

**Real principals in real multiethnic schools:  
the (im)possibilities for inclusive  
principal practice**

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**PhD Thesis**

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Having as backdrop the immigration affecting educational processes in Greece and the rise of extreme-right groups, my thesis argues for the responsibility of principals to lead inclusive, egalitarian schools. Firstly, it demonstrates the importance of understanding the role of a school principal in an ethnically diverse school. Secondly, it argues for a genuine consideration of ethnocentrism and racism in the highly diversity-blind Greek education system. Examining ethnographically the everyday practices of three male principals in three multiethnic secondary schools in Greece, I draw on the theory of Pierre Bourdieu and the concepts of principal habitus, suggested by Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie, and institutional habitus, developed by Reay, Ball and David, to investigate the possibilities and impossibilities for principals to include immigrant students in the educational processes. Seeing principalship as a complicated and contextual practice, I interrogate principal practices at three levels: the vocational, the institutional and the classroom.

My findings suggest that the administrative and pedagogical work of the principals has both a direct and indirect impact on the education of ethnic minority students. Exclusions of immigrant students occur through the ordinariness and mundanity of school administration. It is through this business-as-usual appearance that discrimination occurs, because it is misrecognised as such. Principal practices towards ethnic minority students appear as constellations of vocational, institutional and individual dispositions entangled in ethnocentric structures. Nonetheless, principals also practise disruptions to the exclusion of ethnic minority students. My findings question the role of agency to challenge the (im)possibilities for inclusive principal practice. Ultimately, the thesis argues for a principal role that is explicitly linked to social justice and that is given the tools for critical self-reflection that could turn impossible principalships for immigrant students into possible ones.

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## TEXTUAL CONVENTIONS

I use 'single inverted commas' to indicate a problematised term or concept and for quoting literature text. I use "double inverted commas" for quotes within the quoted literature, and for quoting my participants within the body of text. Square parentheses with three dots [...] indicate edited out text. I use three dots ... in interviews and observational data to indicate pauses; [square] parentheses for explanatory information within the body of transcripts; and (brackets) with information about the participant at the end of transcripts. I also use *italics* to denote emphases and raised voice, summarised fieldnotes and contextual information before or after transcripts. Whenever I add emphasis with *italics* in literature quotes I indicate it in [square] parentheses immediately after the quote.



To my family

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## INTRODUCTION

My work<sup>1</sup> is an ethnographic study of two main issues. First, my thesis demonstrates the importance of understanding and appreciating the complexities within the role of a school principal in an ethnically diverse school. Second, it argues for a genuine consideration of ethnocentrism and racism in the highly diversity-blind Greek education system. In her interview, Gloria Ladson-Billings (2010) suggests that ‘a great principal is a principal who understands his or her role in the system’. During my introductory visit to one of the participating schools, I explained to the vice-principal that I am interested in the role of the principal in multiethnic schools. Her response to this was: ‘I don’t think there is anything different in managing this school from those with no immigrant students’. Similar views were expressed by a focus-group of principals whom I had recently worked with on intercultural training and who had found it hard to identify their work in relation to their ethnic minority students (Education of Foreign and Repatriate Students, 2013). Through the study of day-to-day principalship in three multiethnic secondary schools, this thesis aims to convince principals – together with policy makers, practitioners, teacher trainers and researchers - of the importance of interrogating the implications that principalship has in the education of ethnic minority students. I raise the following research questions, which I address moving across the institutional, vocational (principal) and classroom levels:

- What are the freedoms and limitations of principal practice in effecting an inclusive education for ethnic minority students, and where are these located?
- What are the contextual aspects of principalship and how do these shape principal practices when dealing with issues of multiethnicity?

My findings suggest that the principals’ administrative and pedagogical work has both a direct and indirect impact on the education of ethnic minority students. Principal practices

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<sup>1</sup> The study was funded by the Hellenic State Scholarships Foundation (I.K.Y., Idrima Kratikon Ypotrofion).

towards ethnic minority students appear as constellations of vocational, institutional and individual dispositions entangled in ethnocentric structures. Exclusions of immigrant students occur through the ordinariness and mundanity of school administration. It is through this business-as-usual appearance that discrimination occurs precisely because it is misrecognised as such. Nonetheless, principals also practise disruptions to the exclusion of ethnic minority students. My findings question the role of agency to challenge the (im)possibilities for an inclusive principal practice. Ultimately, this thesis argues for a principal role that is explicitly linked to social justice, and that is given the tools for critical self-reflection, that could turn impossible principalships for immigrant students into possible ones.

In 2009 Stella Protonotariou, a female principal of an inner-city multiethnic primary school in Athens, was prosecuted by the Ministry of Education<sup>2</sup> following claims made by the local education authorities. The accusation was that, under her headship, the school premises were used 'illegally' after the end of the official curriculum. The classrooms were used for mother-tongue lessons to immigrant students, as well as Greek language lessons to immigrant parents. The lessons were organised on a volunteer basis and involved parents and their communities. Protonotariou and her colleagues eventually stood trial, during which the court not only acquitted them, but also praised them for their practice (Enet.gr, 2010). The incident was intensively covered by the Greek media.

Three years later, in 2012, a newly appointed male teacher in an inner-city secondary school in Athens came into conflict with immigrant students. Trying to regain control, he threatened to call the far-right neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn to "take care" of them. Vasiliki Tseliou, the female school principal, fell under the fire of various anti-racist/fascist organisations and social groups for not suggesting the teacher's firing to the education authorities. Responding to media demands, she released a statement about the ways in which she and her school handled the situation. She writes: 'The 46<sup>th</sup> Gymnasium

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<sup>2</sup> The full name of the Greek 'Ministry of Education' was often changed following the succession of governing parties and/or governmental restructurings (i.e. 'Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs', 'Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs', 'Education and Religious Affairs, Culture and Sports'. For reasons of economy I refer to it as 'Ministry of Education'.

[school name] is a school in the centre of Athens [...] and it is not “The Little House on the Prairie” (Alfavita, 2012).

The above cases illustrate my choice of subject, that is the *real* principals in *real* multiethnic schools in Greece. They show how principals as heads of their school, are held accountable for practices that happen inside classrooms, and for decisions that are taken collectively. They also suggest that practising education-for-all is challenged by institutional and individual racisms (Gillborn, 2008); and that gaining consensus over what constitutes inclusive school strategy is a tough business and one that calls for community involvement. Principals, as heads of schools, mediate between teachers and immigrant students, classrooms and communities, the educational system and society in general. What these cases highlight is that principalship is not decontextualised and that the involvement of the school principal in the education of ethnic minority students should be brought to attention.

The title of my thesis makes reference to David Gillborn’s (1995) book *Racism and Antiracism in Real Schools*. The book discusses how change towards antiracist school policies and practices can happen or not. Gillborn presents the case-study of a ‘real’ urban school and the ways teachers and management worked with antiracism at the whole-school level. He found that even though antiracism was initiated by a ‘core group’, the role of the principal was essential in supporting their work (Gillborn, 1995). My research does not examine how antiracism - or critical multicultural education – can be achieved. It investigates the processes of managing multiethnic schools, and the possibilities and impossibilities of including all students in educational processes. I intend my work to be used as the canvas upon which further action can be designed, since this is an issue about which policy makers and practitioners in Greece have not yet heard much.

I examine these questions through the exploration of the everyday practices of three male Greek principals at three secondary schools using ethnographic methods. My study considers principalship to be contextualised (Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie, 2003; Thrupp, 1999). For this, I put principal practices into context by examining them alongside educational policies and classroom practices. I found the thinking tools for this venture in

the theory of Pierre Bourdieu, as well as the concept of institutional habitus as used by Reay, Ball and David (2005), and principal habitus, suggested by Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003), which I further develop through my data.

Schools are definitely no 'little house on the prairie'. They are complicated institutions, constructed by social structures and imbued with individual understandings. They are infused with contesting ideologies and vested interests, and as a result they become places of conflict (Ball, 1987). Schools operate upon different conceptualisations of race/ethnicity and racism/ethnicism, and their practices have real effects on students' realities. Principals are staff burdened with the responsibility of what is going on in their classrooms – Ball (1987) names them 'licensed authority' (p. 82). Regarding minority students, they have to respond to complex situations caused by the insufficiencies of the educational system to include multiethnicity in their policies and practices. However, principals do not operate in a vacuum. They are implicated in the same structural and political fermentations as the other members of the school.

My work is intended to be read as a piece on the sociology of education and not as an educational management study. This decision is based on two insights relating to the principal's job. First, the school principal is a social actor. Second, acting from within this institutional post, her/his practice in relation to the education of ethnic minority students raises questions which can substantively be investigated by sociological rather than organisational theories.

With this framing, I hope that my work adds new knowledge to both the Greek and international literature. It contributes substantial theoretical discussions and empirical evidence to the field of principalship and diversity in Greece, which is still widely underdeveloped. Second, it talks about the particular matter of the principal's involvement in reproducing inequalities and exclusions against students of immigrant background. As I debate in Chapter One, the majority of educational management literature locates the principal as the supervisor or the impartial authority who controls and manages cultural diversity and ethnic/racial conflicts at school. Third, it sides with – and thus reinforces – other research that supports the subtle and misrecognised ways with which ethnic and

racial discrimination takes place. Documenting ethnographically the technologies of racial/ethnic exclusions is still embryonic, particularly in the case of Greece, but also elsewhere. Fourth, my thesis contributes to the constantly growing – yet still underdeveloped - body of international literature that advocates school management as a contextual, complex issue. Finally, working through the data, I develop the concept of principal habitus (Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie, 2003) within the specificities of the Greek context as the tool to interrogate the “street realities” of headship’ (Ball, 1987, p.80).

*Chapter One* sets the scene of my research and deals with the main two subjects that this thesis brings together: intercultural/inclusive education and school principalship. I examine the ways in which multiethnicity has been addressed by school policies and practices, as well as those theoretical approaches which have framed the field of intercultural education in Greece; then I offer an account of the educational management research in Greece and internationally. *Chapter Two* presents the theory framing my way of doing research. In *Chapter Three* I present my research strategies to study and record the everyday life of three male principals at three secondary (compulsory) schools of a City in Greece, two mainstream and one ‘intercultural’ school. *Chapters Four to Eight* offer data analysis which examines the issue of principalship and its (im)possibilities for non-discriminatory practice on three levels: the institutional, the vocational and the classroom. *Chapter Four* deals with the institutional level. There I introduce the three Greek secondary schools: the two mainstream schools, the Aegean and the Ionian; and the intercultural Cretan school. *Chapter Five* focuses on the vocational level, the profession of the principal. I present the three principals of my study, Giorgos (Aegean school), Yannis (Ionian school) and Manos (Cretan school), and I analyse how they became the ‘right person for the job’ (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003, p. 477). *Chapter Six* focuses on the understandings the three principals hold about the educational needs of their ethnic minority students and their expectations and hopes for their future. *Chapter Seven* looks into classroom practices, to better understand the processes for which the three men, as the ‘licensed authority’ of their schools, are held accountable for (Ball, 1987, p. 82). In *Chapter Eight* I examine practices occurring inside the principals’ offices that relate to issues

of attendance and behaviour of ethnic minority students. Finally, *Chapter Nine* presents the conclusions of my thesis. I argue that principalship happens as a constellation of institutional, principal and familial dispositions, and I raise the issue of a 'free' principal practice, capable of cutting through structures of ethnocentrism. I conclude my work by turning to the core question of my research: what does it do for the real principals of real multiethnic schools?



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Intercultural education in Greece, principalship and ethnic minority students**

#### **A note about naming**

My research is concerned with the educational experiences of the 12% (European Union, 2013) of the student population attending Greek schools that has an immigrant background. This concern comes at a particularly pivotal time for Greece: the country is faced by a severe socioeconomic crisis, followed by the rise of extreme-right groups advocating racial/ethnic hatred. Concurrently, inward immigration continues to be a major issue affecting educational processes. The school is at the front-line, burdened with the responsibility to adequately educate all students, while making its grounds space for social justice and egalitarianism.

In the schools I visited immigrant students mostly originated from Albania, Georgia, Russia and Bulgaria. The choice of names for the phenomena and the groups of students under study proved to be a much more of a challenging task than I had initially estimated. Was it 'race', 'ethnicity' or 'nationality' which I was looking at? Should I be talking about students from 'racial minorities', 'ethnic minorities', or is it that 'minority' is not the right term? Should I then name this 12% of students of non-Greek background 'other students' or 'alien students', as they are popularly named in a Greek bibliography? And where do students from Greek repatriate families fit in these categories? Youdell (2003), after Foucault, suggests that a subject 'is constituted through the productive power of discursive practices; that is, the meanings through which the 'world' and the 'self' are made knowable and known are imputed through discourse' (p.86).

### *Naming race 'ethnicity'*

The issues of race, ethnicity and nationality are interwoven. Much debate has been evolving around the use of the word 'race'. The main argument of those who were against its use was that, once it has long been proven that there are no distinct racial categories, the word could only reproduce the rhetoric of stereotyping according to phenotypes (Gillborn, 2008). On the contrary, those who were positioned in favour of its use have argued that since there is racism as a social phenomenon, then the word 'race' should also be used as a marker of the reason which causes practices of racism (Gillborn, 2008). Omi and Winant (1993) accused any replacement of 'race' with 'ethnicity', 'nationality' or 'class' - allegedly more 'objective categories' - as 'mistaken at best, and intellectually dishonest, at worst' (p.7). Gilroy (1987) suggested that 'race' has been used by the UK national politics obscurely together with talks about the 'nation'. This, according to him, indicates how the 'nation is represented in terms which are simultaneously biological and cultural' (p.44). There is a wide range of conceptualisations of these notions among theorists, and the boundaries between 'race', 'ethnicity' and 'nation' appear difficult to discern.

The effect of these blurred relationships is what Gilroy (1987, p.43) calls 'the new racism', which

link[s] discourses of patriotism, nationalism, xenophobia, Englishness, Britishness, militarism and gender difference into a complex system which gives "race" its contemporary meaning.

These intersectional issues are present in the Greek reality. Patriotism is evident in talks about guarding the Greek borders; nationalism in denying an Albanian student the right to hold the Greek flag in a parade; xenophobia in attacks against Afghan mothers claiming space for their children at the playground; Greekness in the speech of the Minister of Citizen Protection, who asked for the restoration of the life quality of the Greeks at the 'historic' centre of Athens; a quasi-militarism in the FRONTEX intervention to guard the eastern Greek borders; and also, in a variant of militarism, the police operations to 'clean'

the 'illegality' of immigrants from the centre of Athens. Moreover, contemporary understandings of race move away from its indissoluble relation with phenotypical characteristics as 'central marker[s] of difference' (Mac an Ghail, 2000 p. 39). As Gillborn (2008, p.3) puts it,

far from being a fixed and natural system of genetic difference, "race" is a system of socially constructed and enforced categories that are constantly recreated and modified through human interaction.

Racism, as the discrimination against people by putting them in essential categories based on 'biological signifiers' (Rattansi, 1992, p. 36), is not limited to skin colour. It is present in practices against 'other' whites, such as the Albanians or Russians in the Greek case, similarly to the Irish as described by Mac an Ghail (2000). This has two implications: first, it means that phenotypical characteristics, when they are observable (for example, the assumed wide forehead of Pontian-Russians, the reddish-skin of the Albanian field workers etc<sup>3</sup>) replace skin colour in effecting racism. Second, there is the fear of deracialisation, if phenotypical characteristics are ignored as signifiers of difference, and of a probable failure in diagnosing them as victims of racism (Mac an Ghail, 2000).

At the same time, the issue of religion as a cultural signifier of difference, common to the case of the Irish and the Albanians, also works as the cause of racial discrimination. Early Albanians in Greece – who were mainly either non-religious, due to their prior communist regime, or Muslims – were baptised Christian Orthodox and changed their names into Greek ones in order not to be stigmatised due to religion. This practice is still popular, especially with children's names.

The intricacy and intersectionality of these concepts has led me to a strategic choice of wording. I have chosen to use the words 'ethnicity', 'ethnicism' and 'ethnic discrimination', instead of 'race' or 'nationality', grounding my reasoning on the significance ethnicity has in the Greek context. Greek national identity 'is organised around an

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<sup>3</sup> I cite these phenotypical characteristics only as auxiliary to the reader who has no experience of what facial traits are usually attributed to these ethnicities and which could work as factors for discriminatory practices against them. Nonetheless, I sustain that phenotypical characteristics are fluid, always changing and thus should not be perceived as essential attributes of these (or any) ethnicities.

ethnogenealogical conception of the nation, but has been trimmed by civic experience and political challenges over the past century' (Triandafyllidou and Veikou, 2002, p. 189). Having in mind Gilroy's (1987) views about the dishonesty of calling 'race' 'ethnicity', as well as Gillborn's (2008) observation that racism is such a powerful concept that people are offended by it, my decision was a conscious one.

Greek ethnicity has been shown to be constructed in multiple ways as the signifier of difference and sameness. Orthodox Christianity and Greek nationality draw the defining lines between 'Greeks' and 'non-Greeks' (Petraou, 2001; Christopoulos, 2001). These cultural characteristics work as proxies for the differentiation of other ethnic identities (Gillborn, 1995). Those ethnicities are 'recast as racial signifiers of inherent difference' (Gillborn, 1995, p. 25), as they assume an essential Greek identity while excluding those who are not 'essentially' Greek. This is what Barker (1981) names 'pseudo-biological culturalism', to describe how cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious elements are permanently ascribed to one's identity, as unchangeable qualities accompanying one's place of origin through time and space (cited in Gillborn, 1997, p. 352). Christopoulos (2001) talks about what he calls 'the Greek national myth'. He argues that Greece, as a mono-cultural, mono-ethnic, mono-religious and mono-lingual nation is nothing more than an artificial construction to ideologically empower the people fighting for their freedom against the 400 years of Turkish occupation<sup>4</sup>.

My decision to talk about 'ethnicism' is grounded in the 'righteousness' that many attribute to the term – and to 'patriotism', in that matter. Ethnicism legitimises the 'patriotic' demands for the reinstatement of the 'homogenous', immigrant-free Greek nation. This is done by invoking painful memories of past wars<sup>5</sup>, therefore making that demand 'righteous'. Ethnicism is often used as a milder countenance of 'racism', to refer to similar practices with a seemingly 'innocent' term. A strong example of this is the claims

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<sup>4</sup> What today is named Greece is a former part of the Byzantine Empire (its capital being Istanbul), whose fall resulted in 400 years of slavery to the Ottoman Empire, between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>5</sup> In its recent history, Greece, has been involved in World Wars I and II, as well as the Balkan Wars (1912-13). Not much earlier, in 1821, it earned its freedom from the Ottoman oppression, after 400 years (14<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> century). Greece was proclaimed a sovereign nation in 1833.

made by the neo-Nazi party 'Golden Dawn' that they are 'ethnicists' and not 'racists' or 'neo-Nazis'<sup>6</sup>. By using the term 'ethnicism' to talk about incidents of racism in the Greek context, I want to lay it bare from its 'innocence' and make the case that ethnicist practices are equally dangerous. In my work I see issues of ethnocentrism, ethnicism, racism and nationalism as mutually implicated/intertwined together.

### *Naming students 'ethnic minority'*

The decision to put students under one descriptive category, which I name 'ethnic minority', was a difficult one, and the reasons are presented here. These students could have immigrated to Greece from another country; they could have been born in Greece, but be of non-Greek origin; they could also have repatriated from regions of the Greek diaspora or even be descendants of Greek repatriates. Concurrently, they could be from families with official immigration documents, or with no documents; or asylum seekers. They could be considered to embody a whole range of phenotypical characteristics; and belong to different social classes.

All of the above different positionalities I needed to place within one category. Apart from obvious reasons of economy, I wanted to induce a critical political practice against the discrimination of any of the aforementioned student categories. I acknowledge that this grouping overshadows the intricacies and special conditions under which different ethnicities are positioned within and by the dominant culture and that it can 'obscure important social, historical, cultural and economic differences between groups' (Gillborn, 2008, p.2). However, it is a necessary compromise in order to speak about institutional discrimination as a phenomenon concerning all the different categories of 'other' students.

