

# The scientification of religiosity and the emotionalisation of morality in preschool education: Educators' discourse in Greece (1964-1974)

**Manolis Kounalakis**

University of Crete

## Abstract

This study attempts to highlight how the concept of religiosity influenced the formation of kindergartens (*Nipiagogeio*) and the profile of kindergarten teachers during the period of the military dictatorship of the colonels in Greece (1964-1974). The research material consists of articles from the scientific journal entitled "Scientific Forum of Educators in Greece." This was the only scientific journal published at that time in Greece by the Greek Teachers' Federation. Methodologically, an innovative attempt was made to enrich the historical hermeneutical methodology, which was based on the role of emotions as key factors not only in the interpretation but also in the production of historical evidence. The study's conclusions emphasize the promotion of desirable emotional models as the main argument for promoting religiosity as a structural element in kindergarten.

Questo studio cerca di evidenziare come il concetto di religiosità abbia influenzato la formazione degli asili (*Nipiagogeio*) e il profilo degli insegnanti di scuola materna durante il periodo della dittatura militare dei colonnelli in Grecia (1964-1974). Il materiale di ricerca è costituito da articoli tratti dalla rivista scientifica intitolata "Forum scientifico degli educatori in Grecia". Si trattava dell'unica rivista scientifica pubblicata all'epoca in Grecia dalla Federazione degli insegnanti greci. Dal punto di vista metodologico, è stato compiuto un tentativo innovativo di arricchire la metodologia ermeneutica storica, basata sul ruolo delle emozioni come fattori chiave non solo nell'interpretazione, ma anche nella produzione di prove storiche. Le conclusioni dello studio sottolineano la promozione di modelli emotivi desiderabili come argomento principale per promuovere la religiosità come elemento strutturale nella scuola materna.

**Keywords:** religiosity; emotionalisation; preschool education; liberal Greek educational reform (1964-1967); Greek dictatorship (1967-1974)

**Parole chiave:** religiosità; emotività; educazione prescolare; riforma liberale dell'istruzione greca (1964-1967); dittatura greca (1967-1974)

Manolis Kounalakis – *The scientification of religiosity and the emotionalisation of morality in preschool education: Educators' discourse in Greece (1964-1974)*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.60923/issn.1970-2221/23349>

## 1. Introduction

This article seeks to examine the development of preschool education and the profile of preschool teachers in Greece from 1964 to 1974. This period encompasses two distinct yet reformative phases in the history of modern Greek education: firstly, the liberal reformist era from 1964 to 1967, characterized by the progressive changes initiated by the Union of the Center government. This phase aimed to modernize and democratize Greek education, influenced by post-war European trends, pressing national educational needs, and a shifting political landscape (Foukas, 2018). Secondly, the era of the April dictatorship (1967-1974) marked a counter-revolutionary shift towards conservative restoration, with educational policies dominated by a nationalist agenda. This included elements of militarization, the promotion of patriotic ideals, conservative principles rooted in Greek and Christian civilization, and a highly centralized approach to educational governance (Papadakis & Tzagkarakis, 2024, p. 308).

A central theme of this research is the role of religiosity in shaping preschool education. The interplay between religion and education has been extensively analyzed by historians of education, particularly concerning the type of citizen that educational systems aim to cultivate. Studies have demonstrated that religious education significantly influences citizenship, especially in areas related to morality and participation in activities that promote national identity (Crook et al., 2011).

## 2. Theoretical framework

### 2.1 *The conceptual content of the term emotion*

Any conceptual definition within the field of the history of emotions requires a precise explanation of the main defining term, specifically, the content of the concept of emotion in historical research methodology. Such an endeavour largely involves the science of psychology, but progress in historiography over the past 50 years, drawing on specific characteristics from the social sciences, has been so rapid that we can define the term "emotion" in a concise way, as long as we do not deviate from what is necessary for historical research methodology.

Terms such as "emotions" and "feelings" are often used interchangeably, yet they possess nuanced differences. A foundational reference frequently cited by scholars in the history of emotions is the Aristotelian perspective, which, despite being addressed in international scholarship years ago, remains a valuable framework for further exploration.

According to Aristotle, the concept of "passion" closely aligns with what we now refer to as emotion. Although a detailed analysis of Aristotelian discourse is beyond the scope of this paper, it is crucial to examine the relationship between passion and the process of judgment. Emotions, or passions, influence our judgment of situations, often accompanying them with pleasurable or painful experiences. In Aristotle's view, emotions such as desire, anger, fear, courage, envy, joy, friendship, hatred, lust, jealousy, and compassion are prioritized. These emotions interact with our judgment in two primary ways: either emotions alter our judgment, or judgment is a component of the emotional experience (Leighton, 1996, pp 1-6).

