koraes commented that "[One French doctor from Montpellier] … read my thesis with pleasure and felt that he learned that the Greeks of today, though subjugated, are still the Greeks of Ancient times …"[39]

Through his unpublished dissertation Koraes found that Europeans were willing to accept Modern Greece's historical and cultural ties to Ancient Greece. In his lecture before the *Société des Observateurs de l'Homme* in 1803, Koraes says: "The [Greek] nation continued in this deplorable state until after the middle of the last century. Yet it was difficult for the attentive observer to discern through the heavy darkness, which covered unhappy Greece that this state of affairs could not last. On the one hand, the very small number of schools where Ancient Greek was taught, in spite of the discouraging imperfection of the teaching methods, in spite of the teachers' ignorance and obstinacy and the small benefit which consequently derived from them, preserved the knowledge of its ancestral tongue like a sacred fire which would one day bring back to life. On the other hand a national vanity, ridiculous in its motives but salutary in its effects, rendered the Greeks as proud of their origin as would be somebody who was descendant, in direct line, of Miltiadis and Themistocles."[40]

According to the above passage, Koraes thought that the Modern Greeks could continue to be intellectual equals to their distant progenitors if it were not for the Church and the Ottoman Turks who decimated Greek learning and Greek intellectual life. The Greek schools that existed moreover failed to preserve the Ancient Greek, but Greek society was still well aware of their ancestral roots. Generally, Koraes' lecture is a plea to the western intellectual society to assist the Modern Greeks in their quest for freedom. He ties the Ancient Greek past to the French enlightened world, pointing out that it is because of Greece that Europeans were able to put away their religious superstitions and find the truth. Moreover, Koraes' *Mémoire sur l'état actuel de la civilisation en Grèce* is also a convincing piece of nationalist propaganda. One of its goals was to dispel any notions in the West that the Modern Greeks were not the descendants of the Ancient Greeks. Koraes achieves this by presenting Greece as a nation that fell from grace only to be reborn once again.

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[39] The original source is found in Mamoukas and Damlas (1881-1887); *Koray's Letters written from Paris, 1788-92*, ed. by P. Ralli, London, 1898. The quotation is also found in G. Ladas, *Vivliografiki Erevna Anaferomeni eis ta Erga tou Adamandiou Korai*, Athina, 1934, p. 40, as well as in Stephen George Chaconas, *Adamandios Korais: A Study in Greek Nationalism*, New York, 1942, p. 27.

[40] Adamandios Koraes, *Report on the Present State of Civilization in Greece*, in vol. *Nationalism in Asia and Africa*, ed. by Elie Kedourie, New York, 1974, pp. 157-158.

Table 2

Koraes' and Velestinlis' Visions of a Greek School System		
	Koraes	**Velestinlis**
Language of instruction	– A "middle way" between *koine* Greek and *demotic* Greek – Need for a literary tradition	– *Demotic* – Mandatory teaching of Ancient Greek – Teaching of French and Italian
Organization	– Centralized, free and public – Universal elementary education – Based on French/Prussian models – Secular in orientation – Considers the Pestalozian and Fellenberg experimental models of education – Considers vocational and professional training	– Centralized, free and public – Universal elementary education – Based on French/Prussian models – Non-secular – Considers religion and Church role in schools – Believes more schools are needed in rural areas
School composition	– Mostly homogenous Greek speakers – The state would include most areas where Greek speakers are found	– Heterogeneous and inclusive of other groups like Muslims – Free representation of all groups, but Greek speakers would be dominant – A large Balkan state would include all groups that were Orthodox Christian
Teaching	– Professional schools to train teachers – Considers the teaching of Ancient Greek history	– Focus on literacy and teaching of Ancient Greek history – No mention of the training of teachers[41]

Koraes certainly believed that the true ancestors of the Modern Greeks were the Ancient Greeks. He referred to the Ancient Greeks as *Hellenes* and the Modern Greeks as *Graikoi* since the term *Graikoi* was older than the word *Hellenes.*[42] The Modern Greeks however often identified themselves as *Romioi*. Koraes strongly disagreed with the use of this word. To Koraes, Modern Greeks should be ashamed of the term *Romioi* since it preserved the memory of Greek subjugation to the Romans. The Byzantine Empire to Koraes was merely a continuation of the Roman

[41] Compiled from Adamandios Korais, *Peri Paidias kai Glossis*, in Idem, *Apanda*, Athina, 1969; R. Velestinlis, *Human Rights Article 22*.

[42] Peter Mackridge, *Byzantium and the Greek Language Question in the Nineteenth Century*, in vol. *Byzantium and the Modern Greek Identity*, ed. by David Ricks, Paul Magdalino, Aldershot, 1998.