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<sup>6</sup> When these lines were written (fall 2013), MPs and other party members of the Golden Dawn (GD) were held under custody for leading a 'criminal organisation' instead of a 'political party'. These legal actions followed the murder of Pavlos Fyssas, a Greek rapper with antiracist/antifascist action, who was ambushed by GD members and killed. However, further investigations connect GD with various crimes and illegal activities, including past murder cases with immigrant victims.

Spivak (1987) and Fuss (1989) suggest that 'strategic essentialism' may be a risk worth taking in order to inspire critical practices towards a collective cause (cited in Brah, 1992, p. 144). Nonetheless, in my data analysis, I allow for such differences between ethnicities to emerge.

In Greek literature the above cases of students are most popularly called '*allodapée*' (masculine, plural), which in English means 'aliens' – those that have a different nationality. Repatriate students are usually called as '*palinnostoondes*' (for the plural of masculine). Most often, however, educators use the word '*allodapós*' (masculine, singular) all together for students of an ethnic/national origin other than Greek. This term, which reverberates with their national belongingness, was the first to be discarded as an inclusive category. The word may correspond to the students' nationality status, as those who are born in Greece are not granted Greek citizenship until the age of 18<sup>7</sup>. However, I find the term inappropriate to describe the students' lived reality, considering that many of them did not have other experiences of 'nationality' other than the Greek one. In the same rhetoric the term '*alloglossoi*' (speaking another language) has been argued to misrepresent the linguistic reality and multilingual competences of immigrant students, whose dominant language, eventually, becomes the Greek one (Tsokalidou, 2005). For similar reasons, I name the students 'ethnic minority' to denote the reality of discrimination they are experiencing due to their 'other' ethnicity, which is positioned in a minoritised state. I also interchangeably use the term 'of immigrant background', to refer to the hybrid cultural identities of these students and the 'new ethnicities' they form by being diasporic subjects (Hall, 1992, p. 252).

At this point I should note that this name may not necessarily represent what the students themselves feel about their 'belonging'. Taking an early look at my data, I recollect an incident when, while interviewing one of the principals in his office, a female student entered. The principal introduced her to me, stating that she is from Albania and this is why I would be interested in her case. There was a moment of awkward silence as the girl

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<sup>7</sup> At the time the research was carried out.

seemed bewildered. She then replied that she does not have memories of Albania, as her family moved in Greece when she was two. This moment of awkwardness is what made me question the dominant view of students as of 'other' ethnic background. Was she aware of her 'otherness' in the same way it was perceived by me or the principal? Research on how students of ethnic minorities in Greece self-identify is still at embryonic stage. However, work such as that of Tsokalidou (2005), Skourtou (2011) and Gkaintartzi and Tsokalidou (2011) on children's bilingual development, suggests that those identities are multi-positional, multifaceted, and undergo constant moulding.

Simultaneously, I would ask whether this bewilderment was a result of the student's wish to renounce her 'otherness'. Work, such as that of Gogonas (2009), suggests that the new generation of Albanians in Greece is losing its language because of the social costs this practice might have in their lives. As noted, many students change their names to Greek ones, or those with 'another' religious affiliation are baptised Orthodox Christians.

In choosing a name to talk about those students, the argument which I would pose aligns with Mac an Ghail's (2000) worry: overlooking racial/ethnic signifiers, due to a naive (not necessarily a consciously ill-willed) obliteration of difference, could lead to the underestimation of ethnicism/racism in explaining social inequalities. By this I mean that even if a student from a non-Greek background feels more Greek than 'other', there are daily institutional practices which constitute those students 'other' and discriminate against them because of their 'otherness'. Youdell's (2003) work proposes that the black students of her research knew tacitly that they were seen as inferior students by the school. This is why, regardless of their own feelings of belonging or my personal attitude, I continue to name them 'ethnic minority' students.

A final remark is my strategic choice of the term 'minority' in order to remind the reader of the students' positioning as such within and by the majority dominant culture. Gillborn (2008) suggests that a more accurate word would be 'minoritised', indicative of the process through which they are constructed as such within a particular society. For example, he says that white people are in fact a minority, looking at global proportions; albeit, they have a majority position regarding their property in power and economic

capital. Therefore, my use of the word 'minority' resonates with the process of those students being put into an underprivileged position because of their 'other', non-Greek ethnic background.

### **Ethnic minority students in Greek schools**

Greece is currently a host country for families arriving from various Asian, Balkan and African countries. My study, however, deals with the children of those minorities who are represented in the Greek schools which took part in my research, carried out at a major urban city in the north of the country. During the academic year 2007-2008, when this study was carried out, statistical data collected by IPODE (the Institute of the Education of Repatriates and Intercultural Education) indicated a 10.7% presence of ethnic minorities. From these, 80% are of an Albanian background (Paleologou, 2004).

Official statistical data on the educational achievement of immigrant and repatriate students in Greece have not been available to date, a problem which has been raised elsewhere (Luciak, 2004; Mediterranean Migration Observatory, 2004). However, the facts of the schools' failure in educating these students could be shown by the declining number of attendance of those groups as they progress through schooling (Luciak, 2004; Mediterranean Migration Observatory, 2004). The reported figures are: 11.6% in Primary, 10.6% in Compulsory Secondary (Gymnasium) and 5.6% in Post-Compulsory Secondary (Lyceum) (Theodoridis, 2008). These numbers concern all ethnic minority students inclusively. It is not surprising that there is a dramatic decline between secondary compulsory (gymnasium) and secondary non-compulsory (lyceum) education. Theodoridis (2008) also suggests that those ethnic minority students who continue with non-compulsory education, apart from lyceums (attended by about 17%), they usually choose vocational education leading to jobs such as technicians, mechanics, plumbers, hairdressers, beauticians, nurse assistants etc. Other sources report inequalities in the educational



attainment between Greek and immigrant/repatriate students, with the latter group achieving much lower (Tourtouras, 2005; Mitakidou, Tourtouras, Tressou, 2008;).

Georgoulas' research (1994) conducted in the Attica County (which includes Athens) showed that students of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade of Primary School (11-12 years old) avoid any association with ethnic minority students (cited in Georgoulas, 2001, p. 217). UNICEF's (2001) research reports that Greek schools are spaces of discriminatory practices against ethnic minority students. The research also suggests xenophobic attitudes and perceptions held by Greek students, parents, teachers and the school management, which result in inequalities<sup>8</sup> in the educational treatment of ethnic minority students (UNICEF, 2001). However, UNICEF's (2001) report suggests that such attitudes are held mostly by teachers and parents, rather than by the students themselves.

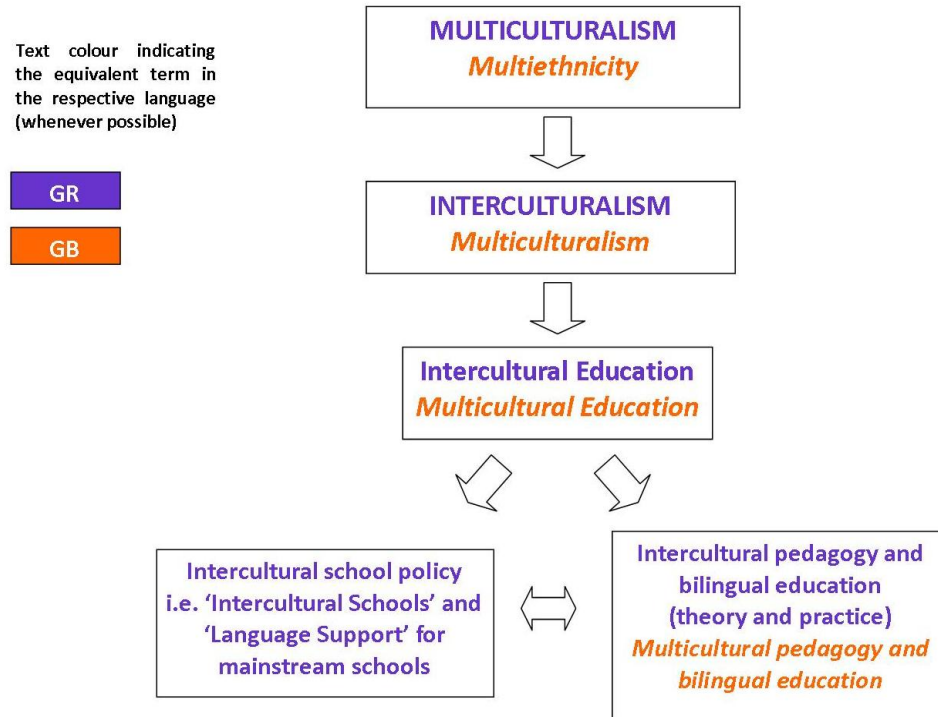
### *Multiethnicity as educational policy and theory*

Interculturalism, as theory, has received considerable attention especially during the last fifteen years. However, interculturalism, as implemented by educational policies in Greece, is currently challenged. The scheme of 'Intercultural Education', as implemented in Greece, has not been genuinely grounded on the theoretical framework of Interculturalism; policy and theory are little associated. What is promised by theory is far from what is delivered in practice (Nikolaou, 2005). Therefore, references to 'Intercultural Education' could be referring to either the Greek educational policy arrangements for ethnic minority students or the intercultural and bilingual pedagogical aims/scopes expressed in academic writings. Diagram I is an effort to present schematically the above information. Moreover, as it is

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<sup>8</sup> To my understanding, 'inequality' here is measured in qualitative variables (such as the unfair treatment in the classroom, harassment, verbal abuse etc). Comparable national outcomes in student achievement could only be obtainable at the last two grades of high-school, using the data of students' entry at university. However, such comparisons are not applied in Greece (mainly due to methodological, ideological, political and systemic matters).

argued in research, there are inconsistencies between what ‘Intercultural Education’ provides for in the policy texts and what happens in reality.



**DIAGRAM I:** Explanation of the intercultural education scheme in Greece, with reference to the UK context.

The task of writing about ‘intercultural education’ in Greece was more difficult than I initially expected. The first challenge was the difference in terms and their contexts between Greece and England; and the second being the indeterminacy in which the terms ‘interculturalism’ and ‘intercultural education’ are being used in Greek texts and discussions. To begin with, I need to clarify the term ‘interculturalism’. In Greek literature it is a term differentiated from the term ‘multiculturalism’. ‘Multiculturalism’ refers to the condition of ethnic pluralism (as in ‘many-cultures’), whereas ‘interculturalism’ is related to the aspired objective of an egalitarian, equal co-existence of people within this diversity (Damanakis, 2002). Additionally, ‘multicultural education’ is used as reference to ‘cultural

relativism', as a conceptual framework which establishes different curricula and educational institutions for the various cultural groups; it is thus a separatist approach to education.

As far as 'intercultural education' and 'interculturalism' is concerned, the terms convey ambivalent meanings: its Greek mainstream use identifies with what in the British context is called 'multiculturalism' and 'multicultural education'; but it is also used in discussions that adopt a more critical approach, closer to what UK literature calls 'antiracism' (Nikolaou, 2005).

### *Intercultural education in Greece*

Greece started thinking about an education for immigrants in the early 1980s, as a consequence of repatriation of Greeks in the mid 70s from Australia, USA, Canada and Germany. Together came immigrants from European countries (especially English, French and German speaking), Asia and Africa, followed by another repatriation wave of Greeks from the former Soviet Union and Albania (Vergeti, 2003). To respond to this new student population the Ministry of Education organised 'Reception Classes', 'Preparatory Language/Support Classes' and 'Repatriate Schools'<sup>9</sup> (Tressou and Mitakidou, 1997). The language support classes were set out to assist children with second language acquisition; they do still officially exist, but official data on their number were available at the time of this research.

In 1996 the Law 2413 on 'Intercultural Education' was launched; this was the first leap from the deficit and assimilationist models of the past to a more inclusive education. The policy text, under the title 'Greek Education Abroad, Intercultural Education and Other Provisions', articulates the following:

1. The objective of Intercultural Education is to organise and operate school units of Primary and Secondary education which will contribute to the

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<sup>9</sup> In Greek: 'Taksis Ipodohis', 'Frontistiriaka Tmimata', 'Scholia Palinnostoonton'

education of youths with educational, social, cultural or learning particularities.

2. At schools of Intercultural Education will be applied the curricula of the mainstream schools, which will be adjusted to the particular educational, social, cultural or learning needs of their students.

(Hellenic Ministry of Education, 1996 - my translation)

Under this scheme, the Hellenic Ministry of Education established the following forms of intercultural education: a) conversion of existing mainstream schools into 'intercultural' when they have more than 45% of repatriate and/or immigrant students out of the students' population; these could be nursery schools (or preschool), primary, secondary and high schools, and also vocational schools, all of which are identified as 'special' schools, b) new public and private intercultural schools and c) classes of 'intercultural education' in mainstream schools. Intercultural schools can have special curricula<sup>10</sup> so as to correspond to the special needs of their students, such as lessons of Greek as a second language. The policy states that teachers are selected on the basis of their knowledge on the subject of intercultural education and teaching Greek as a second language; because of the specialty of their post, they have a reduced work timetable. School principals are allocated following the same procedures as in the case of mainstream schools and on the same basis of qualifications as for teachers (more on this later on).

### *Criticisms*

There are practical and theoretical misconceptions regarding the policy. To start with the former, Damanakis (2002) reports that in practice, except for the extra hours of Greek language teaching and some arrangements on lenient assessment of immigrant students at

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<sup>10</sup> Greek education does not have a 'curriculum' but a 'Detailed Program' (Analitiko Programma (D.P.)). The D. P. is national and, contrary to curricula, it is highly descriptive concerning general and special aims and objectives, teaching material, timetables for subjects to be taught etc. However, for the readers' convenience, I use the term 'curriculum'.

exams, there are no other adjustments made on the curriculum that render it 'intercultural'. Teaching materials for the rest school subjects are the same as in mainstream schools (Damanakis, 2002; Kontogianni, 2002). Other research reports the lack of teacher knowledge on issues of multiculturalism and bilingualism (Kontogianni, 2002; Triarchi-Herrmann, 2000; Mitakidou, 2001; Tsokalidou, 2005; Gkaintartzi and Tsokalidou, 2011; Skourtou, 2011), bewilderment over parts of the educational law (Damanakis, 2002) and neglect of mother tongue teaching (Triarchi-Herrmann, 2000; Mitakidou, 2001; Kontogianni, 2002; Nikolaou, 2005). The overall result is that those schools are seen as failing; and although there are many mainstream Greek schools consisting of over 45% of ethnic minority students, these do not want to be converted into 'intercultural' as the term has acquired negative connotations (Mediterranean Migration Observatory, 2004; Kontogianni, 2002). Across the country there are today 13 Primary, 9 Secondary and only 4 intercultural high schools (IPODE, 2013). Therefore, the situation is as follows: intercultural educational policy has only made little adjustments to the mainstream educational policy, and so intercultural schools operate very much on a mainstream curriculum.

A final note relates to the importance for intercultural education policy to genuinely embrace bilingual education. Intercultural schools, as do some mainstream schools, offer Greek language lessons, but mother tongue teaching is still ignored. Research on linguistics and bilingualism suggests that the difference between the language used at home and the language used at school affects second language acquisition in ways that are not directly observable. Such research proposes that once the students' bilingualism is recognised and activated, this will bring about a positive linguistic and academic development for the student (Cummins, 1984; 1996; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988; Mitakidou, 2000; Triarchi-Herrmann, 2000; Tsokalidou, 2005). At the same time, the importance of one's linguistic capital for the chances of successful selection by the educational system has long been argued (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990).

### *What about mainstream schools?*

Intercultural education policies exclusively concern intercultural schools as a separate institutional model. The only official arrangement for ethnic minority students at mainstream schools is the operation of the 'Reception Classes' and the preparatory Language-Support classes for students who have difficulties with the Greek language. Reception classes (teaching Greek as a second/foreign language) run concurrently with the main classes and are divided into three levels: beginners, intermediate and advanced. These are run only by those schools which have applied for this scheme, following the demands of immigrant parents. Their total number is not known, nor is the quality of teaching that is offered. Nonetheless, no other arrangements have been provided for the raising of bilingual awareness in mainstream classes (Tsokalidou, 2005).

Adding to this, there are no arrangements for a genuine intercultural and bilingual education in mainstream schools with or without reception classes. On the contrary, Greek curriculum is reported to be highly ethnocentric (Fragoudaki and Dragona, 1997; Mouzelis, 1998; Mitakidou 2000; Triarchi- Hermann, 2000; Damanakis, 2002; Makri, 2003; Nikolaou, 2005). Ethnocentrism in the Greek mainstream curriculum has been mainly identified by research in the textbooks of history. Flouris and Ivrinteli (2000) argue that Balkan and former Soviet Union countries are presented as a threat to the Greek territory, and when mentioned in history textbooks<sup>11</sup>, it is always through their territorial conflicts with Greece. Moreover, Dragona and Fragoudaki's (2001) research discusses how history textbooks represent a strong Greek national identity built around the word 'hellenism'. Hellenism becomes an essentialised category; it does not recognise ethnicity and nation as products of 'time, progress and change' (Dragona and Fragoudaki, 2001, p. 40). At the same time, such views on the continuity and consistency of the Greek nation also result in reductionist views of other nations (Dragona and Fragoudaki, 2001). One is left wondering if it is actually

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<sup>11</sup> At the time of writing this thesis, efforts to reform history and other text books were made, which, however, underwent strong critical reviews.

possible that a non-assimilationist approach is implemented at intercultural schools under such circumstances, since they use the mainstream school material.

I should also stress that although research has identified the pitfalls of the Greek teaching content and didactics towards an intercultural pedagogy, it has not yet widely touched upon aspects of the 'subtle' forms of racism in institutions and the micro-processes of ethnocentricity in mainstream and intercultural schools. This is a main issue concerning my research, which aspires to make a contribution to this particular area. However, significant critical research has been done in relation to the issue of the dominance of monolingualism (Tsokalidou, 2005; 2007; 2012; Skourtou, 2011), as well as bilingual and intercultural approaches to teaching (Chatzidaki, 2000).

The theoretical assumptions of the intercultural education scheme are problematic. Applied exclusively at 'special' intercultural schools and capitalising on the 'particularity' of ethnic minority students, Damanakis (2002) argues that the scheme is established upon a discriminatory and segregationist policy. The reference to the students' cultural and ethnic differences by using the term 'particular' normalises through text and schooling practice their 'otherness', while legitimising the 'normality' of the dominant, mainstream Greek culture (Damanakis, 2002).

Between 2010 and 2013 the Hellenic Ministry of Education appointed the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki to run the programme 'Education of Foreign and Repatriate Students'<sup>12</sup>. The project offered school interventions, teacher training and research that covered various 'Actions' ranging from Greek language teaching and intercultural didactics to teacher and management for interculturalism, parent-school communication, etc. Schools (mainstream and intercultural) participated by applying to one or more of ten areas of Action. The project has reportedly affected 6200 students and 4000 teachers across the country (Education of Foreign and Repatriate Students, 2013) and although there are no official data, I would argue that it did have an impact on the way teachers and students

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<sup>12</sup> Under the framework of the operational programme 'Education and Lifelong Learning, ESPA 2007-2013' of the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs.

think about inclusive education. Nonetheless, the programme was implemented for a short period and did not affect the official structures in a permanent way.

### *Interculturalism*

Hohmann (1989), one of the founders of the theory of interculturalism in Europe, has described the aims of intercultural pedagogy as the 'contact' between cultures; the overcoming of obstacles obstructing such contact; and the establishment of 'cultural exchanges' and subsequently 'cultural enrichment' (cited in Damanakis, 2002, p. 108-109 – my translation). According to Damanakis (2002), the objective of the contact of cultures presupposes four principles, which, as he supports, are both legitimate and problematic (this I will explore in the following section): a) equality of cultures, cultural relativism and universalism, b) equal evaluation of the 'cultural capital' of people from diverse cultural backgrounds, c) equal opportunities for all, and d) the development of individuals through diverse social circumstances as the basis and outcome of intercultural pedagogy. It has been long argued that each culture has developed under specific historical, geographical, economical and political circumstances which form their values, ethos and modes of communication. Following this, cultures cannot be compared to each other as inferior or superior, but could only be assessed individually, on the basis of their internal progress and development (Lyons, 1999; Damanakis, 2002).