The primary terms of interest are "emotion" and "feelings." There is a tendency to equate these terms, suggesting that emotions are affective states oriented toward a feeling-centered perspective. Alternatively, another perspective posits that emotions encompass a broader state that includes judgment, decision-making, and action. In this view, emotions are intentional states of mind directed toward action and are thus approached more cognitively, with a thought-centered perception. Interpretations of these concepts are not absolute, as significant variations exist depending on the theoretical framework employed. For instance, behaviorists associate feelings with the

physical experience of a change in mental state, while emotions are linked to the representation of this change resulting from a stimulus (Deigh, 2009).

Conversely, if we accept that emotions are intricately linked to thought and subsequent action, it prompts an exploration of their connection to reason and rationality. Some perspectives align emotions closely with rationality, while others do not support such a linkage. This issue has been a focal point for behaviorists, cognitive psychologists, and neuroscience advocates concerning emotions (Elster, 2009).

The discussion becomes particularly intriguing when viewed from a social perspective, which questions whether the expression of emotions is an innate process or a result of interactions within one's social environment (Mesquita & Parkinson, 2024). Here, the primary distinction lies in the understanding that emotions are the lived experiences of the structures of feelings. Consequently, feelings are transformed into emotions, underscoring a fascinating relationship between the body and the mind. This relationship illustrates how physical experiences are mediated by symbolic structures within society, influencing individuals' minds and ultimately enabling the physical articulation of feelings (Burkitt, 2002).

From the debate on whether emotions are innate, three models have emerged, which we will briefly outline. The model of distinct emotions, developed from the 1960s onwards, posits that certain innate affect programs shape basic emotions. Emotions such as surprise, joy, sadness, anger, fear, and disgust are highlighted in the literature, while others are considered to arise from combinations of these basic emotions. Their manifestation is thus linked to neurological reactions occurring in specific brain regions, independent of social and cultural influences (Ekman, 1971).

In contrast, appraisal theory posits that emotions are not innate but are instead shaped by an individual's cognitive appraisal of an event or situation. This theory emphasizes that an individual's interpretation of an event holds more significance than the event itself and may not necessarily involve any physical or physiological arousal. Once this interpretation is established, emotions of arousal emerge, prompting behavioral tendencies (Siemer & Reisenzein, 2007).

The last model, the dimensional model of emotions, is grounded in the concept of distinct emotions, but also examines emotions across various dimensions. Proponents of this model argue that emotions influence one another based on the dimensions in which they are expressed. The three fundamental dimensions are valence (the degree of pleasantness or unpleasantness), arousal (the level of apathy or enthusiasm), and dominance (the degree of control). This model suggests that emotions arise from combinations of values within these three dimensions, rather than from distinct and innate emotions (Metts & Planalp, 2011, pp. 290-292).

Based on the above, in historical terms, it is more practical to use the term "emotions," as it aligns with the literature and is more closely associated with the secondary level of experiencing an emotional state. Emotions represent a point of action that is more observable and interpretable by historians, whereas feelings are the initial emergence of an emotional state. When examining historical science through the lens of emotion, it is crucial to consider that any cultural change, whether large or small, significantly impacts the content of concepts of interest (Frevert, 2011).

## **2.2 History of emotions: Preliminary remarks**

The burgeoning interest in emotions and feelings within historical research emerged prominently during the 'cultural turn' in historiography of the 1960s and 1970s. Emotions were increasingly recognized as a vital interpretive parameter, facilitating the development of new research fields. This intellectual shift can be traced back

to influential figures such as the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga, whose 1919 work, “*The Autumn of the Middle Ages*,” laid early groundwork. In the late 1930s, Norbert Elias further advanced this discourse with “*The Civilizing Process*,” emphasizing emotional states like shame and embarrassment as critical to historical interpretation. Subsequently, Lucien Febvre, co-founder of the Annales School, significantly contributed to this trend with his article “*La sensibilité et l'histoire: Comment reconstituer la vie affective d'autrefois?*” published in the Annales journal, thereby introducing this innovative approach to the academic community.

The exploration of emotions in historical research did not cease in the 1970s; rather, the cultural turn amplified its acceptance. Since 1980, the epistemological and methodological foundations of this trend have been articulated through two key concepts. The first, introduced in 1985 by social historian Peter Stearns, founder and editor of the Journal of Social History, is termed “emotionality.” This methodology considers social representations crucial for defining the content of an emotional state, positing that societal expectations of an emotion are more influential in understanding or adopting it than the emotion’s intrinsic content (Stearns & Stearns, 1985). An illustrative example of this methodology is the book “*Jealousy: The Evolution of an Emotion in American History*” (1986). The author examines jealousy as a social emotion that evolves over time, tracing the development of emotionology throughout American history. Prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, jealousy was viewed as a reprehensible trait within family relationships. However, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it became more closely linked with the concept of love. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the book documents a broader societal effort to dissociate jealousy from childhood, under the premise that it could hinder a child’s emotional development. Additionally, the exploration of jealousy beyond the confines of familial and marital relationships is particularly noteworthy (Stearns, 1989).