Empire and the rule of the Greeks by the Roman-Greeks and the Greek Church.[43] Instead of adopting the ways of the classical Greeks, the Greek-Roman emperors took Greece farther away from the ways of the West into a world of superstition and mysticism.[44]

With regard to education, Koraes considered that the Greek educational system should be free from Church involvement and become purely secular in nature and controlled exclusively by the Greek state. He deemed education important for the preservation of liberty and progress and believed that the promulgation of religious superstitions by the Greek Orthodox Church had left Greek society in the Dark Ages. A European educational model would work best for a free Greek state because it would bring Greece back to the West. A Lancastrian model of military training should also be adopted in order to preserve Greek liberty since Koraes feared that a free Greece could become too militaristic and people's liberties could be challenged.

In 1805, Koraes began working on his *Hellenic Library*. The books in the *Library* consisted of re-edited versions of Ancient Greek works. We could say that Koraes' reason for creating a Hellenic library was both obtaining academic recognition and helping galvanize a Greek speaking public to revolt. Each of Koraes' re-edited Ancient Greek works included a preface, written by Koraes himself, with nationalist rhetorical undertones in Modern Greek.[45] The books were intended for an educated Greek elite living in European urban centers and in the Greek speaking regions of the Ottoman Empire. Koraes hoped however that the Greek speaking elites would become inspired to the point where they would rise up against their Ottoman masters and convince the rural Christian population to join them in the struggle. Coincidently, this was the first major propaganda war in Modern Greek history. In the process it unified ideological themes such as a common history, common blood and common religion.

Koraes believed that the mass publication of his books should go to the general Greek speaking public even though the majority of them could not read and write. Koraes was convinced (as had happened during the French Revolution) that the responsibility lay with the intellectual Greek *bourgeoisie* and Greek wealthy elites to educate the Greek peasant masses about their ancient history and language as only then could Greeks find unity and revolt against their Ottoman masters.

In all, Koraes' *Hellenic Library* consisted of twenty six volumes. The *Library* would become the greatest accomplishment in early Modern Greek literature.[46] By

[43] Adamandios Korais, *Atakta*, vol. I and II, Parisiis, 1828.

[44] *Ibidem.*

[45] Stephen George Chaconas, *Adamandios Korais*.

[46] Panagiotis Chiotis, *The Enlightenment Tradition in Greece. The Case of Adamandios Koraes and Evangelos Papanoutsos*, unpublished dissertation, Fordham University, 1991.

the early 19th century, copies were sent to Peloponnesus, several of the Greek islands and some of the Greek speaking cities in Asia Minor. Equally important was the financial support that Koraes obtained from a few wealthy Greek merchants who were also interested in seeing a free Greece.

Koraes' movement however did not gain much support form the *Phanariotes*, the elite Greeks of the Ottoman Empire, which included church dignitaries, Christian notable and prominent Greek and Hellenized families. Koraes' goals through mass publication and information in the end were not the fuse that lit the revolutionary fire and brought the revival of the Greek nation based on its Ancient Greek past. However, he set the Modern Greek historiographic tone for a post-colonial independent Greece that sought to develop a national history and a national school system that would transmit to its members a common national Greek consciousness and identity.[47] Olga Augustinos states: "The envisioned [Greek] revival was to take place in historical time, more precisely, at the juncture where the imagined past, distant yet glittering, met the experienced present, palpable yet tenebrous."[48] Although Koraes' library was admired by the Greek educated elites and portrayed by the mostly illiterate rural Greek speaking communities as a vestibule to sacred and ancient knowledge, the school would also need to assist in the process of reviving a Greek identity.

Furthermore, Koraes found lexicography to be *a priori* in developing a strong Greek consciousness. A Greek lexicography, in other words, needed to be developed before developing a national history. What this means is fairly simple, the Greek language had evolved not just because of the corruption of the language by foreign words, but also because of the lack of a modern literary tradition. Greeks therefore needed first to agree on a language – a language not merely for the sake of conveying information or for communicating people's common needs.[49]

[47] Koraes along with his financier, Michael Zosimas, founded lay schools, independent from church control in Chios and Smyrna. He also structured the learning in many of these schools around the pedagogical ideas of Pestalozzi and Fellenberg. Koraes personally trained many of the teachers in the schools. The schools were far too few to have any major impact, however they consciously sought to teach Greek-speaking students that they were connected to the Ancient Greeks.

[48] Olga Augustinos, *Philhellenic Promises and Hellenic Visions: Korais and the Discourse of the Enlightenment*, in vol. *Hellenisms: Culture, Identity, and Ethnicity from Antiquity to Modernity*, ed. by Katerina Zacharia, Aldershot, 2008, p. 169.