In this sense, interculturalism proposes that all cultures are equal. Concurrently it takes account of an intermediate 'culture of the immigrants', which should be accepted as equal to the culture of origin and the culture of the host country (Damanakis, 2002). The role of intercultural pedagogy should, therefore, be to promote the value of each culture in relation to the particular historical circumstances which formed that culture, and its significance for the individual's identity (Damanakis, 2002). In other words, interculturalism entails cultural relativism, where differences between cultures are accepted as inevitable



and unproblematic (Damanakis, 2002). Moreover, accepting all cultures as equal consequently insinuates that the values these cultures express are also to be acknowledged as equal. Therefore, interculturalism is infused with the principle of universalism, once cultural values are recognised as universally valid (Damanakis, 2002). According to interculturalism, cultural relativism and universalism are placed at the centre of pedagogical practices.

It follows that the cultural capital<sup>13</sup> of individuals from different cultures should be equally valued (Damanakis, 2002). This relates to the previous discussion of the 'particularity' of immigrant students articulated in the Greek intercultural policy. If ethnic minority students are targeted as the ones needing special intercultural education, while non-immigrant students do not, this shows that ethnic minority students lack in 'cultural capital'. Obviously, this opposes to the aims of intercultural pedagogy and is another element indicating the shortcomings of the Greek intercultural education scheme. The equality of cultural capitals highlights the right for every individual to equally participate in the domains of education, society and economy of the host country (Damanakis, 2002). This brings us to the third principle, that of the equality of opportunities. There has been a great body of literature researching school effectiveness and equality of opportunities. One of the main arguments of intercultural education is that issues of colour, ethnicity, class and gender should not be, by any means, a factor for discrimination against students during their channelling and selection through the educational system. As I argue in the next section, approaches which do not take into account the elements upon which discrimination can be enacted are colour/ethnic/class and gender-blind and neglect the institutionalised forms of discrimination.

Finally, intercultural pedagogic practice starts from the idea that individuals should be educated and developed within diversity. Intercultural pedagogy does not concern only those of 'other' cultural backgrounds. It is a model of mutual education for students from

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<sup>13</sup> I insert the term at its exact translation from Greek. The source does not specify if 'cultural capital' is meant or not in a Bourdieuan way; I understand that cultural capital here is the accumulation of language, cultural values, customs and previous education.

both host and immigrant cultures (Mitakidou, 2000). A considerable body of Greek literature has been developed concerning bilingual education (i.e Tsokalidou 2005; 2007; 2012; Skourtou, 2011). These researchers argue against 'linguicism', which is described by Skutnabb-Kangas (1988, p.13 ) as:

...ideologies and structures which are used to legitimate, effectuate and reproduce and unequal division of power and resources (both material and non-material) between groups which are defined on the basis of language (on the basis of their mother tongues).

Moving towards this direction, various bilingual models of education have been proposed to create an education where diverse mother tongues are not only being acknowledged, but they are also learned by all social members and used in the public sphere.

Most of the Greek educational research around intercultural issues has focused on strategies to bring other cultures into the classroom in a fight against ethnocentrism, in favour of breaking down stereotypical and prejudice images and in promoting the teaching of Greek as a second language.

### *Rethinking intercultural education*

As Damanakis (2002) argued, the aforementioned four principles grounding Interculturalism raise theoretical and practical considerations. A first issue to ask is how education could promote equality between cultures and their values - which supports the other three principles - when, as in the case of Greece, the curriculum is highly ethnocentric. Even though the Greek Constitution has been recently reformed in 2008, when multiethnicity was evidently present in school classrooms, it still states that the aim of education in Greece is to educate 'the Greeks' and develop their sense of the Greek nationality and religion (Article 16, Paragraph 2). As Damanakis (2002) argues, it is obvious that the Greek State

does not leave space for diversity and cultural pluralism, but is rather dogmatic and ethnocentric.

In such a context where one culture is set hierarchically above other cultures – legitimising the dualism of superiority-inferiority in its Constitution - ‘equality of cultures’ sounds a naivety. This is where, according to David Gillborn (1995), multiculturalism seems to have failed to ‘address[ing] the key structural forces involved in shaping and sustaining racism’ (p. 66). Nikolaou (2005) points out the overwhelming simplicity in which multiculturalism tries to address issues of racism by contending that bringing people together is enough and the grave importance it lays upon cultural differences and prejudice. The ‘sympathetic teaching of “other cultures”’ and the simultaneous lack of attention to racism ‘as embedded in structures and institutions’ has not proven to be the right strategy for addressing the reality of discriminatory social practice (Rattansi, 1992, p.25). As discussed earlier regarding ‘particularity’, the institutional focus on cultural difference seems to perpetuate power domination and the ‘deficit’ of immigrant students. Troyna and Williams (1986), after Gundara (1983), highlight that multiculturalism, in its uncritical materialisation, entails ‘notions of deprivation, disadvantage and underprivilege’ (p. 46).

Consequently, compensatory curricula attempt to resolve inadequacies in the students’ knowledge of the ‘host’ country’s language and culture (Troyna and Williams, 1986). Multiculturalism seems to forget what Hall names ‘colonial experience’, which in this case becomes the ‘immigration experience’; the power of the dominant -host- culture positions immigrant identities as inferior ‘others’ (Hall, 1990, p. 236). This positioning is engineered by a play of ‘cultural power and normalisation’ exerted by the dominant culture (Hall, 1990, p. 236). In this power play, the ‘normal’, or the non-different, and the ‘abnormal’, or the different, are being legitimised through the everyday experience of the structures of discrimination. A multicultural/intercultural approach that does not acknowledge the complexity of reality and normalises difference, cannot achieve the ‘easy’ equality of cultures it promises. As I will discuss in detail in Chapter Two, I find Bourdieu’s notions of fields and habitus essential to understanding power interplays and hierarchical positioning.

For multiculturalists, stereotyping and prejudice is identified as the source of discrimination and racism. The theory of stereotypes is based on the 'natural' need of the human mind for categorisation and is considered to be inevitable for 'orderly living' (Allport, 1979, p.20). Over-generalisations about the similarities and differences between various groups and the charging of those conceptual categories with positive or negative feelings based on one's own values are at the heart of prejudiced attitudes (Milner, 1985; Georgas, 1995). A point to be made here is that this belief has produced the 'prejudiced individual', either this being the teacher or the student (Rattansi, 1992, p. 25). Therefore, the middle-class, white teacher and the middle-class white student are registered as categories of people who are potentially racist. They thus become the 'target of pedagogies that are supposed to cure them of this pathology', and no differentiation between individuals and circumstances is taken into consideration (Rattansi, 1992, p.25). Concurrently, the victims of prejudice and racism are also made into essential categories; I come back to this point in the next section.

However, difference, like stereotypical images, is argued to be socially constructed by the dominant society, so that positions of superiority and inferiority remain unchallenged (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001). Critical literature on racism has offered analyses on how the positioning of individuals as 'different from the rest' is embedded in the hegemonic hierarchies built within societies through the interplays of power. Stuart Hall (1992) argues that 'black' as a category of differentiation has been constructed within discourses of politics and culture, and that the war against racial discrimination becomes in effect a 'struggle around positionalities' (p. 255). In the same manner, Brah (1992) stresses that difference is 'constructed within...competing discourses' of power, and that it becomes a 'difference of social condition' (p. 130-131). Additionally, in an interesting argument, Delgado and Stefancic (2001) highlight that the dominant group constructs difference according to its current needs for specific groups to be dominated over particular periods of time: in agriculture for example, the discriminated groups have other times been the Mexican or Japanese workers, when the utility of blacks was not as contributory for the needs of the American society. They name this social practice 'differential racialization', and

also point out how stereotypes and popular images are also a product of the social conditions of that time (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001, p. 8).

From the above it becomes clear that instead of insisting on difference as a product of cognitive processes (and thus 'inevitable' as human nature) and as a problem to be overcome by bringing 'prejudiced' people in contact with the 'other', the attention should be on the hierarchical positioning of individuals through structures of power.

The disregard of hegemonic power as constitutive of everyday practice within the multicultural paradigm has led to the belief that equality of cultures could be an easily achievable target through pedagogic strategies that promote the contact between 'us' and 'others'. As I argued, reality is far more complicated. Consequently, equal acknowledgement of the students' cultural capital, as well as equality of opportunities cannot be grounded on this erroneous concept of acceptance of the 'other'.

Discriminatory practice against particular groups is present in and interwoven with various ways of the structuring and organisation of social life. In the 60s and 70s civil rights movements and anti-discrimination legislation brought forward the question of equality of educational opportunities and achievement within the discourse of racism (Gillborn, 1995). This interrogation of discrimination, as Gillborn (1995, p.5) says,

removes *intent* from the equation; actions and/or rule that disproportionately disadvantage people of minority ethnic background may be judged racist in their consequences, whatever the conscious intent behind them.

Until then the question focused on the matter of inequality of access to education for racialised students. After that it moved on to examining the inequalities of black (and 'other') students' outcomes, as results of 'hidden' appearances of discrimination rooted in social structures. Institutionalised forms of racism are not confined in the narrow concept of 'overt' or 'direct' racism, but also in the 'complex, sometimes subtle, but always powerful presence at the heart of contemporary society' (Gillborn, 2002, p.1). The challenge against racism should include a deconstruction of structured social spaces such as education, employment, housing, immigration policy etc. (Rattansi, 1992, p. 29).

Institutional racism is not only used to describe, but also to analyse processes of constructing inequalities. It is used as a tool for understanding the deeply implicated forms of oppression of particular social groups (Troyna and Williams, 1986). Institutional racism is also a useful instrument for unpacking the 'networks' of racism built between collaborating institutions, reinforcing discrimination (Troyna and Williams, 1986). Schools in particular are 'institutional sites for selection and deselection' (Rattansi, 1992, p.22). Bourdieu and Passeron's (1990) research has given a detailed account of the procedures of selection of middle and lower class students and argued that discriminatory practices exist against the latter along lines of social class and gender. Later on I present research which has interrogated institutional racism and ethnic minority student achievement.

The majority of Greek research has not yet moved on to a critical appreciation of the countenances of racism. Although the majority of writers acknowledge the deeply embedded ethnocentric character of the Greek curriculum, they do not engage with research that takes account of institutional discrimination. It seems that a strong critical discussion could stem from the research on bilingualism and linguicism, which challenges hierarchical structures expressed through linguistic discrimination. From the above discussion it becomes obvious that within a problematic and complex context any suggestion on tackling discrimination by 'bringing cultures together' and accepting others as equal – in the hope that inequalities will be eliminated – is profoundly problematic.

### **Principalship and ethnic minority students**

This section presents discussions about principalship in multiethnic schools. Putting the job of the principal in the context of Greece, I briefly look at the emergence of the principal as key in the effectiveness of schools, focusing on research that challenges meanings of 'effectiveness' for ethnic minority students. I examine principalship and the micro-politics of

multiethnic schools, and I consider the involvement of principals in changing schools towards inclusive pedagogies.

### *An account of principalship in Greece*

The Greek policy on educational management (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2002b) places the school principal at the top of the school community and identifies her/him as accountable for the organisational and educational processes of the school. The policy regulates that the principal's duties involve supervision and regulation of her/his staff (the Teacher Body), by informing them on policies and regulations, and making sure they abide by these. At the same time, the policy defines that a principal should cooperate with teachers on an equal basis. According to Baldrige *et al.* (1978), one of the characteristics of the effective leader is that s/he is the 'first amongst equals in an educational institution, with the condition that this institution is run by experts and they follow a cooperative procedure' (cited in Raptis and Vitsilaki, 2007, p. 79). In Greece the policy suggests that school management happens both by the principal and the teachers. However, this is a very challenging venture. Chatzipanagiotou (2003) argues that there is bewilderment over the participation of teachers in school management. School administration often becomes a point for tension between the teachers and the principal, as the latter expect teachers to take responsibility for the running of school, while the former do not feel their role and duties as connected to school management. Therefore, they do not understand decision-making as a part of their responsibilities, and cast the school principal as the only one responsible. In other words, they feel their role as executing the decisions taken from above (Chatzipanagiotou, 2003).

This reality has brought me to favour the term 'principalship' and 'school principal' instead of 'management', 'manager' or 'leadership' and 'leader'. I rejected the last two terms as I understand that they are used to refer mostly to 'charismatic' people who

understand the nature of their schools, their challenges, the personalities of their staff, lead changes and have a clear vision (Raptis and Vitsilaki, 2007 after West-Burnham and Bourantas). Without suggesting that the principals of my research do not have some of the characteristics of a 'leader', nonetheless I would refrain from naming them a priori 'leaders'. I understand 'principalship' and 'management' as interchangeable terms to describe a teacher who is appointed as the school director; uses 'licensed authority' (Ball, 1987, p.82); concentrates mostly on administration and bureaucratic practices; and is appointed to 'do things right' (Bourantas, 2005, cited in Raptis and Vitsilaki, 2007, p. 31-32). The choice between 'manager' and 'principal' was based on the literal closeness of the term 'principal' – top teacher among teachers – to the reality of the Greek schools. This is crucial in analysing the role of the person who is 'equal amongst equals', a phrase often cited by educators to refer to this post, as this confers particular possibilities and restrictions in her/his practice. I come back to this in Chapter Five.

The policy on educational management (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2002b) states that the principal should promote and support the collective visions of the school, and be the mentor for the newest teacher members. Moreover, s/he should endorse the school as a site of learning and teachers' training and progress; keep a working and collaborative atmosphere amongst teachers; assess everyone's abilities and use them creatively; cooperate with parents/guardians and the student community in order to manage a framework of understanding and responsibility for the school's life; and meet and cooperate with members of the local educational authorities (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2002b). I see that the policy reflects Ladson-Billings' (2010) proposal that the principal should be an academic leader for her/his teachers, and that s/he should involve the community. However, it is questionable whether the principal is actually in position to deliver on all these, due to the inadequacies of the policy arrangements in relation to the jurisdictional balance between principals and teachers, lack of substantial principal training and absence of school assessment (Papanaoum, 1995; Saitis, 2008;). Papanaoum (1995) suggests that the principal's role ends up being only the administrator and executer of



educational policies and regulations. Moreover, according to Saitis (2008), her/his job-post as 'educator' refers to training her/his staff only on administrative and operational skills.

As Kouloubaritsi *et al* (2007) observe, the current policy adds some power to the post of the principal and by upgrades her/his responsibilities and jurisdictions compared to past policy texts. However, the authors are also critical of the centralised 'pyramidal' approach to school management, which distributes the largest portion of power to higher – and concentrated to less people - levels of authority. In effect, they argue, this means that the principal remains a bureaucrat, whose role is confined to guarding policies and minor regulations (Kouloubaritsi *et al*, 2007). Similar views are expressed by other research (Papanaoum, 1995; Saitis and Gounaropoulos, 2001; Thody, Papanaoum, Johansson and Pashiardis, 2007). Recognising that this kind of rigid structuring guarantees state control, Kouloubaritsi *et al* (2007) raise further questions about the shares of responsibility for student attainment and the quality of education between individual schools and higher authority levels. Moreover, they argue that through processes of curriculum adjustments (i.e. introduction of cross-subject teaching and teaching of immigrant students) the school life has acquired a new, more contextualised and complex character; which requires from the school Principals and teachers specialised knowledge and qualifications (Kouloubaritsi *et al*, 2007).

Thody, Papanaoum, Johansson and Pashiardis (2007) report that there is no official educational management training. Instead, their practice is informed by their personal experiences and individual perceptions of their role (Saitis and Gounaropoulos, 2001). On the matter of principalship in relation to ethnic diversity, the discussions are still at embryonic stage. Existing research usually engages with establishing the need for more research (Papanaoum, 2006); or is based on a comparative literature reviewing of the international experience (Kesidou, 2006). These approaches, however, have much affected the field of educational management in considering multiethnicity in principal practice. For example, the national programme 'Diapolis' (Education of Foreign and Repatriate Students, 2013), which run from 2010 to 2013, has offered principal training on intercultural education. This was a pioneer intervention, and reports are anticipated.

### *School effectiveness: implications for ethnic minority students*

School effectiveness, measured by student achievement on standardised tests, has received a considerable amount of respect in academic research. Developed mainly during the 1980s, it was grounded in the belief that 'schools *can make a difference*' (Thrupp, 1999, p.17). The main feature of this stream of research adheres to management and organisational theories, and its main goal is to identify 'the mechanisms of effectiveness' (Mortimore *et al*, 1988, p. 231). Critics to such approaches note their technicist and prescriptive nature; and the decontextualised approaches to effectiveness, where social, cultural (and sub-cultural) and political factors are widely underplayed (Ball, 1987; Lauder, Jamieson and Wikeley, 1998; Slee and Weiner, 1998; Thrupp, 1999; Lupton, 2005). Persisting difference-'gaps' in the attainment of students of particular social class, race/ethnicity and gender characteristics back up these criticisms (Lupton, 2005; Thrupp, 1999). Nonetheless, these approaches share the assumption that school principals exercise some kind of influence over school processes. Studies such as that of Mortimore *et al* (1988) suggested that leadership styles and the qualities of the principal have an impact on school effectiveness. Others indicate that principal leadership does influence student achievement, but this effect is indirect and mediated mostly through the work of teachers (Hallinger and Heck, in Lingard and Christie, 2003).

Nowadays, headteachers are rarely seen as the 'head of the teachers' but their post is additionally charged with responsibilities of management, accountancy and leadership (Gunter, 2003). A menu of approaches to school leadership styles includes instructional, transformational, moral, participative, managerial and contingent leadership (Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach, 1999). I find that including an analysis of these approaches here is not necessary for the purpose of my thesis, as I take on a different – sociological - stance towards principalship.

My research is not a study of school effectiveness per se. It deals, though, with the ways in which principal practice affects the educational experiences of ethnic minority students. In this sense, it does make a case for more effective schooling, as well as for an

approach that takes into account the context of school management. For this I find useful here to refer to research that has interrogated student outcomes taking into account issues of diversity. David Gillborn and Deborah Youdell (2000) discuss how 'league tables' and assumptions around ability (what they call the 'new IQism') have created institutional practices that stigmatise working-class and ethnic minority students as low-attainers and probable failures. They argue that school practices have excluded African-Caribbean students by rationing their education through discursive processes implicating race and ability - what the authors call 'educational triage' (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000, p. 133). Other research has also discussed the construction of 'ideal clients' within school (Gillborn, 1990); the performativity of discursive practices which constitute black students as impossible learners and sustain inequalities (Youdell, 2003; 2006a; 2006b); the subtle forms of discrimination taking place in classrooms in teacher-student and student-student relationships (Reay 1995a; 1995b); and the behavioural strategies that ethnic minority students develop in order to 'survive' or 'resist' institutional discrimination (Mac an Ghaill, 1988; Mirza, 1993). These micro-processes of institutional racism add to the conceptualisations of the role of the principal in leading inclusive schools.

The effectiveness of Greek schools is not measured by official monitoring committees (i.e the UK's Ofsted), and it remains a matter for school or teacher self-evaluation. Nevertheless, the most recent statistical data (collected during 1998-1999) reveal that Greek schools are failing ethnic minority students. There is a dramatic drop in their attendance in secondary (compulsory and post-compulsory<sup>14</sup>) education (Paleologlou, 2004). This fact shows that schools are not 'effective' for ethnic minority students, no-matter how effectiveness is measured.

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<sup>14</sup> Compulsory schooling stops at the age of 14-15, which I name 'secondary' in my research. Post-compulsory schools are referred to as 'high-schools', and include ages between 14-15 and 17-18.

### *Micro-politics, multiethnicity and conflict*

Research indicates that the contribution of principals is of great importance for the school organisation (Burgess, 1983; Early and Weindling, 2004). This implies a certain conviction that principalship entails authority and influence. Carolyn Riehl (2000) argues that school principals working in multiethnic school contexts are 'key agents' in shaping meanings towards inclusive pedagogies (Riehl, 2000, p. 60). She sees that principals have an 'additional power in defining situations and their meanings', and are in better position to 'influence meaning-making' (Riehl, 2000, p. 60). Such meanings are constructed through everyday school life; as Riehl (2000, p.60) says,

schools embody a complex array of understandings, beliefs, and values that find legitimacy through their acceptance by the broader public and that are encoded in school structures, cultures, and routine practices. Schools are, in effect, constructed around the meanings that people hold about them.