The second theoretical concept revisits the issue of social influence on the perception of emotions in historical research and is presented by medievalist B. Rosenwein. In a seminal 2002 article in *The American Historical Review* titled “*Worrying about Emotions in History*,” Rosenwein introduced the term “emotional community.” This concept treats people as communities and seeks to uncover systems of emotions, focusing on what each community values as important, beneficial, or harmful to its emotional landscape. This holistic approach considers multiple factors in the expression and manifestation of emotions (Rosenwein, 2002).

Rosenwein further emphasizes in a subsequent book that this methodology does not reveal what individuals felt, but rather what the creators of historical documents believed. It is challenging to identify independent manifestations of emotion, as only the codes, rules, and norms of a given era are discernible. Moreover, a historical period cannot be characterized by a singular mode of emotional expression. Each micro-group interprets emotions differently, with meanings that often shift and are always grounded in the community’s value system (Rosenwein, 2006).

### **2.3 Greek Kindergartens (*Nipiagogeia*) and the training of kindergarten teachers (1964-1974)**

In the post-war period, political efforts to renew and consolidate the kindergarten institution in our country progressed slowly. A significant milestone was the enactment of Royal Decree 494/1962, which played a crucial role in establishing the institution and updating the curriculum and timetable, which had remained largely unchanged since the 1930s. The era of liberal educational reform led by the Center-Left did not extend to preschool education, likely due to its overlap with the implementation period of the aforementioned Royal Decree. Consequently, time was needed to adapt to and review the new circumstances, making it inappropriate to disrupt the existing framework.

Regarding religiosity, it is important to note that the Royal Decree on the purpose of kindergarten references religious and national beliefs together, supporting their connection to Greek Christian traditions without explicitly mentioning Orthodoxy. Nonetheless, during this period, the official religion of the Greek state and education was clearly defined in the 1952 Constitution, which remained in effect until 1968, as the Eastern Orthodox Church of Christ. Two illustrative excerpts are provided, the first from the 1952 Constitution and the second from Royal Decree 494/1962:

*“The prevailing religion in Greece is that of the Eastern Orthodox Church of Christ. The Orthodox Church of Greece, acknowledging our Lord Jesus Christ as its head, is inseparably united in doctrine with the Great Church of Constantinople and all other co-religious Churches of Christ...”*

*“The kindergarten’s mission is to support the holistic development of young children, fostering both their physical and mental abilities in a balanced manner. It also aims to instill religious and national values rooted in Greek Christian traditions. Religious education is integrated through the creation of a spiritual environment, incorporating prayer, storytelling from the Old and New Testaments, and nurturing feelings of love for God and one’s neighbor.”*

During the dictatorship period from April 1967 to 1974, institutional changes affecting kindergartens were minimal. It is important to note that the connection between preschool education and religiosity was not often emphasized in official documents. However, it is pertinent to mention that the 1968 Constitution maintained alignment with the principles of the Eastern Orthodox Church of Christ, with an added emphasis on its obligatory nature. The first article of the Constitution stated: *“The prevailing religion in Greece is that of the Eastern Orthodox Church of Christ. Proselytism and any other interference with the prevailing religion are prohibited.”* In the broader context of education, not limited to kindergarten, the term “Hellenic Christianity,” prevalent in the pre-dictatorship era, has been supplanted by “Hellenic and Christian culture,” which underscores a heightened focus on Christianity. Article 17 exemplifies this shift:

*“Education... aims at the moral and spiritual development and the cultivation of national consciousness among young people, grounded in the values of Greek and Christian civilization.”*

Regarding kindergarten, educational policy has remained largely unchanged, with only two general legislative provisions addressing it, neither of which impact its specific educational and pedagogical practices. However, the foundational compulsory law 129/1967, which outlines the framework for the dictatorial counter-revolution, promptly redefines the purpose of kindergarten to align with the regime’s standards. Article 6 specifies:

*“The purpose of the nursery school is to support the physical and mental development of young children through suitable games, activities, and exercises, the cultivation of good habits and personal hygiene, order and obedience, as well as facilitating smooth adaptation to group life.”*

The remaining sections of the compulsory law do not address provisions related to preschool education, except for the organizational structure a kindergarten may adopt based on the number of enrolled preschoolers. The subsequent institutional text providing a regulatory framework for the educational process is Legislative Decree 651/1970. The first article of this decree defines general education in the country as encompassing both primary and secondary levels. According to Article 21, primary education is further divided into preschool and elementary education. This article also updates the purpose of kindergartens, stating that they offer an environment conducive to the physical, mental, social, and linguistic development of young children. Article 22 specifies that the appointment of kindergarten teachers requires a degree from the School of Kindergarten Teachers Training Institution, or a degree from the one-year kindergarten teacher training departments within the Teacher Training Institution, or a high school diploma accompanied by a special diploma, or a degree from a foreign university or specialized institute related to preschool education.