[49] The Greek language had gone through drastic changes after the expansion of the Ottoman Empire into Greek speaking territories. Linguistically the transformed Greek had taken words and phrases from Latin, Albanian, Slavic and Turkish. After the collapse of the Byzantine Empire in 1453 many Greek speakers left and relocated to other parts of Europe, bringing with them the vernacular Greek spoken before the fall of the Byzantine Empire. It is still questionable the way these early Greek refugees tried to preserve the Greek language. The language that did emerge after independence was Modern Greek or *Nea Hellinika* (New Greek). Modern Greek is

Greek identity had to be defined by participation in the Greek language, its literature and the entire range of effects it produced. Unlike Velestinlis' advocacy for the teaching of *demotic* Greek, Koraes' solution was the "middle way," a form of Greek cleansed from the incorporation of foreign words. That way the language would be spoken by a wide range of Greek speakers, from the majority of *demotic* speakers in rural and isolated communities to the more purified speakers in larger cities. Once a literary tradition was established Modern Greeks could better link themselves to their ancient past.

Koraes and Velestinlis thus both represent influential Modern Greek figures that attempted to develop a national Greek consciousness, for a Greek speaking society for the primary purpose of independence. The vehicle that would stimulate this movement was for both of them the school. But more importantly both Koraes and Velestinlis thought that the teaching of a common Greek language and a common Greek history would unite a Greek society that was uncertain of its historical past.

Early Educational Challenges

After independence, schooling in most of Greece was reorganized and administered by the central government. Even during the early years of the struggle for independence, the leaders of the nation turned their thoughts to the establishment of schools.[50] It was understood that the Greek people had to be instructed by intellectuals in order to begin the long process of re-education after centuries of intellectual deprivation. Some educational leaders as Adamandios Koraes were convinced that the Greeks had been liberated twenty years too early since they had not reached the requisite level of education.[51] Koraes and Ioannis Kapodistrias were also interested in the experimental schools of Pestalozzi and

categorized in two distinct categories. The first is the *katharevousa* (purified) and the second is the *demotic* (vernacular). *Katharevousa* is etymologically the nearest form of Modern Greek to resemble Ancient or Attic Greek. Supporters of *katharevousa* sought to purge the Greek language from foreign words and phrases. *Demotic* was the common Greek spoken by the population in Greece. The debate over the use of *katharevousa* and *demotic* would be in the political spotlight of the Greek educational reforms of the 1970's. A Greek politician is quoted saying: "Without the study of ancient learning we would have been 'balkanized.'" The agreement reached was to teach all school lessons in *demotic*, but have mandatory courses in Ancient Greek in the upper grades. See Wendy Moleas, *The Development of the Greek Language*, 2nd ed., London, 2005, "H Kathimerini," February 8, 1976; Andreas A. Kazamias, *The Politics of Educational Reform in Greece: Law 309/1976*, in "Comparative Education Review," 1978.

[50] *Balkan Society in the Age of Greek Independence*, ed. by Richard Clogg, London, 1981.

[51] Robert Shannan Peckham, *National Histories, Natural States: Nationalism and the Politics of Place in Greece*, London, 2001, p. 17.

Fellenberg that were functioning at the time in the United States and Switzerland.[52] They had briefly considered adopting these progressive educational models, but understood that Greece needed first to nationalize its schools before it could open its own experimental schools.[53]

Table 3

Year	National Population	Primary Schools	Hellenic Schools
1833	NA	NA	NA
1836	751,000	113	NA
1840	850,000	252	54
1846	968,988	317	NA
1850	1,005,966	NA	75
1855	1,053,515	450	81
1860	1,089,886	668	87
1865	1,375,043	974	123
1869	1,440,920	1194	114
1873	1,528,298	1268	136
1879	1,679,470	1447	167
1889	2,187,208	2278	NA
1900	2,504,070	3334	287
1905	2,594,761	3504	NA
1910	2,684,090	3678	282

Compiled from J. Gennadius, *A Sketch of the History of Education in Greece, ed. cit.*, pp. 23-29; George Milo Wilcox, *Education in Greece, ed. cit.*; Christina Koulouri, *Dimensions idéologiques de l'historicité en Grèce, ed. cit.*, p. 499.

Before 1820, there had been a few schools in Greece, but the revolution had brought education to an abrupt halt.[54] In 1830 there was practically no formal education.[55] As early as 1822 the first Greek National Assembly, which was held in Epidaurus in the Argolis region of Peloponnesus, advocated a free elementary

[52] See M.Th. Lascaris, *Autobiographia tou Ioannou Kapodistria*, Athina, 1940 and Nikos Kastanis, *American Pestalozianism in Greek Mathematical Education 1830-1836*, in "BSHM Bulletin: Journal of the British Society for the History of Mathematics," vol. 22, 2007, pp. 120-133.