Meanings are made by people and could thus be as varied as the number of people who make those meanings. Even official policies do not define what school is, but are rather 'open to "interpretation"' (Ball, 1987, p. 15). Those meanings could be grounded in personal ideologies and vested interests that school members hold around its role (Ball, 1987). Therefore, within this pluralism of meanings, the school is far from a homogeneous place, but instead '*arenas of struggle*; to be riven with actual or potential conflict between members; to be poorly co-ordinated; to be ideologically diverse' (Ball, 1987, p. 12).

On the matter of principalship for diversity, the principal's own understandings play an important role in her/his strategies. Ryan's (2003) research suggests that principals were likely to fail to recognise that racism existed in their schools. According to Ryan (2003), this could come as a result of lack of appreciation on the principals' part of the deeper and salient forms of racism (as interwoven in the institution's structures); or their reluctance to acknowledge their school as being racist for the sake of its reputation and competition in the school market. If the principal is in position to define meanings, then the principal's own meanings and perceptions should be placed at the centre of concern. I suggest that the

application of the notion of principal habitus illuminates the way principal practices are produced.

Given such a variety of meanings, it is not difficult to understand how conflict is present in the school processes. However, conflict is usually ignored by managerial literature (Ball, 1987). Henze, Katz and Norte's (2000) research is one that discusses conflict, and in particular conflict that is based on racial or ethnic issues. Leaders, they argue, conceptualise conflict as a complex notion with overt and covert countenances; leaders are also able to identify its precursors (Henze, Katz and Norte, 2000). The research classified racial/ethnic conflict between students across a continuum of forms: overt conflict (such as physical violence), subtle conflict (i.e. avoidance of particular groups) and root causes of conflict (i.e. segregation, racism, inequality) (Henze, Katz and Norte, 2000, p. 197). Their research, however, portrays the principal as above all conflict: s/he is there to acknowledge conflict and act as a pacifier (Henze, Katz and Norte, 2000). Here, I would raise the following question: is the principal not involved in those conflicts? The following paragraphs deal with this query.

Ryan (2003) suggests that principal strategies against racism depend on the principal's understanding of what racism is. Henze, Katz and Norte's (2000) research conceptualises racism as a result of stereotypes, personal prejudice and lack of contact between cultures. As stated in Chapter One, such understandings are problematic, since they fail to grasp the more subtle structural forms of racism. Racism is a complicated issue. Unless negotiated with the broader community, conceptualisations of racism are bound to be confined in one individual's - or one group's- perceptions. Gillborn (1995) presents how teachers' notions of racism had to be constantly negotiated with students, parents and community and undergo contestation and resistance. It is obvious that different understandings of racism lead to different practices against racism. If the principal's role is to resolve racial/ethnic conflict, as in Henze, Katz and Norte's (2000) research, then her/his strategies are much dependent on understandings of the nature of the conflict; and if such understandings are not shared among the school community (including ethnic minority students and their parents), then those strategies are likely to fail, or be regarded as partial

and hegemonic (Gilborn, 1995). Therefore, understandings of principals as 'neutral pacifiers' fail to position them as individuals implicated in the same conflict through their own understandings of what the conflict is.

An emerging assumption in many studies (i.e. Henze, Katz and Norte, 2000) is that the school principal is in control of the school processes. Ball (1987) criticises top-down approaches to school organisation as distorted representations of the school realities, and argues for more complex understandings of control. He criticises any organisational typology of forms of control in relation to structure that tries to fit school administration into fixed categories, such as hierarchical or membership-controlled (Ball, 1987, p. 8). Ball (1987) argues that control changes across school activities and people; also meanings of control shift. He refers to the example of the headteacher in Burgess's (1983) research: the headteacher and the researcher held different opinions on the degree of control the former exerted on his staff (cited in Ball, 1987, p. 9-10). This example highlights how ideas on who *has* the control and what *is* control are negotiated and contested.

### *Principal practice and change towards inclusive pedagogies*

Blair (2002) offers an account of what constitutes effective school leadership for multiethnic contexts. Arguing against positions like that of Slee, Weiner and Tomlinson (1998) who oppose prescriptive management, Blair sustains that 'some generalisations are necessary' in order to help those holding principal posts (p. 186). One of the points she makes is that school leaders should be 'authoritative' and strong in their leadership if they are to bring change in their schools (Blair, 2002). Through a contrasting experience, Gillborn (1995) theorises change as the '*power* of one or more groups to influence the shape of the institution' (Gillborn, 1995, p. 99). In his research, change in one school towards antiracist/multicultural pedagogy was initiated by a 'core group', which implicated and engaged the principal; the latter's support proved to be essential (Gillborn, 1995). However,

the principal's strategy involved collaborating mainly with this core group, while giving them freedom of actions, because 'in the whole staff arena it is merely driving some people further into the corners' (Gillborn, 1995, p. 103). Contradicting Blair's (2002) findings of a strong leader as effective, this illustrates that different school contexts require different approaches; and that the principal is not always the 'authority'.

Some further points of Blair's (2002) research suggest that transformational leadership would be the effective approach to change school cultures towards ethnically inclusive education; the leader should ensure communication of visions and meanings through flexible and diplomatic strategies, especially when dealing with issues of racism; issues of value ('what ought to be') should be central to leadership; and that leaders should work towards the institutionalisation of the vision for a fair and inclusive school. This research pays much attention to contextual factors that challenge leadership, such as difficulties arising from vested interests, different opinions on what racism is, and different meanings of what purpose should the school serve (Blair, 2002). Nevertheless, Blair (2002) starts from some assumptions: leaders *want* change for an inclusive school; and they *can* engineer this change.

I will start from the assumption that principals can engineer change, as this has been supported by research (i.e. Burgess, 1983; Gillborn, 1995; Blair, 2002). However, this research dealt with schools and principals that were willing to change; this is probably not the case for many other schools. Riehl (2000) argues that change happens 'not simply when technical changes in structure and process are undertaken, but when persons inside and outside of the school construct new understandings about what the change means.' (p. 60). Therefore, change is a result of shared understandings on what needs to be change. It becomes clear that change is a complex and difficult process, and definitely not one person's practice. In this context, the claims of Henze, Katz and Norte (2000) that the principal could manage to de-institutionalise racism - even more if we think the intricacy of the concept of institutional racism- seem to deny the complexities of micro-political processes.

Here I would turn to the second assumption that leaders *want* change. Change is not neutral; it much depends on personal ideologies and vested interests (Ball, 1987, p. 5). Therefore, leadership for change cannot be grounded on the leader's 'rationality and efficiency to provide control' (Ball, 1987, p. 5). The leader, as well as her/his staff, has ideologies and vested interests. Wolcott's (1973) ethnographic research of Ed, a headteacher, suggests that his practice was tuned towards the accommodation of the system which he was appointed to serve. In a similar rationale, Henze, Katz and Norte (2000) raise, but do not explore, the matter of how the Japanese ethnic/racial background of a principal might have played a role in his efforts to introduce antiracist pedagogical approaches in his school. Dillard's (1995) research discusses how principal personal biographies and collective experiences as members of cultural/ethnic groups play a decisive role on their leading strategies. These studies highlight how the principals' position within the school system, their vested interests and personal ideologies as well as those of their school community affect their practice.



## CHAPTER TWO

### Conceptualising Social Practice: Pierre Bourdieu

Since principalship is contextual, managing multiethnic schools means taking into account the positions of all school actors within the complexities of social structures, the school principal being one of them. Bourdieu's theoretical framework contributes to my research in two significant ways. Firstly, it allows for a deep comprehension of the structures of domination and discrimination within education and society. The theory, thus, produces a coherent understanding of the complexities underlying social practice – and consequently principal practice. Secondly, it provides the tools to think about schooling and principalship throughout the structures of multiethnicity. My first encounter with Bourdieu's thinking was through Diane Reay's (1995a; 1995b; 1998a; 1998b; 2004) various work on social, racial and gender inequalities, which utilised Bourdieu's theoretical tools to explore manifestations of power in classrooms. Bourdieu's work is concerned with social practice, which is constituted by the trinity of the notions of field, capital and habitus. Bourdieu's concepts are tightly interwoven, and so my writing strategy is to allow the text to be formed by an infusion of his notions. Bourdieu uses the term 'field' to describe any 'structured social space' (Bourdieu, 1998, p.40). These fields could include, for example, the school as space; the school as a system (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992); or education in general (Lingard and Christie, 2003). Eventually social spaces are 'force field[s]', (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 41). Capitals are the 'social energy' needed to become a member of social practice (Bourdieu, 2004, p. 15). They are resources that a person can deploy to maintain or better their position in society – in fields. Finally, what a person becomes and how s/he socially behaves is expressed through the concept of habitus. Habitus is dispositions that are acquired as one participates in different fields of social practice – starting from the family. It is ways of being and doing that feel 'natural' and 'right' to the individual (Bourdieu, 1990).

Bourdieu's theory has been widely used in educational studies (some examples are Harker, 1984; Reay, Ball and David, 2005; Dumais, 2002; Gunter, 2003; Lingard and Christie, 2003; Lingard and Rawolle, 2004). Many of these proved to be influential for my own research, as they provided me with a way of thinking about inequalities in education. Most importantly they helped me to avoid deficit models of understanding students, while focusing on institutional discrimination. This is a highly intricate and at points 'messy' paradigm which however 'fits in well with the complex messiness of the real world' (Reay, 1995b, p. 116). Bourdieu's way of thinking seemed to open possibilities for understanding 'domination as everyday practice' (Cicourel, 1993, p.111). Moreover, Bob Lingard and Pam Christie's (2003) study suggested that 'Bourdieu...makes it possible to explain how the actions of principals are always contextual, since their interests vary with issue, location, time, school mix, composition of staff and so on' (p. 317).

These two encounters with Bourdieu's theory led me to consider it as a tool for interrogating my research questions: What are the freedoms and limitations of principal practice in effecting an inclusive education for ethnic minority students, and where are these located? What are the contextual aspects of principalship and how do these shape principal practices when dealing with issues of multiethnicity? In answering them I draw on two additional concepts, that of 'institutional habitus' (Reay, Ball and David, 2005); and 'principal habitus' (Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie, 2003). The former is, in simple terms, the ethos of an institution, manifested through the behaviour of the members of that institution (Reay, Ball and David, 2005). The latter refers to particular vocational dispositions (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003) that one learns through professional development. Therefore, principals have become 'the right person for the job' while learning how to do the job (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003, 477). The above concepts will be my toolkit to unpack the institutional and vocational processes that pose limitations or possibilities in principal practice for an education-for-all.

## Habitus

Bourdieu's mission was to bridge the objectivist and subjectivist traditions of research, for both traditions had elements to offer and points where they failed. Objectivism brings to the surface the question of the objective conditions within which social practice happens; the 'one and the same system of constant relations' within which a common meaning is made (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 26). However, objectivism fails to take account of individual experience, the ways in which those objective conditions are transformed into individual practice. Subjectivism, on the other hand, suggests that the meaning of the world lies in individual experience, and that knowledge derives from the certainty that this particular experience exists (Bourdieu, 1990). Nevertheless, it does not take account of the particular common social conditions which made that experience possible (Bourdieu, 1990). Bourdieu names his theory constructivist structuralism, or structuralist-constructivism. Structuralist because it talks about the common – he calls them 'objective' - conditions that define the relations between individuals in social practice; constructivist because it talks about the reproduction of those common conditions through individual – subjective - practice (Grenfell and James, 1998). Structures, for Bourdieu, are not static as in structuralist theory, which sees them as 'foundational and transcendent', cross-cultural and timeless 'being innate to the human mind' (Grenfell and James, 1998, p. 14). Bourdieu's structures are dynamic and dialectic with the subject, a relation which is defined through the concept of habitus. I come back to discuss structures later on.

In understanding the concept of habitus I was assisted by Reay's analysis of its four axes (1995b; 2004): *embodiment*, the compound relation between *past and present*, the solidity between the *collective and the individual* and the blending of *agency with structure*. To start with, habitus is embodiment of the world, 'a socialised body' (Bourdieu, cited in Reay, Ball and David, 2005, p. 23). It is social structures internalised by individuals, not only in their minds, but also in their bodies. Long-lasting ways of speaking, dressing and walking are some of the features of the embodied habitus, as are ways of thinking and feeling

(Bourdieu, 1990). Internalisation of the social structures starts from the moment of birth. In *Outline of a Theory of Practice* Bourdieu (1977, p. 87) says:

The child imitates not “models” but other people’s actions. Body hexis speaks directly to the motor function, in the form of a pattern of postures that is both individual and systematic, because linked to a whole system of techniques involving the body and tools, and charged with a host of social meanings and values: in all societies, children are particularly attentive to the gestures and postures which, in their eyes, express everything that goes to make an accomplished adult – a way of walking, a tilt of the head, facial expressions, ways of sitting and of using implements, always associated with a tone of voice, a style of speech, and (how could it be otherwise?) a certain subjective experience.

An individual’s body and mind are products of social conditioning; a social ‘phenotype’. Habitus ‘structures the perception of that world as well as action in that world’ (Bourdieu cited in Reay, Ball and David, 2005, p. 23). It is internalised dispositions that make the individual think and act in certain ways that reflect her/his past social experience.

The second working of the habitus is mediating between past and present. For Bourdieu, the ‘proper object of social science’ is the ‘relation between two realisations of historical action, in bodies and in things’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 126). Habitus is ‘embodied history’ (Bourdieu, 1990, p.56), the incorporation of the continuum of past structures and present structures, starting from those of the family, the school etc., (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p.134). Reay, Ball and David (2005) talk about the ‘familial habitus’. Habitus is a historic body. However, habitus is not only accumulated structured structures, but also proactive restructuring structures. The structures internalised by the habitus are ‘predisposed to function as structuring structures’, generating new responses to old patterns (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53). Although persistent, the habitus is not rigid, but ‘carries within it the genesis of new creative responses, which are capable of transcending the social conditions in which it was produced.’ (Reay, Ball and David, 2005, p.26). As Reay, Ball and David (2005) observe, if habitus was formulated only upon past social conditions - without those conditions also being ‘conditioning’ - working class university applicants would be an impossibility.

Another working of the habitus is the bridging of individual and collective practices as a 'system of dispositions common to all products of the same conditionings' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 59). Individuals living under the same or about the same living conditions internalise specific set of 'attitudes', what Bourdieu calls 'dispositions'. The word implies that these structures are predisposed to function as 'intentions' leading to specific practices. On this similarity of dispositions Bourdieu categorised social practices into clusters of economic conditions; in other words into social classes (Bourdieu, 1986). However, Bourdieu (1993, p.46) asserts:

Action is not a response that can be fully explained by reference to the triggering stimulus; and it has as its principle a system of dispositions, what I call the *habitus*, which is the product of all biographical experience (so that, just as no two individual histories are identical so no two individual *habitus* are identical [...])

Habitus is not identical for all individuals within social classes. Some dispositions are similar across people who have experienced similar social conditions. However, other conditions within those clusters are different – so are their dispositions. Each field of social practice adds on the habitus different structures; thus habitus is always formed and reformed. Habitus carries within it all the moments of the past, which could be a product of either collective or individual experience. Whereas collective experience is in a way easier to identify because of the obviousness of its patterns, individual experience is more challenging to explain. Individual experience is strings pulled together from the total of (the countless) collective experiences, resulting in the formation of a singularity – a unique individual. Nonetheless, Bourdieu (1993, p.46) continues the above sentence as follows:

[...] although there are classes of experiences and therefore classes of *habitus* - the *habitus* of classes.

To my understanding, Bourdieu wants to protect empirical research from overgeneralisations, where an 'easy' and 'convenient' identification of commonalities would provide behavioural patterns. It is not that the habitus is empirically unreachable. Bourdieu

always emphasised that the value of his concept lies in its empirical use and reflexivity. The point he makes is that one should be careful of generalisations when trying to map down a class habitus, without overlooking subjectivity. In other words, the habitus is non-essentialist.

Finally, the habitus has the capacity to move from structure to agency and from agency to structure, that is between the subjective (individual) and the objective (field) (Reay, 2004). Bourdieu (cited in Reay, 2004, p. 433) says:

The habitus, as a system of dispositions to a certain practice, is an objective basis for regular modes of behaviour, and thus for the regularity of the modes of practice, and if practices can be predicted...this is because the effect of the habitus is that agents who are equipped with it will behave in a certain way in certain circumstances.

The habitus reproduces practices that are for 'people like us' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 77). If, however, such practices are socially predetermined, where is agency to be found? What is the meaning of choice, if choice is already made for us? The answer is to be found in the totality of one's life. The course of one's life is the compilation of different field experiences which structure and re-structure the habitus. Habitus, thus, guides individuals through choices and finally leads them to choosing the practice that 'naturally' fits to their social experiences – the logic of practice. Nonetheless, any choice results from the reproduction of the structures that have structured the habitus. There is, thus, an agency that chooses; but this choice is available within the limits set by structures. As Reay (2004) articulates, 'the most improbable practices are rejected as unthinkable but, concomitantly, only a limited range of practices are possible' (p. 433). Bourdieu (1990, p.87) asserts:

Habitus is a kind of transforming machine that leads us to "reproduce" the social conditions of our own production, but in a relatively unpredictable way, in such a way that one cannot move simply and mechanically from knowledge of the conditions of production to knowledge of the product.

There is an agency which replicates social structures. However, this replication follows a complicated procedure of choosing and rejecting multiple scenarios. As Adams (2006)

suggest, ‘there is often an opportunity to “play the game” in more than one way’ (p. 515). McNay (1999) notes that Bourdieu’s habitus avoids the ‘fetishization of the indeterminacy of social structures’ (cited in Adams, 2006, p. 515). Nonetheless, the concept has been heavily criticised for its determinacy and the underplaying of agency and reflexivity (Kim, 2010; Adams, 2006). I come back to this matter when discussing the logic of practice.

## **Capitals**

Capital has three prime forms: the economic, the social and the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2004, p.15). These are the resources which an individual uses to participate in society and upon which her/his social standing is played out. Economic capital refers to the ‘currency of exchange’ (Lingard and Christie, 2003, p. 324) - it refers to the obvious monetary value (Bourdieu, 2004). Social capital is constituted by social networks, people which an individual knows and can be used to one’s social benefit (Bourdieu, 2004). Finally, cultural capital is the accumulation of cultural competences, such as linguistic skills, conduct and accommodation of beliefs, mainly bequeathed by family and schooling (Reay, Ball and David, 2005). Every form of capital is derivative of economic capital (Bourdieu, 2004). Economic capital is convertible into cultural capital if, for example, we consider education as a social space for gaining cultural capital: attending a more expensive school, or being in education longer, which itself costs more in money and time, will earn them ‘more’, or a different type of, cultural capital. In turn, cultural capital can be translated into economic capital, for example through education that brings well-paid professions. Capitals are ultimately translated into symbolic capital, an arbitrary value attributed to them other than their face-value conveying a particular status.

Capital makes a particular space of social practice (a field) dynamic and not static. It is the reason for social agents to be antagonistic over something, the possession of which will pay the profits available in the field. ‘There is always choice’ in a field, always a reason

to struggle, and that is the capitals (i.e. power) at stake (Grenfell and James, 1998, p. 21). This implies that, if capitals are to be won or lost, then there is always hope for agents who do not possess capital to do so by struggling for it. Grenfell and James (1998) give the example of students who may not enter the school field with the required capital, but are able to gain it through schooling. According to Reay, Ball and David (2005), the power of capital within a specific field has to be accounted for in relation to other forms of capital. Moreover, Bourdieu asserts that entry in a field depends on the circumstances of the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). More on the relation between field and capitals later on.

As I mentioned earlier, cultural capital is the accumulation of 'linguistic competences, manners, preferences and orientations' (Reay, Ball and David, 2005, p.20). The term has been variably used to describe the 'prestigious tastes, objects, or styles validated by centers of cultural authority' (Mohr and DiMaggio, 1995, p. 168); or students' participation in cultural activities (Dumais, 2002). However, as Reay, Ball and David (2005) argue, 'cultural capital is much more than the high status activities that have traditionally been operationalised in empirical research within education' (p. 20). In their own work they also include 'qualitative dimensions of cultural capital', such as 'levels of confidence, certainty and entitlement...individuals' strategic use of knowledge, skills and competence' (Reay, Ball and David, 2005, p. 20-21).