*“to complement family education and assist in the smooth development of the child’s physical, mental, and spiritual abilities. More specifically, it aims to: a) create a suitable environment for the social, moral, aesthetic, and religious education of the child, b) promote language development, c) cultivate skills and senses, d) the acquisition of basic knowledge of the immediate natural and human environment and good habits”* (Education Committee, 1974, p. 36).

Beneath the dictatorial regime’s meticulous approach to preschool education lay a broader ideological objective for Greek kindergartens. During the dictatorship, preschool education was instrumental in promoting the doctrine of national rebirth. Institutions for young children transcended their traditional role as mere care facilities, becoming pivotal in instilling values of discipline, religion, and patriotism from the earliest stages of human development (Mousena & Kainourgiou, 2015).

### **3. Research questions**

#### ***3.1 General question***

The general question of this study is as follows: how did the concept of religiosity influence the development of kindergarten and the training of kindergarten teachers during the period 1964-1974, as documented in the pages of the Scientific Forum of the Teacher?

#### ***3.2 Specific research questions***

1. What are the fundamental characteristics of the presence of religiosity in preschool education, as depicted in the issues of the Scientific Forum of the Teacher during the period 1964-1974?
2. What role does the concept of religiosity play within the political and scientific context of the period under review (1964-1974)?

### **4. Methodology**

#### ***4.1 The sample***

The research sample consists of a broad corpus of written documents. It comprises all issues of the Scientific Forum of the Teacher, which is the scientific journal of the Greek Teachers’ Federation, published between 1964 and 1974. Specifically, 42 issues of this scientific journal were studied, containing 386 articles, written mostly by teachers and education officials of that time, as well as a few educational researchers. It should be noted that this scientific journal mainly refers to issues related to primary school. Nevertheless, there are individual articles that deal exclusively with preschool education, as the Greek Teachers’ Federation is a powerful institution for advocating educational and labor issues not only for primary schools, but for primary education in general.

#### ***4.2 Main epistemological direction***

This study proposes a methodology centered on the concept of emotion as the primary lens for interpreting documentary material. Epistemologically, it seeks to apply an enhanced version of historical hermeneutical methodology, incorporating new interpretative parameters. While this paper does not aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of the interpretive philosophical method or its methodological integration into historiography, it is essential to briefly highlight the aspects we retain and seek to expand upon in the proposed methodology.

A key scientific principle is the notion of interpretation, which does not adhere to predefined objective concepts. Instead, the goal is to reconstruct the authors' intended meanings within their historical context. This approach aligns with Husserl's concept of *Lebenswelt* in phenomenology, which refers to the researchers' lived experiences that precede and influence interpretation (Kopf, 2025). Heidegger, Husserl's student, further developed this idea by exploring intentionality, asserting that our self-understanding is shaped by individual intentional acts (Okrent, 2000, p. 205). Consequently, the researcher's context and the era in which the research is conducted play a crucial role, encompassing the prejudices, experiences, social background, and cultural references that influence interpretation, as well as the very enactment of the historical event.

The second key aspect of this epistemology that warrants our attention is the perspective from which authorial intentionality is examined. The analysis of documentary material primarily employed linguistic methodologies. Theorists such as Gadamer and Ricoeur introduced pivotal concepts, including the historicity of language, which links understanding to the medium of tradition and language, and textual semiotics and discourse analysis, which shift the focus from syntax to the world of the text (Maboloc, 2024).

The third aspect pertains to the influence of psychology on the interpretative process. Initial references by Schleiermacher to this school of thought emphasized two fundamental axes of communication and interpretation: the linguistic and the psychological. Gadamer later diverged from this approach, while Ricoeur, particularly through the concept of "distanciation", reoriented the focus of interpretation from the author to the text, which ultimately serves as a medium for self-understanding (Bühler, 2001, p. 154).

Contemporary researchers are increasingly interested in the psychological state of the individual, incorporating elements of interpretative methods. Central to our epistemological perspective is the concept of emotion. The foundational principle of this view posits that emotion is the primary code in the interpretative process. In essence, perception necessitates the experience of emotion. Emotions impact the mind and are also experienced physically, thereby influencing the interpretation of texts, situations, and environments. Moreover, they can impose moral judgments, as they inherently contain elements of judgment (Kearney, 2021; Ahmed, 2013; Nussbaum, 2001).