[53] M.Th. Lascaris, *op. cit.*

[54] J. Gennadius, *A Sketch of the History of Education in Greece: A Paper Presented to the World Federation of Education Associations Conference in Edinburgh*, Edinburgh, 1925. Most of Gennadius' statistics are from 1913.

[55] R.A.H. Bickford-Smith, *Greece under King George*, s.l., 1893.

education for all Greek citizens. The Assembly's report submitted in 1824 called for three grade levels in schools: elementary, middle, and higher.[56] The elementary schools were divided into two levels, followed by the Hellenic schools of three years followed by four years of study in the gymnasia.[57] By 1830, the Greek government was still bankrupt from its revolutionary war. Most of its financial support came from philhellenic groups in Western Europe and from Greek businessmen living abroad.[58] The Greek government was given the difficult task of expanding its humble educational system and creating a new one that would help Greece gain some economic and social security. According to some figures there were seventy-one elementary schools in Greece with 6,121 pupils.[59] The national budget allocated about 141,120 francs in 1829 for its schools and 220,500 francs in 1830.

In 1833, after the arrival of the first king of Greece Otto of Bavaria (1833-1862), important measures were taken for the expansion of Greek education. On February 6, 1833, the *Primary and Communal Education Law* was enacted. Another law in 1834 established compulsory education for all children between the ages of five and twelve. In 1834 a training school for teachers was opened.[60] According to one observer, "In 1840 there were 252 elementary schools with 22,000 scholars, under government control and dependent upon government support, and private schools with an additional 10,000 scholars, a total of four percent of the population."[61] The schools naturally grew in number as the years went by, as the population in Greece grew. During the rule of King George I (1863-1913) Greece had the greatest increase in the number of schools opened. This is best illustrated in Table 3 which shows that by 1900 the total number of public elementary schools in Greece was 3,334. The total number of students in both elementary and Hellenic schools was 216,883.[62]

As a general mission, the goals of the first schools were to create an elementary literate citizenry that would be able to carry out the simple task of expanding the economy in agricultural and commercial terms and of uniting the Greek people around a sense of belonging to a common nation.[63]

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[56] George Milo Wilcox, *Education in Greece*, unpublished dissertation, Columbia University, 1933.

[57] R.A.H. Bickford-Smith, *op. cit.*

[58] Irini Sariouglou, *Turkish Policy towards Greek Education in Istanbul 1923-1974: Secondary Education and Cultural Identity*, Athens, 2004.

[59] R.A.H. Bickford-Smith, *op. cit.*

[60] *Ibidem.*

[61] *Ibidem.*

[62] Christina Koulouri, *Dimensions idéologiques de l'historicité en Grece (1834-1914)*, Bruxelles-Paris, 1991, p. 499.

[63] Kalliniki Dendrinou Antonakaki, *Greek Education: Reorganization of the Administrative Structure*, New York, 1955.

Table 4

GDP per Capita in Selected European Countries (1820-1913)			
	1820	**1870**	**1913**
Austria	1,218	1,863	3,465
Belgium	1,319	2,697	4,220
France	1,230	1,876	3,485
Germany	1,058	1,821	3,648
United Kingdom	1,707	3,191	4,921
Greece	**666**	**913**	**1,592**

Compiled from Angus Maddison, *The World Economy*, vol. II *Historical Statistics*, Paris, 2006, p. 185.

From the time of the independence to 1913 Greece lagged behind economically when compared to other European countries, as illustrated in Table 4. This drawback was primarily due to the fact that Greece was an agriculturally based society immediately after independence all the way through most of the 20th century. Countries like France, Germany and the United Kingdom and to some extent Austria and Belgium had shifted from an agriculturally based society to an industrial society as early as the late 18th century. Many of them had also profited from European colonial expeditions in Africa and Asia in the 1800's.

Table 5

Illiteracy Rates in Europe (1900-1913)			
Country	**Male (%)**	**Female (%)**	**Population (in millions) (1913)**
France	6.9	9.3	65.0
Belgium	7.6	9.0	7.6
Hungary	13.0	17.1	7.8
Italy	25.0	31.0	41.4
Bulgaria	37.2	62.8	4.7
Greece	**37.4**	**69.8**	**5.4**

The illiteracy rates were compiled from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th edition, London, New York, 1929. The population census was compiled from Angus Maddison, *The World Economy*, *ed. cit.*, vol. II, p. 183.

Similarly, Greece would also lag behind in its literacy rates between the years 1900-1913 as shown in Table 5. The more industrialized nations such as France, Belgium, Hungary and Italy had a larger literate population than Greece and Bulgaria. This may be because both Greece and Bulgaria became independent states in the 19th century. Moreover, both countries did not nationalize their school systems until after having obtained their independence.