Bourdieu (2004) identifies three countenances of cultural capital: the embodied state, the objectified and the institutionalised. The objectified state refers to objects, products of a cultural activity; books, dictionaries, art work, certificates etc. The institutionalised state relates to institutions, such as universities and schools, and it is connected to the objectified state and particularly educational qualifications (Bourdieu, 2004). The embodied state of cultural capital is closely related to habitus. It describes internalised and enduring attitudes expressed in mind and body (Bourdieu, 2004, p.18). In other words, it is the cultural capital made into body and way of thinking. According to Reay, Ball and David (2005), this form of cultural capital is acquired through 'pedagogic action, the investment of time by parents, other family members or hired professionals to sensitise the child to cultural distinctions' (p. 20). Moreover, Bourdieu (2004) asserts that



embodied capital is 'external wealth converted into an integral part of the person, into a habitus...' (p.18). That is, accumulation of cultural capital in its embodied state – that is in body and mind- converts into habitus. In other words, qualities attributed to cultural capital are internalised by individuals as their nature. Acquisition of cultural capital depends '...on the period, the society, and the social class, in the absence of any deliberate inculcation, and therefore quite unconsciously' (Bourdieu, 2004, p. 18).

The unconscious mode through which cultural capital is acquired and used brings us to the symbolic capital, a quintessential point of Bourdieu's theory. Symbolic capital is cultural capital misrecognised as an arbitrary cultural product and recognised as 'legitimate competency' (Bourdieu, 2004.). All forms of capital attribute symbolic distinctions to their possessors. They are based on objective distinctions (i.e amount of wealth, contacts, level of education etc.), but social 'presuppositions' constitute them as distinctive of a particular social status (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2013, p. 298). Therefore, symbolic capital rests on the (mis)recognition of these real conditions as 'social order', while ignoring their arbitrariness (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2013, p. 298). For Bourdieu the educational system imposes 'symbolic violence', since it works to misrecognise social resources for 'abilities' (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990, p. 41). Symbolic capital is relational and so it changes values in different fields and across history (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2013).

In my work I also draw on the notion of 'anti-capital'. The term is mentioned in Grenfell's (2009) article on social capital, who defines it as 'a culture counter to the dominant one' (p. 25). Grenfell (2009, p.23) says:

[...] in a world of *doxa* and *heterodoxa* – both orthodox and heretical – *capital* itself (especially *cultural capital*) may only have value within the *field* in which it exists. If the *field* is not governed by the dominant, legitimated *doxa*, and thus has a heterodoxic *cultural capital*, then its medium of discourse is a kind of *anti-capital*, which itself will also be amplified by the *social capital*, networks, that mediates *field* processes.

Grenfell (2009) does not develop this concept further in his paper, however anti-capital can be theoretically supported by work such as that of Yosso (2005) and Mac an Ghail (1989).

Yosso (2005) suggests that 'Students of Color' mobilised various capitals which were heterodox or were acquired through the state of being heterodox. She identifies as such capitals the aspirational, the navigational, the social, the linguistic, the familial and the resistant (Yosso, 2005, p. 69). The aspirational capital is being able to aspire for the future against a subordinate social standing. The linguistic capital refers to having multilingual skills; the familial capital to the cultural resources acquired within the family and community such as collective histories and memories; and the social capital to community membership. The navigational capital explains the ability to manoeuvre around institutional racism; and the resistant capital 'those knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality' (Yosso, 2005, p. 80). The last two forms of capital echo Mac an Ghail's (1989) case that due to their experiences of institutional racism, black students developed 'coping and survival strategies' to get through with their cultural subordination at school (p. 273). Moreover, Mac an Ghail (1989) proposes that through these strategies the students were 'consciously creating their own material culture' defying white culture's normativity. Anti-capital, thus, encompasses these anti-normative, social resources that ethnic minority students develop and at the same time describes their heterodox workings in the doxa of the school.

### **Fields and the logic of practice**

Bourdieu (1998, p. 40-41) defines field as follows:

A field is a structured social space, a field of forces, a force field. It contains people who dominate and people who are dominated. Constant, permanent relationships of inequality operate inside this space, which at the same time becomes a space in which the various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the field. All the individuals in this universe bring to the competition all the (relative) power at their disposal. It is this power that defines their position in the field, and, as a result, their strategies.

Fields are 'socially-constituted areas of activity' across which individuals (agents) are positioned according to their objective relations (Lingard and Christie, 2003, p.324). For Bourdieu these relations are 'objective' since they are formed upon 'material properties', i.e. the body, wealth etc., and 'can be numbered and measured like any other object of the physical world' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2013, p. 293). These define the objective structures of the field and he names them the "objectivity of the first order". The "objectivity of the second order" regards the 'systems of classification, the mental and bodily schemata that function as symbolic templates for the practical activities – conduct, thoughts, feelings, and judgements – of social agents' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1997, p. 7). These two different orders describe the field structures in their two countenances, the social and the mental, upon which individuals are socially positioned (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1997; 2013). Concurrently, as Bourdieu (2004) suggests, "objectivity is a social product of the field which depends on the presuppositions accepted in the field" (cited in Kim, 2010, p. 749). Structures are always restructured (and restructuring) through the social practice of individuals; they are, thus, subjectified and subjectifying. Fields describe the objective conditions of practice; and the habitus the subjective responses to it. This is the logic of practice, to which I come back later on.

Struggle evolves among agents in order to maintain or change their relation to other agents and subsequently their positioning in the field. Bourdieu usually refers to the concept of field using a metaphor, according to which the field is a 'game'. It is a game where players, working as individuals or in groups, seek to improve or maintain their positions. Depending on their personal interest, they attempt to inflict the social criteria which best serve them (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Individual strategies on how to play the field game rely upon the possession of capitals, which serve as a 'pile of tokens of various colours that they [individuals] have won in the previous rounds and which they will play in the rounds to come' to their benefit (Bourdieu, 1993 p. 34). Additionally, an agent will choose to participate more eagerly in games (fields) where her/his capitals have chances to be valued higher: '...the more yellow tokens (cultural capital) they have, the more they will stake on the yellow squares (the educational system)' (Bourdieu, 1993). Not

everybody, though, has same access to capitals; this depends on the value and utility of the capitals (power) they bring in the game (Harker, 1984). The individuals' strategies aim at two ends: to gain more capital in order to preserve or advance their location in the field or to convert capitals into other forms of capital that will put them in advantage (Grenfell and James, 1998).

Fields are positioned in hierarchical relations (Reay, 2004), with the fields of economy and power in 'a superordinate relationship to other quasi-autonomous fields' (Lingard and Christie, 2003, p. 323). Thomson and Holdsworth argue that the field of power is the accumulation of all fields (in Lingard and Christie, 2003, p. 324). There are countless fields framing social practice, which may also contain subfields. These fields and their subfields may have overlapping structures and rules to be followed by those wanting to enter the field and play the game. However each field has a degree of relative autonomy and a distinct 'logic of practice' as its rule (Lingard and Christie, 2003). This logic means that the individual knows and acts according to the field rules; put simply, the know-how of the game. Logic of practice is non-deliberate, unconscious and automated. An individual masters so many logics as are the fields within which s/he participates. Fields are not closed blocks of activity. Their borders are dynamic, always in dialectical relation with the borders of other fields.

A field does not have parts, components. Every subfield has its own logic, rules and regularities, and each stage in the division of a field...entails a genuine qualitative leap...Every field constitutes a potentially open space of play whose boundaries are *dynamic borders* which are the stake of struggles within the field itself.

(Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 104)

The field has, however, 'stages of division' which means that they are identifiable and eligible to description (Bourdieu, and Wacquant, 1992, p. 104). However, Bourdieu admits that the question of the field limits is 'a very difficult one' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 100). Eventually this also means that identifying clear-cut blocks of 'logics' is also a difficult question.

For an individual to operate in a specific field needs to master the logic of practice of that field, the 'sense of the game' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 121). Undoubtedly, participation in the game must also have some meaning for the 'player'.

The relation between habitus and field operates in two ways. On one side, it is a relation of conditioning: the field structures the habitus, which is the product of the embodiment of the immanent necessity of the field (or of a hierarchy of intersecting fields). On the other side, it is a relation of knowledge or cognitive construction: habitus contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world, a world endowed with sense or with value, in which it is worth investing one's energy.

(Bourdieu, cited in Reay, 2004, p. 435)

When an individual plays the game (s) s/he already knows the reason to play the game, the profits to be won and goods to be jeopardised – otherwise s/he would not play. The habitus makes the world meaningful, and the world makes the habitus exist.

However, Bourdieu is very careful to distinguish the field from the strict meaning of a 'game', as the logic of practice is actually non-deliberate (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The field rules are unspoken and subtle. The struggle for distinction feels as something natural the players 'have' to do that 'it is "worth the candle"' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.98). The logic of practice is unconscious. The habitus – as a historic body - is inculcated 'as a second nature and so forgotten as history' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 56). The social actor is 'like a "fish in the water": it does not feel the weight of the water, and it takes the world about itself for granted' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 127). Unconsciousness is the cornerstone of symbolic violence, for domination is misrecognised as being arbitrary (Grenfell and James, 1998). Bourdieu (1990) also sees 'automatism' in the workings of the habitus (p. 103). Automatism holds the agents' capacity to 'respond instantaneously to all the uncertain and ambiguous situations of practice' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 104). Bourdieu asserts elsewhere that 'the habitus is a spontaneity without consciousness or will...' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 56). Habitus, then, is both history and spontaneity. The habitus is spontaneous *within* the acquired system of generative schemes, i.e. the history embedded in the habitus (Bourdieu, 1990). The habitus can spontaneously

act by choosing the available action scenarios set by the structures of history. It is spontaneous with restrictions.

Bourdieu has been criticised for portraying individual practice as determined and adhered to structures (Kim, 2010). His later works, however, leave more space for agentic reactions to structures, where the habitus appears in contestation with the field and able to gear up change (Reay, 2004). There are moments when the unconscious habitus becomes conscious: crisis - a sudden change of field, to which individuals feel they do not longer belong - opens up space for self-questioning (Reay, 2004; Adams, 2006). In this sense, doubting oneself can work as instance for reflection. Reay (2004) suggests that the habitus has the possibility of 'myriad adaptations, responses, reactions and resistances to "the way the world is", but also of individuals struggling to make the world a different place' (p. 437). Against Bourdieu's critics Wacquant (1989, p. 36) asserts:

I cannot begin to comprehend how relations of domination, whether material or symbolic, could possibly operate without implying, activating resistance. The dominated, in any social universe, can always exert a certain force, inasmuch as to belong to a field means by definition that one is capable of producing effects in it [...], thus of putting certain forces into motion.

Therefore, the habitus can be resisting and seeking to change its own condition of existence. However, as Wacquant (1989) suggests, resistance can only happen within the available moves for that resistance to happen. In this sense, 'the habitus will always submit to the field' (Adkins, cited in Adams, 2006, p. 516). It is this submission, however, upon which the perpetuation of the social structures of inequalities happens (Wacquant, 1989).

### **Institutional habitus**

Using the concepts of principal and institutional habitus helped me to understand principal practice in the context of multiethnic schools. I start off with institutional habitus because it

speaks of a particular culture within which a principal habitus produces specific cultured practices. It explains organisational and institutional effects on the practices of school members (principals, teachers, students) that reflect particular cultured (ethnicised, classed, gendered etc.) expectations bestowed on them. Here I adopt the conceptual development of institutional habitus by Reay, David and Ball (2005). They discussed how the class, the ethnicity and the gender of high school graduates - as well as of their parents - knitted their choice for particular tertiary institutions. This choice, they suggested, is a result of the degree of matching between the familial and the institutional habitus. Institutional habitus, a term appropriated from McDonough (1997, cited in Reay, David and Ball, 2005, p. 36), is

a complex amalgam of agency and structure and could be understood as the impact of a cultural group or social class on an individual's behaviour as it is mediated through an organisation.

Institutional habitus describes the collectivity of the dispositions an institution passes down on its members. These dispositions have been cultivated through cultural and class hierarchies, and create further distinctions amongst those who embody the particular institutional habitus. In other words, it describes a 'school effect' (Smith and Tomlinson, 1989) that tends to attribute particular 'qualities' or status to its members across and within institutions. Reay, David and Ball (2005) focused on how this broadcasted institutional 'quality' matched or mismatched the 'qualities' students carried from home, influencing their choice of university. McDonald and Wingfield (2009) used the concept of organisational habitus to describe 'how the embedded norms and values of an organisation can structure interpersonal interactions and social contacts of those within it', focusing on the rendering of black teachers as visible or invisible in predominantly white educational institutions, depending what served institutional racism better (p. 31). Similarly, Horvat McNamara and Antonio (1999) suggest that the school habitus exerts symbolic violence to those individuals who do not match it, resulting in their estrangement and 'othering'. More recently, Smyth and Banks (2012) worked with the concept to highlight the contradicting

statuses of two schools which were reflected in their academic climate and guidance provision.

In simpler terms, the institutional habitus can be understood as institutional (here school) ethos. This includes a way of working, thinking and practising within a school; skills, values and ethics that are transmitted to its members, which are then assessed; and lack of which is penalised. This ethos is attuned to favouring the dominant (particularly classed, ethnicised and gendered) culture, disadvantaging those of dominated cultures. It is a 'socially and culturally biased' ethos (Thomas, 2002, p. 431). Reay, David and Ball (2005) note that 'institutional habituses, no less than individual habituses, have a history, and have, in most cases, been established over time'; but due to their 'collective nature are less fluid than individual habitus' (p.36). The institutional habitus is constituted upon educational policies, curriculum and organisational practices (Reay, Ball and David, 2005; Lingard and Rawolle, 2004), which, in turn, are constituted upon embedded social structures. I also understand that, as a habitus, it is a product of the struggles of social fields that define and permeate a school's establishment. For example, Lingard and Rawolle (2004) describe educational policies as fields; curriculum and organisational practices could also be seen as products of particular struggles. As a product of such intersecting, overlapping and contesting structures, the institutional habitus is constructed upon particular cultural capitals, which are embodied in 'expectations, conduct, character and manners' and objectified 'in [the members'] dress, demeanour and stances...in buildings, trophies, rituals, performances and in the school staff (their histories and qualifications) (Reay, David and Ball, 2005, p.37). The student intake (in terms of socioeconomic status), their cultures and sub-cultures are also important elements of the institutional habitus as a factor contributing towards the school's status and the shaping of its educational and organisational processes (Thrupp, 1999).

I will now discuss two points of critique as proposed by Atkinson (2011; 2013). First, this collective form of habitus (along with the 'familial' habitus) is an unnecessary and incompatible addition to Bourdieu's thinking toolbox; and second, it is an unsound concept endangering oversimplification. Burke, Emmerich and Ingram (2013) have responded to his



critique, defending the concept of collective habitus, to which Atkinson (2013) replied. While the former point to the empirical usefulness of the concept – with which I align, the latter sustains ‘reason’ over empiricism (Atkinson, 2011, p. 344). Not intending to recite this controversy here in full, I will briefly present my position.

Following a kind of Bourdieusian blueprint, Atkinson suggests that there are three fatal flaws in the concept of institutional (and familial) habitus: substantialism, anthropomorphism and homogenisation (Atkinson, 2011). Atkinson (2011) notes that what is a relational theory now becomes a substantialist theory, since the institutional habitus supposes a kind of ‘superhabitus’ that shapes individual habitus, instead of the school effect resulting by ‘a system of relations’ (p. 337). He questions Reay, Crozier and Clayton’s (2009, in Atkinson, 2011) switch from talking about schools as fields to schools having a habitus. According to him, only humans can have a habitus. Moreover, Atkinson (2011) argues that switching between the school as a field and as a habitus as tools might serve the particular analytical focus, these still ‘cannot simply be swapped around at will’. He holds that this endangers theoretical tools to ‘loosely categorise empirical observations’ (p. 345). Atkinson, instead, sticks to Bourdieu’s original concepts describing the school effect as a ‘school-specific doxa’, a particular school ethos shared amongst school members (Atkinson, 2011, p. 342).

Atkinson’s (2011) critique stems from an admirable wish to preserve the authenticity of Bourdieu’s theory. In my work I adopt heuristic concepts inspired by Bourdieu’s theory (i.e. institutional and principal habitus). Against Atkinson’s (2011) warnings about ‘smother[ing] analysis of the deeper layers of complexity and intricacy’ (p. 332), I see that these notions categorise a complicated reality through complicatedly theorised empirical data. As Burke, Emmerich and Ingram (2013) argue, the institutional habitus, as a collectivity of individual habituses, enriches our reading of social practice by extending it ‘beyond understanding groups as aggregates of individuals relationally located within a particular social space’ (p. 167). Instead of (and in addition to) talking about schools as structured by the positions individuals take within them, we talk about schools as structured by the individuals (and their habitus) practising within them. Individual dispositions reflect and also generate

collective (school-specific) dispositions – or doxai – and, in turn, these formulate the relations within institutions. Far from the institutional habitus treating schools as fixed substances, it constitutes them as bodily and material relational positions. The institutional habitus mobilise embodied and materialised dispositions at the collective level producing further relational distinctions.

Atkinson's (2011) second point of objection is that schools cannot be anthropomorphic and thus cannot have a habitus, since the habitus is 'corporeal' and 'organic' (p. 338). Nonetheless, he refers to 'school ethos'. Does this not mean that schools have habits, culture, a way of doing things? How about the term 'institutional racism'? Do schools have racist feelings or act in racist ways? Burke, Emmerich and Ingram (2013) suggest that schools (or organisations, unions etc.) are not anthropomorphic, but anthropomorphised. They are collective practices constituted by individual human action reflecting particular purposes and mediating particular cultural and social dispositions. This brings me to the final point of critique that the collective nature of the institutional habitus hinders 'specificity, complexity and difference', since it does not allow for individuality and inner conflict (Atkinson, 2011, p. 339). Reay, David and Ball (2001) acknowledge the "gaps and rough edges" in the institutional habitus (cited in Burke, Emmerich and Ingram, 2013, p. 167). However, as Burke, Emmerich and Ingram (2013) argue, 'an adequate examination and socio-analysis of heterodoxy cannot be achieved without the articulation of the collective orthodoxy and, of course, a concomitant examination of the doxic aspects of the field' (p. 171). For example, the research by McDonald and Wingfield (2009) described an institution with white and black teachers and showed how black teachers were constituted (in)visible school members by an organisational habitus that mediated a predominantly white culture. This institutional habitus was both fragmented by inner conflict and unified to reproduce white cultural practices.

In my analysis I refer to schools both as fields and as habituses, one time seeing them as structures and the other as product of structures. In the first case, I acknowledge how the school provides a space for struggles, itself constituted by other struggles. In the second, I conceptualise how these struggles are embodied in individuals and buildings and

enacted collectively by school members through organisational and pedagogical practices. This dual perspective, on structures and collectives, elaborates the understanding of educational institutions. However, in this dual conceptualisation it appears that schools set out the rules of the game (as fields) and concurrently they meet these self-generated rules (as habitus). This is probably where Atkinson's (2011) critique lies: if schools are rule-making they cannot be rule-breaking. Nonetheless, I find that the problem is not conceptual inconsistency, but conceptual complicatedness. Although I started with the question of whether schools are fields *or* habitus, I grew to interchangeably understand them as fields *and* habitus. To adapt Atkinson's (2011) analogy, adding institutional habitus to my thinking toolbox was not a matter of 'trying to hammer a nail with a screwdriver when the hammer is right there' (p. 345), but a matter of having different hammer types for different nail uses.

### **Principal habitus**

In analysing principalship as practice I am deploying the concept of principal habitus, proposed by Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003). While in this section I lay out the theoretical tenets of principal habitus, in Chapter Five I explore the concept through the data of three principal cases, Giorgos, Manos and Yannis. This adds to the analysis of Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003) a more elaborated and situated understanding of the conditions constituting a principal habitus in Greece. As such, principal habitus should not be seen as a universal analytical category, but should be adapted and revised to fit different social practices in different settings and times. Principal habitus refers, first and foremost, to a professional mind and body. For this reason I draw on the concept of 'vocational habitus' by Colley, James, Tedder and Diment (2003), as well as that of 'teacher habitus' by Braun (2009). I do this because in Greece all principals were primarily teachers who applied for the principal's post later in their career. This 'specialist' principal habitus describes the dispositions acquired through a specific professional course; it is a particularly

'cultured habitus' (Bourdieu, 1967 cited in Reay, Ball and David 2005, p. 26). It rests upon dispositions acquired through participation in earlier or parallel fields (i.e. family, school, teaching etc.); on classed, gendered and ethnicised structures that shape one's professional path. Principal habitus interacts, coexists but also conflicts with dispositions acquired through other fields, and it may also reconstitute them (Lingard and Christie, 2003, p. 322). Principal habitus works together with institutional habitus (Reay, Ball and David, 2005) since school members mediate institutional dispositions through their practices. Therefore, I understand principal practice to be a constellation of vocational, institutional and familial dispositions.