Building on the preceding discussion, we present a concise definition of the conceptual framework underpinning the epistemological-methodological approach introduced in this research, termed emotion-driven historical hermeneutical analysis for the history of education. The first core principle posits that emotions are linguistically mediated yet culturally intelligible states that convey evaluative content. The second principle asserts that emotions serve not merely as a means of expression but as interpretive agents, performing interpretive functions rather than merely reflecting meaning. The final principle addresses the types of emotional acts identifiable by historians of education. We categorize these into three types: a) Bodily emotions, which encompass atmospheres and general "moods" within a space (non-linguistic); b) Expressive emotions, which are feelings embedded and encoded within language, narrative, genre, etc. (emotion as a mediated factor); and c) Social/political emotions, which include emotional regimes, collective moods, and the circulation of feelings within society.

## 5. Presentation of research findings

Between 1964 and 1967, during a period of liberal reforms, the journal featured an increased number of articles focused exclusively on kindergarten teachers and early childhood education, with a total of four pertinent articles identified. These articles examine the core mission of kindergarten and the ideal attributes of educators. Notably, the religious aspect is absent from these discussions. Kindergarten is acknowledged as a crucial stage for facilitating a seamless cognitive and socio-emotional transition to primary education. A significant finding

of our research is the heightened emphasis on the emotional component in kindergarten settings. The articles employ precise linguistic terminology, reflecting a sophisticated pedagogical approach to emotional situations. The ideal educator is characterized by affection and kindness towards young children. Additionally, the importance of nurturing social emotions in young children is highlighted, as it contributes to character development. The concept of "linguistic emotion" is introduced in the context of language skill development. These concepts are utilized to legitimize the cultivation of moral consciousness in young children and to advance patriotic objectives. In essence, the development of social skills for navigating emotional situations underscores the moral and formative role of kindergarten. The following excerpts are illustrative:

*"The systematic cultivation of emotional and volitional abilities regarding "goodness and virtue" constitute the twofold mission of the Kindergarten. This will be achieved... by stimulating and appropriately nurturing the imagination and social emotions with the ultimate goal of character building. 3) Through the cultivation of linguistic emotion... 4) Through the creation of social experience, which is acquired through moralistic stories and fairy tales appropriate for this age group".<sup>1</sup>*

*"The purpose of kindergarten is to teach children to speak our language correctly... To inspire in them a love for our country, our customs and traditions, to inspire in them a spirit of discipline, cooperation and understanding".<sup>2</sup>*

The emergence of the April dictatorship marks the second and most pivotal phase analyzed in this study. Over this seven-year span, seven pertinent articles were identified. In six of these, the discourse predominantly adopts a religiously-centered approach to preschool education. Specifically, four articles focus exclusively on this theme, while the remaining two make explicit references to it. The ideological promotion of the dictatorship, particularly through the forceful educational counter-reform, appears to have a direct impact on the subject matter of the articles under review. Although religiosity and Christianity were previously notable in discussions on preschool education, they became central and fundamental issues during this period. The advocacy for religious education in these articles is grounded in two main points: the establishment of a scientific basis and its connection to the emotional development of children. The scientification of religious education and religiosity is achieved by integrating Christian principles with classical educational studies, a concept heavily promoted during the seven-year dictatorship and encapsulated in the notion of Hellenic-Christian culture and education. The emotional aspects used to legitimize religious education are tied to the moralization of pedagogy. The following excerpts are illustrative:

*"Religiousness is a necessity that belongs to the fundamental components of the soul. It is the spiritual impulse of man toward action, communication, and expression. Religious emotion is universal... Psychology teaches that it is an innate tendency of man... Moral rules appear as divine commandments, and transgression is a sin, while obedience is a reward. For children, prayer becomes, over time, the means by which they overcome their petty selfishness... The stages of its development are parallel to those of religious sentiment".<sup>3</sup>*

*"It is undeniable that this encounter, which led to a union, was greatly facilitated by the existing affinity between Greek and Christian education in terms of their perception of God, man, and the world... The ultimate goal of Greek education is to become as much God like as possible... The pedagogical imperative of Hellenism is "become what you have learned," while that of Christianity is the pursuit of man's liberation from man-animal and his turn toward man-God. In other words, the goal of both is the formation of personality within the framework of Greek and Christian civilization. The pursuit of Greek education to form man into "kalon kagathon" (good man) is reinforced by Christian love and aims to educate man in morality and autonomous personality in the light of the Greek-Christian ideal".<sup>4</sup>*