My interest in the concept was sparked by Lingard and Christie's (2003) statement that principals might have little direct effect on student outcomes due to a principal habitus with particular 'location within multiple fields with competing logics of practice (p. 327). This fit well with my hypothesis that Greek principals are faced by practical possibilities and impossibilities when managing schools with a multiethnic agenda, both structural and agentic. As Lingard and Christie (2003) suggest, using Bourdieu helps us 'to think of the interplay between the practices of a school leader with a particular habitus, working across a number of fields with different power structures, hierarchies of influence, and logics of practice' (p. 320). This implies questions of how principals have become the principals they are and why they deliver principalship as they do. Concurrently, agency and structure are in constant negotiation. I find that the relation between agency and structure - the particular/individual and the general/collective - are best described in Wolcott's (1973) statement that his case-study principal was 'in some ways like no other man; and how he [was] in some ways like some other men' (p.65). Principal habitus 'builds upon prior dispositions learned through the long apprenticeship of school and university' as well as that of the field of educational management (Lingard and Christie, 2003, p. 326). These professional paths create different trails of dispositions, some of which are individual to each person and some others collective among professionals. Therefore, the practice of principals could be very similar and very different.

I see the concept of principal habitus as a specialism of Colley, James, Tedder and Diment (2003) 'vocational habitus'. Braun (2009) also used this concept to talk about a 'teacher habitus'. Colley, James, Tedder and Diment (2003) found that students in the nursing profession felt they had to make themselves look and act as 'the right person for the job' (p. 477) by orienting body and mind to dispositions which were valued by the particular vocational field. The vocational habitus is above all 'learning as becoming' (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003). Braun (2009), following Murray and Maguire (2007), argues that this professional 'becoming' happens on three levels, the micro/individual; the institutional; and the macro level, which refers to the State and its policies. She has examined the teachers' experiences, conceptualisations and embodiments of a teaching vocational habitus. As Braun (2009) observed, following Colley and Hodkinson, the vocational habitus, as embodied and practised by professionals, defines the profession itself. I understand that this is the relationship between field and habitus: the field conditions the habitus, and the habitus makes the field 'a meaningful world' (Bourdieu, cited in Reay, 2004, p. 435). The vocational dispositions are both 'idealised and realised'. On the one hand they are dispositions, values and behaviours to be aspired as ideal for the profession. On the other, they are dispositions that could be actualised (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003, p. 471). While the former maintain the passion for the job, the latter reassure the individual for their chosen career.

Another aspect of the vocational habitus is 'sensibility', which adds to the concept 'feelings and morals, and the capacity for emotional labour' (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003, p. 471). Colley, James, Tedder and Diment (2003) studied students in childcare, healthcare and engineering schools and examined the ways their professional identities were constructed in relation to feelings. Their narratives showed conceptualisations of particular gendered feelings and modes of behaviour to which they felt they should orient themselves in order to be good practitioners. Braun's (2009) work was engaged with a similar venture regarding the development of teachers' habitus at the beginning of their career and the emotional aspects of the job they needed to carry out. She, as well as Colley, James, Tedder and Diment (2003), has found that her interviewees

variably found themselves in accordance and/or discordance with the demands for a gendered emotional labour. Other approaches to gendered - and also classed and ethnicised - aspects of emotional labour can be found in work such as Reay's (2000) and Zembylas' (2007), who deploy the concept of emotional capital.

Colley, James, Tedder and Diment (2003) suggest that learning as becoming is not a passive embodiment of vocational culture. Agency, the 'social and family backgrounds, individual preferences and life experiences', co-constructs the vocational habitus together with the demands of the vocational field; this habitus 'must be a "choosable" identity for the individual' (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003, p. 488). However, Braun (2009) criticises that Colley, James, Tedder and Diment (2003) present a very limited agency. Her point is that the portrayed students in their study needed to have demonstrated possession of all the dispositions the vocational field asked in order to succeed in their degrees. As Braun (2009) notes, we need to keep in mind that professionals draw also on individual resources to respond 'more or less well' to the demands of the job (p. 129).

Since learning as becoming happens within particular institutions, I also focus on the institutional aspects that define principalship. This is something that was lightly touched upon by Colley, James, Tedder and Diment (2003) and Braun (2009) in their analyses of vocational habitus. Distinguishing between institutional and principal dispositions is often a hard task exactly because the vocational culture is developed within particular institutional cultures. Thus, similar professions happen differently across institutions. Nonetheless, in my analysis I attempt to isolate the principal from the institutional habitus as much as possible.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Designing the research: habitus as method

While Chapter Two has dealt with Bourdieu's conceptual framework, in this chapter I present my own adaptation of his paradigm. I discuss the 'what', 'why' and 'how' of my research, which is an ethnographic study of three secondary schools in Greece: two mainstream schools and one that is designated 'intercultural'. Within these institutions I focused on the principals, whom I placed into context by examining also classroom practices, teacher practices, policies and organisational structures. The methods I used were mainly observation and interviews, but I also drew on demographic data, and document/archival research. As Reay (2004; 1995b) proposes, habitus becomes a method of interrogation in empirical research, in two specific ways. First, the habitus provides tools (fields, capitals, and habitus) to describe, deconstruct and finally understand the practices of individuals; and second, to position the researcher within this analytical process. The purpose of this chapter is to show how I have applied the concepts in designing my research strategies. These strategies included decisions on *how* to research (ethnography, interviews, observations, document research); *who* to research (principals, teachers, students); *what* to research (space, bodies, objects, movement, thoughts, speech, relations); and *where* (school unit, offices, classrooms, corridors etc). Of course, the concepts of habitus, fields and capitals guided my analysis of the data to unpack the logic of principal practice, as well as the logic of the research, and the researcher's assumptions and preconceptions.

## **Ethnography and habitus**

My research is engaged with understanding principalship in Greek schools with multiethnic students. This sentence is a constellation of issues: it is a study on principalship as social practice; as contextual and responsive to practice within and outside school; and as framed by a general multiethnic discourse. These key concepts led me to see my study under the light of the ethnographic paradigm. Ethnography deals with 'real human beings and actual human behaviour' (Wolcott, 1973, p. xi). Moreover, ethnography, as an account of 'ethnos' - a Greek word for 'nation' -, is concerned with representing a culture (Spradley, 1980). Ethnography aims to understand particular social practices as embedded in the culture where the particular practice takes place. In other words, social practice is encountered as a suture between the particular and the general. My study is ethnographic, aspiring to produce knowledge of the principal's social practice on issues which are raised by a multicultural social environment; in Gregory and Williams' words (2000), a 'cultural grammar' of principalship in Greek multiethnic schools. It is, therefore, the study of the principal, the students, the teachers or the school as a unit, which - seen through the notion of habitus - act as products and producers of one (or several) culture(s).

My inclination towards ethnography was also influenced by Bourdieu's own way of carrying out ethnographic work. Blommaert (2005, p. 228) describes Bourdieu's work as an

"ethnographic invitation", a call to empirically explore in micro-ethnography the structures suggested in his work, an appeal to continue thinking theoretically while we work ethnographically.

In this sense, I have responded positively to his invitation, in that I believe that I have worked at both a theoretical and an ethnographical level. An ethnographic piece of research could take a variety of forms, depending on the particular content - epistemological and methodological - with which the researcher ascribes it. For some, ethnography means an anthropological and naturalistic study, where the researcher approaches social phenomena without having adopted a theory prior to data collection. Such a study starts from pure observation and recording of cultural phenomena, and then



continues to creating conceptual categories, preferring to collect random data, rather than data which carefully fall into planned observational categories (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1998). The type of knowledge produced by this kind of ethnography is understood to be descriptive rather than theoretical, and the analytical outcome is usually an effort to group data that will reveal behavioural schema and patterns, without focusing much on the theoretical implications of these findings (Miles and Huberman, 1994). On this epistemological division Yin (2003a; 2003b) bases the difference between case study<sup>15</sup> and ethnography (as well as grounded theory) in that the former essentially starts from a particular epistemological basis.

However, my view of ethnography does not follow the aforementioned standpoints. As Denzin and Lincoln (2003) state, the researcher 'approaches the world with a set of ideas, a framework (theory, ontology) that specifies a set of questions (epistemology) that he or she then examines in specific ways (methodology, analysis)' (cited in Anfara and Mertz, 2006, p. xxi). Bourdieu's paradigm places the researcher inside the world which has produced her/him as a researcher and social actor. The researcher is implicated in the production of that world, which is always formed and reformed through personal and collective understandings. The researcher is not distant from the object of observation; neither is s/he detached from the procedure of meaning-making. This proposes that there is always a theoretical framework which the researcher brings in at the moment of observation, and also at the moment of data analysis. Youdell (2006b), following Foucault, suggests a futility in the division between descriptive and theoretical ethnography, and notes that 'the question becomes, then, not whether ethnography is theoretical, but how far its theoretical framework is made *explicit* and worked through research questions, data generation, analysis and writing' (Youdell, 2006b, p. 60).

Therefore, my ethnography is one that follows an explicit positioning of the Bourdieuan paradigm, which assists my thinking of principalship as a contextual praxis

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<sup>15</sup> I find that there is no clear-cut distinction between case-study and ethnography presentations across methodology literature. For example, even if Yin (2003) sees case-study as a separate methodology, Cohen and Manion (1994) mention Wolcott's (1973) study *The man in the Principal's Office*, which was subtitled 'An Ethnography', under the section titled 'case-study'.

embedded in the wider social activity. At the same time, it starts from a description of the observed reality. Bourdieu's macro-sociological theorisation starts from the situatedness of minor ethnographic details, and with habitus it translates them into the embodied – thus normalised and taken for granted – generalised and historised structures, which condition the possibilities and impossibilities of social practices (Blommaert, 2005). I locate habitus at the centre of my query, investigating 'principal habitus' (Lingard and Christie, 2003), because 'using habitus as a conceptual tool ensures that the research focus is always broader than the specific focus under study' (Reay, 2004, p. 439). Therefore, the everyday conduct of the principal towards her/his ethnic minority students – manifested through embodied dispositions - can illuminate our understanding of the historical embeddedness of the structures, which have made possible or impossible this conduct.

However, doing ethnography with Bourdieu means that the outline of the social practice under examination will not be an easy result of cause-effect relations. Thinking in terms of habitus, fields and capitals presupposes that we understand the logic of practice as a highly intricate interplay between agency and structure, such that its result is 'neither random nor determined' (Grenfell and James, 1998, p. 157). As explained in the previous chapter, Bourdieu names his theory constructivist structuralism, or structuralist-constructivism, as he tries to suture the objective (actual) with the subjective (experience). For Bourdieu the objective-subjective divide constitutes a paradoxical epistemological dualism in the tradition of the social sciences. His answer to this was to study 'the dialectic of the internalisation of externality and the externalisation of internality' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72). This dialectic is expressed by the concept of habitus, the embodiment of objective structures and their re-enactment as individualised practice.

The implications for this study are twofold. First, it should unmask the objective relations that have preconditioned the possibilities and impossibilities of principal practice. Second, it should question the objective relations which have preconditioned my perceptions regarding the logic of practice under study. It follows that the methods suggested in this thesis, i.e. observation, interview document research, together with reflexivity (i.e. participant objectivation), as well as the analysis that follows, are nothing

else but a use of habitus as a method (Reay, 2004; 1995b). On the one hand, habitus interrogates social world in order to answer questions about principal practice; on the other, habitus interrogates the researcher, in order to answer questions about how this principal practice is made knowledgeable. The researcher her/himself is a subject, has incorporated schemes of perceptions, a doxa- a socially constructed knowledge- about the world, which has been evolved as s/he processed through the various social fields (Bourdieu, 1990). The researcher is implicated 'in the same theory of practice' as the researched, and not some kind of 'a higher epistemological authority' (Grenfell and James, 1998, p. 157).

In his article 'Participant Objectivation', Bourdieu (2003) proposes that 'idiosyncratic personal experiences methodically subjected to sociological control constitute irreplaceable analytic resources' once the researcher 'mobiliz[es] one's social past through self-socio-analysis' (p.281). Analysing the logic of social practice implies that the researcher's practice also happens under particular logics. This is for Bourdieu the meaning of reflexivity, a 'knowledge of the knowing subject' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 27) which will lead to understanding not only the conceptual schemes of the researcher's 'knowing', but also the conditions which make this understanding possible. This 'self-socio-analysis' is what Bourdieu terms 'participant objectivation', which is the act of unpacking the 'social conditions of possibility' of the particular experience (Bourdieu, 2003, p. 281-282).

How inductive can someone's mind go in searching for the conditions which have conditioned her/his understanding? As Adams (2006) suggests, the practice of reflexivity is 'still guided by the particular constitution of one's habitus' (p. 515). Kim (2010) criticises Bourdieu for claiming that his 'participant objectivation' – as 'epistemic' reflexivity - moves away from the 'narcissistic' reflexivity that, arguably, ends in an 'endless process of talking to oneself' (p. 749). Bourdieu invites sociologists to pinpoint their own position within a 'social space' as a starting point instead of being endlessly inductive; and then examine how this position affects their understandings (Kim, 2010, p. 479). However, Kim (2010) argues, the researcher is caught up in her/his own objectivation, since this pinpointing happens by the researcher her/himself.

Is, then, the quest for reflexivity impossible? I would suggest that there are great impossibilities common to all research practice, but also good possibilities within limits. Bourdieu proposes that reflexivity should not be performed in an apologetic manner, as if the researcher's self has spoilt the research, but in an effort to be as more 'scientific' as possible; that is, acknowledging the shortcomings of the research (Bourdieu, 2003). For the researcher cannot possibly blame her/himself for being a researcher within this world of social practice; nor can s/he pretend that s/he is not participating in it. With this in mind, and following Youdell's (2006b) argument that the risk of 'assuming a disembodied authorial authority' is greater than 'inadvertent essentialism' (p. 65), I have questioned at various moments my becoming/being a researcher, as well as my participation in the field as a middle-class, Greek female in her late 20s. While I recorded this reflective process in a green notepad I named 'diary of thoughts', space limitation and the emotional task of exposing oneself too much discouraged me from presenting it here.

I am aware that I engage with the Bourdieuan paradigm more than some would wish. Critique on Bourdieu has been ferocious especially against the notion of 'habitus' upon which I have much relied. It has been criticised for its messiness; over-determinacy and also its indeterminacy; and failure to deliver the bridge between objectivism and subjectivism (Jenkins, 1992; Brubaker, 1993; Cicourel, 1993; Nash, 1999). Bourdieu also has been accused for being structuralist (Cicourel, 1993; Butler, 1999) and unable to practice self-objectivation (Brubaker, 1993). Some others have even rejected overall his theory's usefulness in educational research (Tooley and Darby, 1998, cited in Nash, 1999). Appreciating this critique, I worked it throughout the analytical process.

## The research

So far I have analysed how habitus is a method for interrogating the researcher and the research process. In this section I show how I used habitus to design the research. My preliminary research questions are:

- What are the freedoms and limitations of principal practice in effecting an inclusive education for ethnic minority students, and where are these located?
- What are the contextual aspects of principalship and how do these shape principal practices when dealing with issues of multiethnicity?

Answering these questions I deploy the concepts of institutional and principal habitus, analysed in the previous chapter. I use these to ask questions about the school ethos and vocational culture of the principal regarding the educational treatment of ethnic minority students. Therefore, further questions that I asked were the following:

- *What are the institutional dispositions that are manifest in the social practice of schools members regarding ethnic minority students?*
- *What are the vocational dispositions of principalship that are manifest in the social practice of the principals regarding ethnic minority students?*

I particularly ask about dispositions, rather than habitus, because these are the observable elements of the habitus through individual practice (Reay, 2004). Together with studying empirically institutional and principal habitus, I necessarily looked at fields and capitals. All concepts were used to organise my research design as well as my data in preparation of analysis (more on this later). Therefore, additional questions assisted the planning of my research:

- *What are the fields and sub-fields formed inside and across school processes?*
- *What capitals are being operationalised across those fields and sub-fields?*
- *What is the logic of practice of each field and how do they interact?*

The question of fields establishes the 'objective' structures - social (real) and mental (schemas of perception) - upon which practice happens inside the school. Asking this question I created a 'stage' upon which the practices I wanted to research were played out. At the same time this was also looking at the 'backstage', since fields condition the institutional and principal dispositions. I have identified several fields and sub-fields, which I have characterised either as 'abstract' or 'spatial', depending on whether it is a physical space (i.e. the office, the classrooms, the school); or an non-physical space marked by social relations, struggle for distinction and concepts etc. (i.e. mainstream/intercultural education, educational policies, pedagogy etc.) (Bourdieu, 1996). In other words, I broke the institutional and principal habitus down to their constituent structures. I started this field mapping from the spatial structures and concurrently worked with the abstract structures that expressed/defined the former. The school as a building, the principal's office, the staffroom, the classrooms, the corridors and the school yard were the first to identify as actual places to research practice.

The question of capitals is important in defining fields. Answering this helped me to distinguish different rules of practice, as well as the requirements for participating in – or being rejected from - the game. Capitals show the qualities that each field assesses as good/bad, sufficient/insufficient. I should note, however, that the analysis of capitals and fields is not exhaustive. Nonetheless, thinking with habitus (Reay, 2004) entails performing multiple analyses that frame the specific subject-matter. For example, conceptualising the classroom as one field distinct to that of the principal's office, with different rules and logics of practice, is important in order to set the scene, but not essential to analyse thoroughly in this case.

The above questions lead me to conceptualise the logics of practice that operate within the school regarding the education of ethnic minority students, both as a general school culture and as principalship work ethos. These help us to understand how principal practice is located 'within multiple fields with competing logics of practice' (Lingard and Christie, 2003, p. 327) regarding multiethnicity. In other words, this pins down the position of the principal within the micro-politics of the school that relate to how ethnic minority

students are being educated. Eventually the above exploration brings us closer to assessing the possibilities and limitations of principalship in effecting an education-for- all.

### *Sampling, access and duration of fieldwork*

My study was conducted in three secondary schools (13-15 year old students) of a big urban city in Greece. Greek schools are named after numbers (i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> Secondary School of Athens). I decided to give them pseudonyms which, on the one hand, match with the school naming style in the UK, and on the other, have nothing in common with their naming in Greece. Therefore, I have named them Aegean, Ionian and Cretan schools after three Greek seas. The former two are mainstream schools, while the latter is designated 'intercultural'. 'Intercultural' schools are a particular institutional model. As explained in Chapter One these schools have a regulated intake of immigrant students (40-45%) and (arguably) follow a special curriculum that focuses on their integration. The Ionian school was where I conducted the piloting of my research, which took place in 2006, while the main body of research was conducted in the 2007-2008 academic year. Here I embody data gathered during this piloting phase, when I interviewed the principal of the Ionian school. I did so in order to either strengthen an argument built on the main-study schools, or contradict it, in order to highlight the complicatedness of school practice. Having not taken these into account, I would have overlooked those aspects as non-important.

School sampling was grounded on two criteria, the first of which concerns ethnic minority student intake. As 20% intake or more of ethnic minority students over the school's population was identified to be substantial by the EPPAS project (Greek initials for the project Integration of Repatriate and Foreign Students in School)<sup>16</sup>, I sampled my schools accordingly. The Cretan (intercultural) school had 40% intake of ethnic minority

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<sup>16</sup> The project was funded by the European Union (EPEAEK II, Act 1.1.1.A) and coordinated by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki for secondary schools, running from April 2006 until July 2007.

students, the Aegean school (mainstream) 60% and the Ionian school 20%<sup>17</sup>. The recruitment of the specific schools was grounded on an approximately 20% difference of immigrant student intake, so that I examine how principalships might be affected by this.