Since 1967, religiosity and Christianity have been associated with an additional dimension. A punitive perspective on faith has emerged, where religious beliefs are directly linked to political and ideological stances, fostering

a divisive attitude characterized by ultra-conservative traits and a lack of acceptance for diversity and otherness. In essence, Christianity is portrayed as the sole path to achieving educational ideals. The following excerpts exemplify this perspective:

*"God is the soul of the world, the source of moral, religious, and aesthetic ideals... Everyone prefers religious teaching, because it makes people more Christian and moral, leads them to the truth, uplifts them, comforts them... The Turks, being uncivilized, uneducated, and barbaric, have never ceased to stir up hatred against the Greeks and all Greek civilization. They are endowed with the most barbaric and animalistic instincts of the Tatars of the steppes, and with these they write their history, mercenaries that they are. They will be punished as they deserve. Such punishment, see what the communists suffered, those who desecrated the sacred and the holy... The gods punish the irreverent. But who are the irreverent? The communists".<sup>5</sup>*

During the second period of the Greek dictatorship (1969-1974), only one article was identified that explicitly linked religiosity as a fundamental aspect of modern kindergarten education. The distinctions are evident. While Greek and Christian cultural values are established as the foundation of the educational framework, it is notable that preschool education is structured around ten core objectives, with only one pertaining to religious education. A significant shift in the ideological approach to religious education is observed in its direct association with the concepts of love and acceptance, as reflected in the transition from the term 'religiosity' to 'religious studies.' The following excerpt is illustrative:

*"Easy 'remote acquaintance' and close communication with people of different faiths and races (Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Germans, Americans, Japanese, etc.) provides opportunities for learning about religion and for international understanding and love".<sup>6</sup>*

## 6. Research conclusions

The findings of this research indicate that the concept of religiosity was a significant consideration in the formulation of preschool education in Greece during the period under review. The primary objective of the study was to demonstrate how the defining characteristics of preschool education were shaped by the integration of religiosity.

Focusing on the years 1964–1967, the analysis reveals that, at the level of institutional reforms, preschool education experienced minimal structural changes. Instead, efforts were directed toward adapting to the substantial reforms introduced in 1962, which had a lasting impact on the development of the kindergarten system in Greece. During this era, the modern kindergarten was primarily oriented towards preparing children cognitively for entry into elementary school. Nevertheless, equal emphasis was placed on the socio-emotional development of preschoolers, within which religiosity played a pivotal role. The concept of religiosity was closely associated with the cultivation of moral character, underscoring its visible and influential presence within the kindergarten environment.

The preceding analysis outlines the framework of preschool education pertinent to our research, highlighting the socio-political dimensions of emotion within the studied context. The pedagogical and ideological elements of religiosity present in our sample exhibit diverse characteristics. Notably, the findings indicate a clear intention within the scientific educational community to engage more actively in preschool education, likely influenced by the implementation of the 1962 reform.

A key conclusion regarding the period 1964–1967 is the absence of religiosity as a concept within the scientific discourse of our sample. Conversely, emotion emerges as a decisive factor in shaping the role of the kindergarten teacher. The effectiveness of kindergarten educators is closely linked to their adoption of positive emotional models along two primary axes. The first pertains to the children themselves, who must be nurtured with love

and kindness. The second relates to the moral and patriotic ethos of the kindergarten, the promotion of which is similarly rooted in emotional engagement. It is essential that young children develop an affinity for this role. Within our epistemological framework, three distinct types of emotional acts are identified. Bodily emotion refers to the general disposition of love directed toward infants. Expressive emotion encompasses the explicit articulation of emotional obligations, as evidenced linguistically in our data. Social and political emotion is reflected in the evidence supporting the moral and patriotic character of the kindergarten.

During the period of the military dictatorship, there were minimal political initiatives regarding the aims and curriculum of kindergarten education. At the legislative level, preschool education was primarily associated with supporting the child's physical and mental development, as well as fostering social and language skills. Notably, the concept of religiosity was largely absent from these legislative frameworks. This omission is particularly striking given that, in 1973, the Education Committee—widely recognized for proposing a more progressive program of educational reforms—recommended the inclusion of religious education and its connection to the moral development of kindergarten students.