The second criterion in sampling the schools was the educational policy and curricula<sup>18</sup> implemented by the schools. I recruited two mainstream schools (Aegean, 60% and Ionian 20%), and one 'intercultural' school (Cretan, 40%). This choice was based on Lingard and Rawolle's (2004) suggestion that policy context and curriculum are fields of struggle. Therefore, I found it essential to examine formations of institutional habitus within two different fields (policy context and curriculum), and consequently to explore differences in the logic of practice of school members. It is obvious that my research does not want to offer a point-to-point comparison of schools and principals. It rather wants to elucidate different principalships within different institutions, so that the complexity and variability of school processes is highlighted. Doing this, I talk about the different (and similar) ways in which ethnic minority students are excluded from school processes. In this sense, I was also not interested in establishing a unitary Greek principal habitus, but I wanted to see its individual manifestations stemming from collective (common to all or different across institutions) structures.

For my pilot study I visited the Ionian school (mainstream, 20%) for four full school-days spread in two weeks in 2006. For my main field work I spent about 8 months in the Aegean (mainstream, 60%) and the Cretan (intercultural, 40%) schools in 2007-2008 (4 months in the former and just over 3.5 months in the latter), excluding 4 weeks for Christmas and Easter breaks. During this time, I spent 37 and 32 days at the Aegean and the Cretan schools respectively, 2-3 days per week for 3-4 hours each. This is, arguably, a relatively short time for ethnography, since immersion in the field requires lengthy periods of research (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). However, for Wolcott (1987), time is

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<sup>17</sup> The numbers were approximated, as the exact percentage may have revealed the actual schools.

<sup>18</sup> I use the term 'curriculum' to match with the U.K. experience of a common educational syllabus applied to mainstream schools. However, the Greek 'curriculum' (translated from Greek 'Analytic Program') is not as flexible as in the U.K.; it is centralised with specific guidelines on books and teaching materials to be used, subjects and pages to be covered, timelines etc. Therefore, there is great uniformity across mainstream schools.



'necessary but not sufficient' in delivering a 'good ethnography' (p.39). By this he means that carrying out a 2-years field research does not reassure that the produced text would necessarily be a good cultural analysis, rich in data and production of knowledge. Against the unwritten law of ethnography having to spread over at least 12 months of fieldwork, he proposes that the complexity of studying a school unit (or a single role in this school unit) produces overwhelming data (Wolcott, 1987). This, together with the particular field circumstances and the researcher's sensitivity in looking for data in the appropriate ways and places, could be factors that minimise the time of field work (Wolcott, 1987).

In my case, I had an official 3-month limitation by the Education Institute (Pedagogiko Institutouto) of the Hellenic Ministry of Education, which granted me the permission to carry out research in state schools. However, the principals allowed me to stay in their school for about one additional month. Moreover, the permission was valid for one year exclusively. Therefore, I took advantage of all the available time, given the fact that the Greek school year is about 9 months, from mid September to late May, dividing my time between the two schools. However, even if my field time was limited, I would strenuously say that the data gathered were more than enough in order to construct a detailed and thorough analysis of principalship. I discuss rapport building later on and whether this was something achieved. What I could say though with certainty is that by the time of my 'forced' departure from the field, my data indicated a repetition in the range of the behaviours and practices recorded.

Tables 1, 2, 3, in Appendix A summarise the actions taken at each school of the main research.

## *Ethics*

My empirical study took under great consideration its responsibilities towards the participating schools and individuals, believing that the aim of my research 'should [not] be pursued at all costs' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, p. 263). I followed the BERA guidelines (2004), as well as those set by the Educational Institute of the Hellenic Ministry of Education (Faculty of Research, Substantiation and Educational Technology). Before entering the field, I was granted a research ethics approval by the Institute of Education's Research Ethics Committee (FREC) faculty. I also provided the Educational Institute with a full research plan and ethics statement in order to acquire the official permission to conduct research in state schools. The permission concerned specific schools (those that I have sampled) and was distributed by the central Educational Bureau to the schools through the principals, who then informed their staff. Even though I had wanted to talk to the staff on my first day in the field, the principals thought this to be unnecessary and also difficult to organise. However, I would introduce myself and my research to individual staff, whenever I was given the opportunity.

My first concern was to reassure anonymity to the participating schools. However, and despite my efforts to keep them anonymous, identification of some degree might be possible over my will. In particular, the recruited secondary intercultural school is one of the few (12) schools of its type in Greece. This is the reason for not revealing either the name of the city or its geographical location. Although research consent was given to me by both the principals and the Hellenic Ministry of Education, I was considerate of any refusals by school members to participate. In a few cases, for example, I was asked to not use the recorder. Students were informed by their teachers about my presence at their school, and I also introduced myself to them the first time I entered their classroom. I was concerned about observing the students in the classrooms, and I discussed with the principals whether I should ask for informed consent by their parents. However, they suggested that this would not be necessary, since they had given me their permission – and so any responsibility would burden them.

Regarding my observations in the principal offices, consensus was grounded on various aspects: which conversations and meeting I was allowed to regard as data; when my presence was considered disruptive; whether conversations over the phone could be recorded (Wolcott, 1973). Even though some of these were orally established, other negotiations happened silently as practice evolved. Personal ethics were called on the spot, judging at every time how I could affect the field and my position as the researcher in it. Therefore, although I could not escape the 'anything you say or do may be taken down and used as data...' atmosphere (Bell, cited in Hammersley and Attkinon, 1995, p. 265), at what I felt as ethically challenging moments, I preferred to minimise discomfort for both sides by not recording that data and leaving the site.

An additional issue which has troubled me since the beginning of my project is the sensitivity surrounding the very core of my research. Investigating 'multiethnicity' inevitably results in examining also 'racism', 'ethnocentrism' and 'nationalism'. This requires a great deal of diplomatic skills, both while collecting and while analysing data. Mentioning the word 'multiethnicity', 'interculturalism' and so on, immediately harks back to their counter-notions. Being cautious not to cause a defensive stance of the participants against me and my research (and thus alienate data and jeopardise my position in the field), I avoided confrontational and/or strongly political words (i.e. ethnocentricity, nationalism, racism/antiracism etc).

#### *Data collection: observation and interview*

The research design indicated that I needed to study dispositions and actual practices empirically. These would help me understand the logic of practice that leads principalship to particular practices regarding ethnic minority students. I identified observation and interview as a combination of methods to explore empirical reality. For Bourdieu there exists a 'bedrock of social reality - the visible world of what people do - which is objectively

'real" (Jenkins, 1992, p.61). I understand that 'objectively "real"' is what has become an 'object' of practice. The observation suggested here, then, aims at 'getting at "real life" in the real world' (Robson, 2002, p. 310).

While observing 'what people do', I also wanted to find out 'what people think' about what they do. As Montaigne stated, 'saying is one thing; doing in another' (cited in Robson, 2002, p.310). The combination of observation and interview, then, would help me to approach 'why people do what they do': the social and mental structures that form the practice of the researched. This is the logic of practice, which entails 'schemes of perceptions, thought and action' (Bourdieu, cited in Grenfell and James, 1998, p. 156). Talking about structures, one thinks of a fixed and determined way that social practice happens according to a singular logic. This would mean that the same structures produce similar practices. Even though this is obviously one of the aims of this research – to come up with classifiable and patterned understandings of social practice – it is not all there is. My aim is to also show how people respond differently to structures and logics. In fact, none of the bodily practices and personal accounts of my participants were the same with those of others. Observation and interview, thus, are used to understand how structures are also restructured through the habitus to generate individual practice. Combining these two methods (observations and interview) I can approach different practices via different kinds of data which offer different insights.

My research mainly rested upon observations and interviews. However, I have also searched through policy and school documents. I had limitations with going through particular school documents (i.e. the meeting minutes of Teacher Body at all schools, student records at the Aegean school etc). Some of the information I needed (i.e. socioeconomic status of students), I found through other data that were available to me (i.e. school reports). I also used demographics, web-based research and collected any other type of data that could create a more complete picture of the schools and their context. For example, in some occasions I have made side-notes on matters that were broadcasted on television and spurred media attention and/or discussions inside and outside the school.

Within each school, I researched the Principal; the students attending the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade of secondary school<sup>19</sup> (aged 14); and the teachers teaching those classrooms. Even though I conducted interviews with students attending that grade, eventually I decided to not include these data. My decision was based on practical reasons, namely word limitation. To start with, my thesis draws on different theoretical fields (i.e. intercultural education, educational management, the sociological theory of Pierre Bourdieu etc.), with which I needed to engage thoroughly in order to build my arguments. The fact that my research concerns Greece posed the challenge of giving contextual information to the non-Greek reader, which inevitably occupied considerable space. Finally, the ethnographic approach that I have adopted, and my presentation strategy required lengthy passages of data, so that these are left open to different interpretations (Youdell, 2011; 2004). Acknowledging that student experiences of principalship can elucidate the matter differently, I intend to use that data for later publications. Nonetheless, had I included them in this work would have risked the richness of the data and the depth of analysis.

I chose the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade for two reasons. Firstly, the 1<sup>st</sup> Grade was very unstable regarding the duration of studentship, as immigrant students without official documentation were forced to stop schooling after the first trimester. Secondly, I rejected 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade because data gathered during my pilot study - and also supported by Theodoridis (2008) - suggested that their representation in that grade declines. My research is also concerned with the reasons behind this decline, which I consider a result of the exclusion of immigrant students as learners from educational processes.

I conducted observations in the three principal offices and I also observed the teachers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade teaching their classrooms at the Aegean (mainstream) and Cretan (intercultural) schools. The lessons included Literature, Maths, Sports and Arts. This way, I could study students and teachers in contexts that require a variety of competencies, and thus of cultural (and maybe social) capitals. I could, then, capture the logics of practice

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<sup>19</sup> Secondary schools in Greece have three grades and are compulsory. Upon successful completion of secondary education, students move on to high school which is non-compulsory and has another three grades that lead to tertiary education.

regarding ethnic minority students in different settings. My observations included a speculation of 'elements' of practice: actors, activities, objects, acts, events, goals, feelings, as these evolved in the spaces mentioned earlier (Robson, 2002, p.320). Although not planned, I found it interesting to observe the Religion and the Greek Language Support classes of the Cretan school (intercultural). In addition, I conducted observations in the staffroom and the school corridors. As Eden & Kalekin-Fishman (2002) suggest, staffroom is the space where teachers express more freely their attitudes towards their students. I saw corridors as the connecting space in-between the different spatial sub-fields of the school building. In this space different rules of practice need to be negotiated. For example, students are allowed to speak loudly during the breaks (which they cannot do inside classrooms), but not run (which they can do in the schoolyard). Similarly, teachers can tell off students for running in the corridors, but not for speaking loudly.

My initial plan was to shadow the principals as they did their daily chores. However, this seemed unusual to them and although they did not clearly deny it, their great hesitation put me off. Particularly at the Aegean and Ionian schools (mainstream), principals and staff were not used to having researchers observing their work. I observed the principals mostly inside their offices sitting next to them, following their recommendations. This proximity caused me both anxiety and security. Anxiety because I felt uncomfortable for the notes I was taking next to my participants, and security because this proximity also insinuated honesty on my part. Nonetheless, the process was stressful. Even though I prepared myself for a scenario where participants requested to see my notes<sup>20</sup>, I was never asked to do so. When recording my observations, I waited until the observed practice came to an end before I write down my notes. This was because I did not want to give away of what I found interesting and so affect the field. At other times, particularly in the classrooms, I took the opportunity to take notes when students were also writing in their notebooks; this gave a sense of blending in the field as well.

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<sup>20</sup> In such a case I would tell them that since my notes did not concern just the particular participant, it would feel unethical to saw them that information. If they insisted, I would say I would be happy to give them a copy of the records that concern them.

The schools' unfamiliarity with observation was one of the biggest difficulties in my research, mostly at the mainstream (staffed by older ages) Aegean school, where teachers were more hesitant. The Cretan school was more familiar with observations (many teachers held research degrees). I opted to sit at the back in some empty desk. I planned to visit each subject (i.e. Arts) twice for each classroom (ie. Classroom A of 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade). School schedule was another challenge in planning observations. Staff strikes; student protests and abstention from classes; a major power cut due to strikes by the electric supplier workers; all these made it hard for teachers to plan their lessons – and I observations. Moreover, individual teacher issues<sup>21</sup> posed restrictions on the times I could observe classrooms. On top of that, routine scheduling of term tests and staff meetings (I was not allowed to attend either) limited the amount of observations I had initially planned. Moreover, after a few efforts to observe the school yard, I soon abandoned it. The Aegean school shared a yard with 3 other schools and the Cretan school had just over 500 students, and following up individual students from a distance was very challenging. Finally, since during the whole research process I was alone, I felt as the strange adult wondering around underaged students.

I conducted interviews with the three principals, which were either arranged semi-structured or relaxed conversations. The former were usually scheduled to fit in the principals' daily work plan. The latter, which are termed 'ethnographic interviews', were impromptu conversations spurred by some incident. The themes I covered through questioning aimed at uncovering their principalship experiences in relation to their school being multiethnic. Working across the vocational and school axis the questions targeted principal and institutional dispositions, and inter-field relations by asking their views on their staff. In addition, I conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers teaching the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade, 7 (out of 10 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade teachers) at the Aegean and 6 (out of 18 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade teachers) at the Cretan schools. These were one-off interviews of about 50' – 60' duration. The questioning aimed at their classroom and institutional experiences with ethnic minority

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<sup>21</sup> i.e. sports teacher at the Aegean was sick and no replacement was appointed during fieldwork.

students, as well as their views of involvement of the school principal in their education. I also had unscheduled conversation with these and other teachers at both schools. Plans of the semi-structured interviews with principals and teachers can be found in Appendix B .

The interviews with the teachers were arranged depending on their availability and willingness. Most of the interviewees were hesitant in the beginning, since they would have to either stay longer hours in the school or ‘waste’ their breaks. An extreme example was that of a female teacher for whom I was looking around the school for our scheduled interview. I finally found her sitting quietly (I would say hiding/avoiding me) in the superintendent’s room drinking her coffee. For all scheduled interviews (principals and teachers) I used a digital recorder, asking first the permission of the interviewee. Two teachers did not feel comfortable with the machine recording, so they asked me to take hand notes instead. I let my interviewees to choose the place for the interview in order for them to feel as comfortable as possible. This was harder for the Cretan school teachers, as lack of space forced us to conduct them in the always occupied staffroom. This had two consequences: first, difficult transcriptions, since some interviewees kept their voice low; second, interventions from other teachers, when interviewees spoke louder. Even though I initially thought the latter was a drawback to the data quality, I later appreciated the relaxed conversation and the insights some of these interventions brought about.

### *Some epistemological concerns*

I have earlier discussed the issue of immersion in the field (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). In order to be as immersed as possible in the reality of each site, I chose to attend one school at a time. I started with the mainstream Aegean school, as the principal who have granted me the permission was retiring in a few months. I then continued with the intercultural Cretan school. I felt that having been switching between schools, I would not



have been immersed in their contexts. Moreover, I believe that this allowed me to build critical distance as I moved from one to another.

Literature on research methods makes a distinction between participant and non-participant observation (Cohen and Manion, 1994). Observations are classified as such in order to distinguish between researchers who participate in the research field while being researchers (participants as researchers) (i.e. Jansson and Nikolaidou, 2013), and researchers who enter the field solely with this capacity (non-participant researchers). Agreeing with Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), I would argue that 'everyone is a participant observer, acquiring knowledge about the social world in the course of participating in it' (p. 125). Therefore, even though I was not a 'teacher who is researching', I was performing participant observation in the sense that I and my 'subjects' were participating in the same situated reality. In fact, we co-created it. As an example, I quote the following incident while observing a lesson in the Cretan school:

Entering the classroom for the session to start, a female student pushes a male student, who she thinks pushed her earlier. Fani [female teacher] tries to resolve the situation and tells me "We are a bit of a playground here".

Not only did I participate with my physical presence in the incident, but most importantly I was the reason for which she articulated her thoughts. Inviting me to 'see' her classroom as a "playground", she conferred a particular meaning over what I observed; an objectivation (making 'real') what she, her students and I shared. Had I not been there, she might not have spoken her mind the way she did - there would be no particular reason to do so. Her naming of the classroom as "playground" had a particular effect on me and students. I was made to think that she might see her students as immature; or I might even see the students as such myself. Hearing Fani, the students might have felt offended or ashamed of their behaviour. It becomes obvious that I was not just observing, but co-constructing what was observed.

Even though this is a case where I am very obviously taking part in classroom practices, most of the times my participation was subtle and involved me interpreting what

was being observed. Youdell (2006b) suggests that ‘observation is itself simultaneously constitutive of and constituted by the world and the subjects that it seeks to observe’ (p. 68). Similarly for Bourdieu, the researchers who objectify ‘the researched, they are in effect objectifying themselves and their own social categories’ (Grenfell and James, 1998, p. 174). How I interpreted the observations is well documented in my handwritten records, not only in what kind of information I chose to write down, but also in the way I wrote them down. For example, when my notes were messy, with scribbles and arrows pointing to footnotes, it indicated that the observation was either very interesting for me or very intensely experienced. When they were neat, it possibly showed the slower pace or intensity (as experienced by me) of the practice.

Conducting observations insinuates the researcher’s conviction that ‘behaviour is purposeful and expressive of deeper values and beliefs’ (Marshall and Rossman, 2006, p. 98). Therefore, I believe that I can approach the logic(s) of practice – and their conflicts - by observing principals, teachers and students. I do not, however, claim that I experience that logic in the same way they do. Nor can I accurately describe others’ experiences. What I do, though, is to describe as accurately as possible my experience of their experiences. Therefore, I talk about those logics of practice (and their conflicts) through the logics (and their conflicts) that guide my practice as a researcher. Put simply, what I decide to question, what I name ‘data’, analyse and represent has to do with the rules underlying my course of making a ‘right’ scientific research (and so possibly getting a doctoral degree). I can also not claim that my observations were not ‘subjective, biased, impressionistic, idiosyncratic’ (Cohen and Manion, 1994, p. 111). In fact they were all those things. To claim the opposite would be to claim non-participation in any field. Is this working against approaching ‘reality’ and ‘truth’? As Youdell (2006b) puts it, instead of being “problematic”, this approach to practice that positions the researcher under the same mechanism that produces the practice of the researched should be seen as ‘emblematic’ of the way that ‘reality’ and ‘truth’ are constituted (p. 68). Having said this, I do not mean that the researcher must not be as much reflexive as possible by recognising these limitations. While observing, for example, I decided to be more aware of the fact that my particular interest may have

excluded data that did not relate obviously to my research questions. Thus I ended up taking notes of (almost) everything. Nevertheless, I also realised that this was impossible; and that I would still manipulate my data in particular ways.

Interviews are characterised according to the 'closeness' of the question focus. In the 'loosest' form, which I employed along the semi-structured ones, there is the 'ethnographic' interview, to describe a flexible interview frame where the interviewees are encouraged to express themselves freely, approaching more the pace of an informal conversation (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Agreeing with Scheurich (1997), the interviewer – as a social actor - 'has multiple intentions and desires', which could be conscious or unconscious and shifting during the interview (p. 62). This is how I experienced my interviews as well. Even though my purposes were laid out in an interview frame (for the semi-structured ones), it was often that interviewees diverted from what I had in mind. I also saw that I sometimes shifted my own interest depending on their diversions, as they brought up issues that I had not thought of before. Additionally, the nature of my research required communicating with the school members. Immersion in the school would happen with me there talking with staff and students, physically participating (to an extent) in their school life and understanding by questioning. At the same time, being the researcher I often felt that they saw me as an opportunity to share with a wider audience (through my work) what they experienced. Put simply, they needed someone to listen to their stories. Therefore, ethnographic interviewing adds to the research the spontaneous information exchange and social contact between researcher and researched.