In contrast, the scientific discourse reflected in the sample we examined presents a markedly different perspective. Here, religiosity emerges as a defining feature of preschool education. The term “Christianity” frequently supplants “religiosity” in the language used, underscoring the deeper ideological orientation of these texts. This linguistic shift directly mirrors the ideological underpinnings of the April dictatorship and highlights the significant social and political influence of emotional appeals. The association between Christianity and the ideals of ancient Greek classical heritage further reinforces this narrative. Within the discourse of the educators analyzed, the concept of emotion serves as a pivotal element. The initial step in legitimizing Greek Christianity within the articles studied was its presentation as a scientific concept. The attempt to associate adherence to Christianity with the objectives of pedagogical science is evident. The second aspect, employed to reinforce the validity of the first, is the process of emotionalization—specifically, the integration of Greek Christian educational principles with emotional frameworks, and more precisely, with the ethical dimension of early childhood education. In this context, ethics is ambiguously connected to the aesthetic aspects of education and the spiritual development of preschool children, thus manifesting as a physically expressed emotion. These two foundational concepts are presented as achievable exclusively at the local level, emphasizing a rejection of influences not directly related to the nation and homeland for preschool children, and aligning with the ideological stance of the colonels/dictators for preschool educators.

Regarding the final article examined in the study, which covers the period 1971–1974, it is situated within the context of the purported liberalization of the dictatorship's educational policy. The content, however, stands in contrast to the prevailing political climate. While the 1973 Education Committee explicitly highlights the importance of religiosity, our research indicates that this is the first instance in the journal's history where other religions and ethnicities are acknowledged and the term “religious studies” is introduced. Nevertheless, the sample size is too limited to significantly alter the overall impression of the dictatorship era that emerges from the broader body of research.

In conclusion, the scientific discourse among the educators in the sample was strongly anchored in the potential influence of emotional models. In historical research focused on emotion, it is essential to identify the latent emotional power embedded in situations, codes, and norms, even when these do not constitute discrete emotions (Kounalakis, 2025).

During the period 1964–1967, religiosity did not play a decisive role in shaping the Kindergarten. In contrast, from 1967 to 1974, religiosity became a significant factor. Despite this shift, in both periods, the authors of the articles consistently associated the kindergarten teacher's profile with the adoption and implementation of a

specific, overarching emotional model. The concept of morality was thus imbued with emotional significance in both contexts—manifesting with a more moderate tone in 1964–1967 and with heightened emotional intensity in 1967–1974.

## Notes

1. The excerpt comes from the following article in the journal under review: Kitsaras, I. (1964). Kindergarten and the Education of Kindergarten Teachers. *Scientific Forum of the Teacher*, 1, 26.
2. The excerpt comes from the following article in the journal under review: Karra-Vlachoutsis, E. (1966). What characterizes a good kindergarten. *Scientific Forum of the Teacher*, 2, 22.
3. The excerpt comes from the following article in the journal under review: Religiousness and Education. (1968). *Scientific Forum of the Teacher*, 5, 19, 20.
4. The excerpt comes from the following article in the journal under review: Kitsaras, I. (1968). Greek Christian Education. *Scientific Forum of the Teacher*, 5, 19, 20, 11, 12.
5. The excerpt comes from the following article in the journal under review: Hatzakos, H. (1967). The gods punish the irreverent. *Scientific Forum of the Teacher*, 1-2, 30, 31.
6. The excerpt comes from the following article in the journal under review: Kotsamanidis, Th. (1971). Contemporary Ideas in Contemporary Kindergarten. *Scientific Forum of the Teacher*, 1-4, 23.

## References

- Ahmed, S. (2013). *The cultural politics of emotion*. Routledge.
- Bühler, P. (2011). Ricoeur's concept of distanciation as a challenge for theological hermeneutics. In J. Verheyden, T. L. Hetteema, & P. Vandecasteele (Eds.), *Paul Ricoeur. Poetics and Religion* (pp. 151–165). Peeters. <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-59031>
- Burkitt, I. (2002). Complex emotions: Relations, feelings and images in emotional experience. *The Sociological Review*, 50, 151–167. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954x.2002.tb03596.x>
- Crook, D., Freathy, R., & Wright, S. (2011). Citizenship, religion and education. *History of Education*, 40(6), 695–700. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760x.2011.638801>
- Deigh, J. (2009). Concepts of emotions in modern philosophy and psychology. In P. Goldie (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion Get access Arrow* (pp. 17–40). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199235018.003.0002>
- Education Committee (1974). *Findings of the Education Committee 1971-1973*. National Printing House.
- Ekman, P. (1971). Universals and cultural differences in facial expressions of emotion. *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation*, 19, 207–283.
- Elster, J. (2009). Emotional choice and rational choice. In P. Goldie (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion Get access Arrow* (pp. 263–282). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199235018.003.0002>
- Foukas, V. (2018). Challenges in Greek education during the 1960s: The 1964 educational reform and its overthrow. *Espacio Tiempo y Educacion*, 5(1), 71-93. <https://doi.org/10.14516/ete.215>
- Frevert, U. (2011). *Emotions in history - lost and found*. Central European University Press.
- Kearney, R. (2021). *Touch: Recovering our most vital sense*. Columbia. University Press.
- Manolis Kounalakis – *The scientification of religiosity and the emotionalisation of morality in preschool education: Educators' discourse in Greece (1964-1974)*
- DOI: <https://doi.org/10.60923/issn.1970-2221/23349>

- Kopf, G. (2025). The presence of the fourth: A phenomenology of the living world. In C. Hutt & H. Kim (Eds.), *Cosmopolitan Husserl. From Transcendental Phenomenology to the Ethics of Renewal* (pp. 221-238). Routledge.
- Kounalakis, M. (2025). Pedagogy of responsibility and morality: The power of emotionalization in highlighting power relations in the field of educational history. *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*, 6(8), 5010–5014. <https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.6.0825.3160>
- Leighton, S. R. (1996). Aristotle and the emotions. In A. Oksenberg Rorty (Ed.), *Essays on Aristotle's rhetoric* (pp. 206–237). University of California Press.
- Maboloc, C. R. (2024). Understanding the meaning of meaning: Origin, concepts, and methodological approaches to hermeneutics. *Journal of Contemporary Philosophical and Anthropological Studies*, 2(3). <https://doi.org/10.59652/jcpas.v2i3.254>
- Mesquita, B., & Parkinson, B. (2024). Social constructionist theories of emotions. In A. Scarantino (Ed.), *Emotion Theory: The Routledge Comprehensive Guide Volume I: History, Contemporary Theories, and Key Elements* (pp. 387–407). Routledge.
- Metts, S., & Planalp, S. (2011). Emotion experience and expression: Current trends and future directions in interpersonal relationship research. In M. Knapp & J. Daly (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Interpersonal Communication* (4<sup>th</sup> ed., pp. 283–316). Sage.
- Mousena, E., & Kainourgiou, E. (2015). Changing the paradigm in Early Childhood Institutions in Greece 1950-2000. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 3(6), 253-261. <https://doi.org/10.11114/jets.v3i6.1039>
- Nussbaum, M. C. (2001). *Upheavals of thought: The intelligence of emotions*. Cambridge University Press.
- Okrent, M. (2000). Intentionality, teleology, and normativity. In M. Wrathall & J. Faulconer (Eds.), *Appropriating Heidegger* (pp. 191–206). Cambridge University Press eBooks.
- Papadakis, N., & Tzagkarakis, S. I. (2024). The “April” Dictatorship’s Policy in Universities and Students’ Activism and Resistance against the Dictatorship, in Greece. *Central European and Balkan Studies*, XXXIII, 307-328. <https://doi.org/10.4467/2543733XSSB.24.017.20041>
- Rosenwein, B. H. (2002). Worrying about emotions in history. *The American Historical Review*, 107(3), 821–845. <https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/107.3.821>
- Rosenwein, B. H. (2006). *Emotional communities in the early middle ages*. Cornell University Press.
- Siemer, M., & Reisenzein, R. (2007). Emotions and appraisals: Can you have one without the other? *Emotion*, 7(1), 26–29. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1528-3542.7.1.26>
- Stearns, P. N. (1989). *Jealousy: The evolution of an emotion in American history*. New York University Press.
- Stearns, P. N., & Stearns, C. Z. (1985). Emotionology: Clarifying the history of emotions and emotional standards. *The American Historical Review*, 90(4), 813-836. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1858841>

## Documentary material

Greek Teachers' Federation, *Scientific Forum of Teachers*, (January, February 1964 – Issue No. 3 1974).

Manolis Kounalakis – *The scientification of religiosity and the emotionalisation of morality in preschool education: Educators' discourse in Greece (1964-1974)*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.60923/issn.1970-2221/23349>

### **Legal texts**

Constitution of Greece of 1952, Government Gazette A 1/1952.

Constitution of Greece of 1968, Government Gazette A 267/1968.

Emergency Law 129, On the organization and administration of general education and other provisions, Government Gazette 163/1967.

Legislative Decree 651, on the organization of General Education and the administration of its personnel. Government Gazette 179/1970.

Royal Decree 494, on the analytical curriculum of the state kindergartens. Government Gazette 119/1962.

**Manolis Kounalakis** holds a Ph.D. in the History of Education from the University of Crete. He has authored numerous articles on topics including: the history of teacher education in Greece through the examination of original archival materials, the integration of the history of education into museum narratives, the implementation of the microhistorical method in educational history and the emotional reception of historical narratives. He has contributed to two European-funded projects focused on the history of education in Greece and has taught related courses at the University of Crete.

**Contact:** [mkounalakis@edc.uoc.gr](mailto:mkounalakis@edc.uoc.gr)