Rapport is considered to be one of the aims of the interviewer, and arguably it relies on her/his interpersonal skills (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). In order to gain a good grasp of the participants' experiences, one needs to build an environment of trust where both interviewer and (mostly) the interviewee feel comfortable (Miller and Glassner, 1997). Although much desired, I felt that both rapport and the interpersonal skills needed for it were elusive qualities. Lincoln and Guba (1985) say that interview is 'a conversation with a purpose' (cited in Scheurich, 1997, p. 61). However, interviewing is also 'a *social relationship*' regardless of the purposes that condition it (Bourdieu, 1999, p. 608). I found

that I had to labour social skills during each interview, negotiating what counts as 'skill' every time. For example, politeness for one teacher might have meant sliminess for another; friendliness could be seen as opportunism; and discreetness, unassertiveness. I experienced a great deal of uncertainty in many interviews. As Scheurich (1997) suggests, 'the interview interaction is fundamentally indeterminate' (p. 73). Even though I tried to be flexible in building this environment of trust, there was still only a degree of flexibility that I could achieve. This depended on how I read the interviewee's positioning towards me and the interview itself, as well as my own positioning and possible readings of me by my interviewee. There was a degree to which I was an 'active, rational researcher managing her/his identity/ies within the field', and a degree of unconscious/unintentional/intuitive managing of the interview (Youdell, 2006b, p. 62).

Most of the times rapport was the result of, rather than the prerequisite for interviewing. However, even those with whom rapport was established early on were aware of the fact that I was there to research them. This created "moments of rapport" rather than field friendships (Luff cited in Duncombe and Jessop, 2002, p. 113). Most important, though, in building rapport, as Miller and Glassner (1997) observe, was to make to my interviewees very clear how I would use their interviews (and observational data in that matter). Trust (or I would say raspings of it) could not have been achieved if participants were not reassured that anonymity was guaranteed and that it was only me to have access to that data. Bourdieu *et al* (1999) talk about the symbolic violence that is exerted during an interview. Interview, he says, is a 'game' whose rules are defined by the interviewer and, as happens within every field, there is a flux of '*linguistic and symbolic goods*', capitals (Bourdieu *et al*, 1999, p. 609). The interviewee, on the other side, puts effort into demonstrating 'mastery' on the subject in question or mastery of linguistic competencies (Jenkins, 1992, p. 53). For Bourdieu only "'non-violent" communication' grounded on 'social proximity and familiarity' could provide the researcher with some form of confidence that the accounts given by the interviewees elude the distortion caused by the interview's symbolic violence (Bourdieu *et al*, 1999, p. 610). However, I find this view contrasting my

experience on two points, the first relating to the 'holder' of power, and the second to the concept of non-violent communication.

The interview is framed by 'asymmetries of power' (Scheurich, 1997, p.70). This being said, symbolic violence was not exerted exclusively from me, the interviewer, towards my interviewees, but also the other way around. Even though I was the one to put my participants in the interviewee's position, as well as the one defining the interview subject, I often felt this control/power slipping away from me. Teachers often diverted from what I wanted to hear, and they also had objections on the process itself (i.e. use of recorder, asking me to rephrase/explain my questions etc). As Scheurich (1997) suggest, my teachers 'carve[d] our space of their own' (p. 71). However, I did not receive this power shift as a negative consequence, but as creative and reflexive instances. The interviewees brought up issues that I had not thought of asking before or had not clearly formed in my mind. In addition, this shaping and reshaping of the interview resonated with my wish to not be a hegemonic interviewer trapped in her own understandings. I wanted to be an equal interlocutor to my interviewees, who ultimately held the 'truth' of the reality that I researched. Even though one might suggest that power was monopolised by me, I saw the interviewees as 'active resisters' (Scheurich, 1997, p. 71).

Bourdieu *et al* (1999) suggests that only circumstances of 'non-violent communication' might produce accounts free of symbolic violence, in which interlocutors feel familiar with each other, and their dispositions have been produced under similar social conditions. I find his suggestion problematic. Even though familiarity might have assisted a more guard-down conversation, yet the risk of the researcher losing critical distance would have been greater. As Wolcott (1978) suggests, 'detachment is as important to the ethnographic process as is involvement' (p.39).

### *Analysis, representation and the question of validity*

I have explained that working with Bourdieu's structural constructivism means moving from what gives us a sense of actuality to what is (re)produced through subjective experience, and vice versa. My method of analysis, therefore, involved the mapping of collective structures and the individual experience. As I discussed, thinking with habitus I took decisions on the how, who, what and where to research. Having collected the data, I organised it by hand-coding it into themes, so that I have a more manageable bulk; I did this for both interview and observational data. For the interview data (with principals and teachers) I used the questions asked as first themes. To save time, I did not transcribe the whole length of the interviews, but I constructed an index (or a rough coding plan) of the issues covered across the interviews. Working my way to more specific themes, I revisited the 'raw' data and transcribed what was of my particular interest. I often had to go back from one interview to the rest and search for a new emerging theme. While working with interview data, I organised my observational data through a similar process, this time starting from specific spaces (presumed fields), namely the 'school', the 'principal's office' and the 'classrooms', and the practices observed in those. I performed the above process separately for each school, in order to not lose the contextuality of practices. This way I could have a canvas upon which I could perform comparisons, by identifying practices and understandings that were common and different. Wanting to obstruct as much of my bias in the process as possible, I coded (almost) everything, including information that did not directly relate to my research question. This task proved to be extremely time-consuming and daunting due to the amount of information, but also useful in capturing the whole picture. Arguably, this was also to make myself feel more confident and 'ethical' about my delivery.

Having a first idea of what my data looked like, I proceeded with organising it under the specific theoretical categories which later formed my chapters: institutional habitus and school logics regarding ethnicity and ethnic minority students; principal habitus and the logic of the principal's office regarding ethnic minority students; and the logic of the

classrooms regarding ethnic minority students. Underlying this analysis was the concept of 'principal habitus', for which I needed to establish its specificities for the Greek context. Interrogating my data with habitus (Reay, 2004), I searched for emerging structures (primarily ethnicised, but also classed and gendered), capitals and dispositions that explained practices and utterances, still working with each school individually. The collectivity of capitals and dispositions gave me an idea of the fields – the particular logics which made meaningful the practices of principals and teachers. This I understand as working at the 'objective' end of Bourdieu's structural constructivism, the assembly of an 'actual' world which makes social practices happen in certain ways. Concurrently, I also reorganised my data by merging the coding themes of interviews and observations of individual schools under common patterns across them, to get a sense of the macro-level, drawing on policy texts, area demographics etc. At the other end of my analytical strategy was to break these patterns through. Eventually, I came up with meta-themes that described the participants' compliance with and resistance to prevalent structures.

Throughout the analytical process I was very concerned with two issues: overlooking the complexities of agency for the sake of structures; and losing the bigger picture by looking into decontextualised data extract. Both of these problems were fostered by the process of coding, and so I had to work *with* and *against* coding. Categorising data means not only that they are organised, but also quantified, grasping the extent and intensity of patterns. Useful as this method may be, 'it also deflects attention away from uncategorised activities' (Silverman, 2011, p. 66). For this reason, I read and re-read the 'raw' data, paying attention to its details, noting any unclassified information, browsing through data from the start for similar 'uncategorised' examples. The issue of decontextualisation has also troubled me. Looking at isolated textual lines where, for example, teachers spoke about the 'deficit' of immigrant families, there was the risk of perceiving it as face value of their attitudes. Nonetheless, the flow of their accounts revealed more complicated, and often paradoxical, standpoints. Moreover, I was interested in knowing about the conditions conditioning their accounts; the full story behind what was being said. Accounts are not just a narration but are rather a 'part of the world they describe and are thus shaped by the

contexts in which they occur' (Atkinson, cited in Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, p. 126). In order to not lose this 'part of the world' in coding, my primary strategy was to get a good grasp of my participants through the available data, by thoroughly reading their interviews and any notes I made about them. The juxtaposition of interviews and observational data across three levels - institutional, principal, classroom - not only worked as a kind of triangulation, but also offered this sense of 'sequence' I was after of my participants' experiences (Silverman, 2011, p. 62).

In presenting my data I primarily opted for long detailed passages. This strategy proved helpful in talking about agency and structure at the same time. On the one hand, a fuller story about the schools was being told, leaving the particular data into context. On the other, it was often that the same passage (single account or observed scene) contained contradictions and paradoxes; references to structures and breaks with them. On the downside, this strategy made the organising of data difficult and their structuring into chapters uncertain, as the richness of each piece made it difficult to categorise it under one specific code. Considerable time was spent on working and reworking on the coherence of my chapters. In addition, the writing process itself was a process of analysis. By closely investigating data while writing, and in a somehow mysterious way, new interpretative insights emerged. All these made the analytical process less organised than when I first started it, often chaotic, but always exciting.

A research project should be very cautious not to be merely a construct of the researcher's worldview, but to be a construct based on the participants' views of the particular social reality. In other words, the study should be expressive of the emic and not the etic perspective (Marshall and Rossman, 2006, p. 101). The strategy of lengthy, detailed extracts underlines that the process is a result of a subjective process, leaving data open to different interpretations (Youdell, 2011; 2004). This effort to distinguish between the emic and the etic gives a more 'honest' image of the field to the reader. Another issue was that of translation, as the language of field work was the Greek. Through discussions with native English speakers I had to cross-check finer meanings and nuances, so that they translate adequately to English, while retain the cultural elements of the participants' accounts. This



was a challenging task, but certainly fascinating, contributing to clearer borders between the emic and the etic.

The issue of validity is problematised within and outside the field of qualitative methods. The above strategies aimed at retaining the reliability and validity of my data analysis. When researching other people's lives, we can only access moments of them (Miller and Glassner, 1997, p. 136). Concomitantly, we interpret those moments, trying to unpack their underlying meanings, their patterns and reasons. Nonetheless, the researcher is not 'a kind of god' that holds all 'truth' (Scheurich, 1997, p. 64). What we researchers do is to cover 'indeterminacy with the determinacies of our meaning-making, replacing ambiguities with findings or constructions' (Scheurich, 1997, p. 73). As Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) assert, my ethnographic study is set out to offer "confidence" over the explanations it delivers, rather than "proof" (cited in Youdell, 2006b, p. 60).

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Introducing the schools: three institutional habituses and the fields of Greek educational practice**

I start this chapter by presenting the three (compulsory) secondary schools (13-15 year old students), namely the Ionian, the Aegean and the Cretan schools of a main urban city in Greece. I then offer the socioeconomic mapping of the three schools, using school demographics as well as participants' accounts. This draws a first image of their institutional habituses – their ethos and culture – which, I argue, are constituted and hierarchised upon ethnocentric dispositions. Finally, I discuss the mainstream and intercultural educational policy in Greece, and the existence of particular school models, to find that they are ‘normalised’ or ‘abnormalised’ depending on personal and institutional understandings about multiethnicity.

#### **The Ionian school**

The Ionian School was a mainstream school of about 300 students, an average-size school for Greek standards. It was situated in one of the City's suburbs, on the high street of a densely populated area. Historically, this area had served as settling grounds for refugees, first for the ethnic-Greek refugees from the Near East Turkey (1922) and later for Greek repatriates from Germany (1950). Even though it had earlier been considered an area of low socioeconomic state, it has lately seen improvements. This is reflected in the regeneration of some of its parks, streets and squares, the cultural activities it offers and the recent higher-quality flats. The settling of recent immigrant populations in this area was significant, but not as much as in the inner City.

20% of the student population were ethnic minority. Yannis, the school principal, described the students mainly as of lower-middle and working class backgrounds. The school was staffed with 38 teachers, which I would identify as 'white', 9 of which were men (including the principal). Apart from a female teacher (temporary, hourly-paid) who was a Greek repatriate from Germany (the German language teacher), all other staff were born and raised in Greece. The Ionian school was accommodated in a relatively new building shared with another secondary school. The building's infrastructure allowed for their independent function, but for the school yard, which was shared during the breaks by students of both schools. The principal's and vice-principal's office and the staffroom were located on the second floor in the same corridor. On the walls across the corridor were big frames with pictures from various school activities, mainly from cultural events, such as dance contests, theatrical plays and school national celebrations etc. The walls next to the classrooms were decorated with student drawings and other handcraft. The school yard had colourful drawings on its walls made by students.

### **The Aegean School**

The Aegean school was a mainstream inner-city school. The area could be described as 'downgraded' and of a low socioeconomic status. Many economic immigrants, mainly from Georgia and Albania, had settled in this area of the City. The school operated in a building that reflected the aged and low socioeconomic characteristics of the neighbourhood, and hosted three secondary schools in total, an indication of the highly populated area. The interior of the building was maze-like and there were no clearly distinct spaces for each school. The management offices and the staffrooms of all three schools were located next to each other in the same corridor. The principal shared his office with the vice principal and the school's secretary. The schoolyard was shared. Each school's activities (participation in

projects, excursions, celebrations etc.) were portrayed on the walls next to the office of the principal of each school.

The Aegean school had about 200 students – a relatively small institution - 60% of which were of an immigrant background. The student population was characterised in school reports as of low socioeconomic status, most parents doing manual semi-skilled jobs. 24 staff was teaching at the Aegean school, 5 of which were men, including the principal. The average age of the teachers was 48-50. This relates to the centralised way teachers are appointed at schools according to a point system based (primarily) on years in service, with city schools demanding more points. Two effects of age are linked with the staff's education and further training. First, due to the way university courses were organised in the past, older teachers did not receive specific pedagogical training. As some said in their interviews, they learnt pedagogy on the site. Second, only two teachers received postgraduate training (Masters), since these were either unavailable in the past or not chosen by the teachers, as it was for those interested to entering the academic field. All teachers were 'white' Greek, and a female French language teacher was a Greek repatriate from France.

### **The Cretan School**

The Cretan school was a designated 'intercultural' institution, a school model with the explicit aim to accommodate and promote multiethnicity. It was a large school of about 500 students and was located in one of the fastest developing boroughs in the City suburbs. Traditionally, the borough had been the settling grounds for immigrants and Greek repatriates since the 1970s and was considered of low socioeconomic status. However, the situation has shifted in the past ten years, as construction developments created better housing conditions. Being a new construction, the school building fitted this landscape. The interior walls were covered with posters from cultural and school events, photographs from student activities and bulletin boards with various information concerning teachers and

students. However, as the Cretan school received more students each year (particularly immigrant students), space soon became a problem. For example, the staffroom was a small room that fit only some of its staff. To accommodate the increasing number of students, the school was in constant conflict with educational authorities in order to extend the school premises. At the time of my research, their solution was to transform the basement into classrooms to accommodate mainly the increasing number of the preparatory classes for immigrant students.

The student population of the Cretan school was by 40% of immigrant background, and students came from a mix of social classes, from upper middle (i.e. children of lawyers and doctors) to lower ones (i.e. domestics and constructions). This could be explained by the rise of the area's socioeconomic status in the recent years (school allocation is based on post code). The school employed 60 teachers and, although the gender gap was not as great as at the other two schools, the 25 male teachers were outnumbered by the female ones. Moreover, the Cretan school was staffed by much younger teachers compared to the Aegean school, average age being around 36-37. This was partly due to the school's remoteness from the city-centre and its lower demands in in-service years (points). Another reason, however, was the fact that staff allocation at the Cretan school – an 'intercultural' school – required advanced qualifications (post-graduate and further training), which older staff did not possess. Intercultural schools request that teachers preferably speak one of the languages spoken by minorities, or any other language. Therefore, the Cretan school had two hourly-paid, temporary teachers with knowledge of community languages to teach at the 'Language Support' classes – lessons aiming to teach particular school subjects to students with difficulties in the Greek language. These teachers were repatriates: a Greek-Pontian repatriate from Georgia (former USSR) teaching Physics and Chemistry and a Greek repatriate from Albania. All teachers were 'white'.

It is important to note that permanent teaching staff at Greek state schools are considered 'public servants', and as such the Greek state requests that they have Greek citizenship. The legal process in acquiring citizenship is complicated and case-specific, as well as time-consuming due to the insufficiencies of the Greek bureaucracy, often criticised

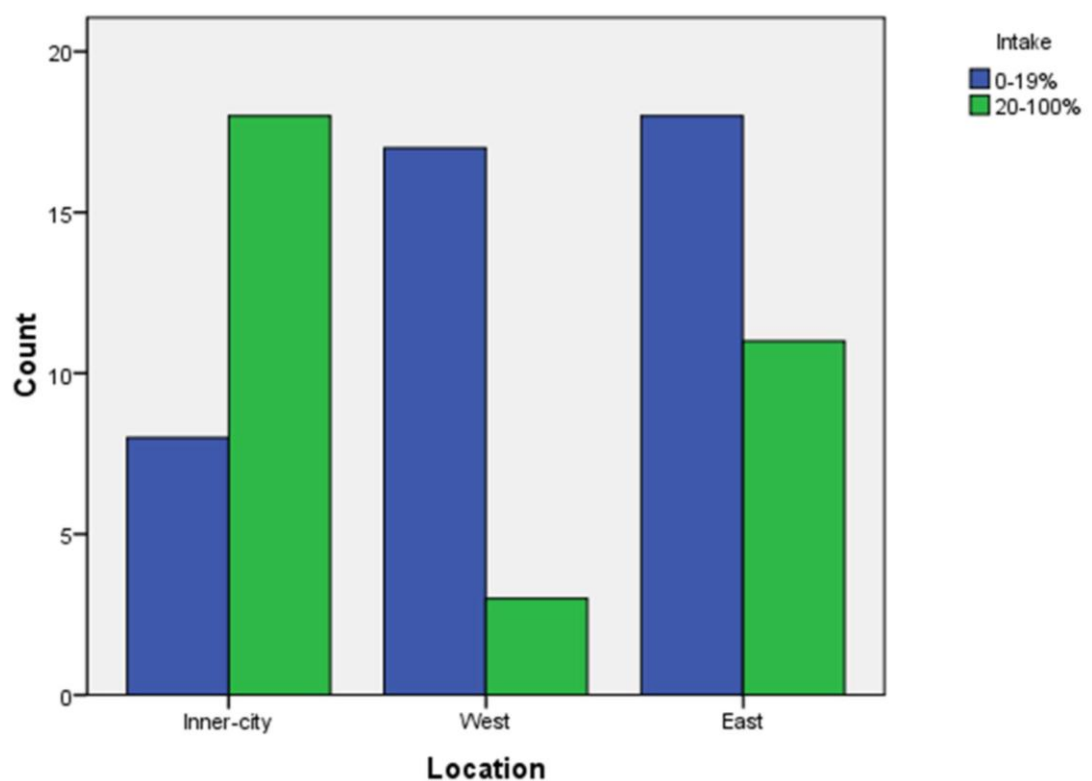
by the Greek Ombudsman (<http://www.synigoros.gr/?i=foreigner.el>). This leaves immigrant educators that have not been naturalised excluded from public schools. There are different citizenship prerequisites for Greek repatriates, depending on the country from which they have repatriated. For those repatriating from the Greek diasporas in the former USSR countries and Turkey (in which Giorgos, the principal of the Aegean school, had origins), regulations for acquiring Greek citizenship are more lenient than other diasporic communities, and so it is possible to work as a permanent state-school teacher. On the other hand, those repatriating from Greek minorities in the Voria Ipiros region (south Albania) face great challenges in acquiring Greek citizenship (Christopoulos, 2004). I discuss the matter of ethnicity and school staffing in Chapter Five.

### **Student demographics and school choices: the formation of local school markets**

This subsection draws the picture of the social landscape of the City of my research within which the three schools are situated. This is important as it offers a socioeconomic mapping of the three schools. In other words, it helps us to understand the constitution of their institutional habituses, which forms (and is formed by) the practices of the principals, the teachers and the students. The 'social and symbolic order' of particular neighbourhoods of the City is reflected in the ways schools are ranked as 'bad' and 'good' (Bunar, 2010, p. 154). As the analysis suggests, the positioning of the three secondary schools in the City's social landscape leads to conceptualisations of local, quasi-school markets.

The City's socioeconomic demographics show the centre as a mixture of middle and lower socioeconomic classes, while middle-class and upper-class households are concentrated in the west of the City and its suburbs. The east part and suburbs are considered to be mainly of low socioeconomic status and mostly underdeveloped. However certain boroughs – such as the one where the Cretan school is located - are gradually upgraded, due to the space available for new buildings. As expected, immigrant communities have mainly settled down in the centre and east side of the City. The

enrolment of students at state schools follows a postcode policy, and thus, as shown in Charts 1 and 2, school intakes reflect this socioeconomic distribution. The figures show the presence of ethnic minority and Greek students in secondary education per City region. Chart 1 sketches the school intake defining 20% as the benchmark percentage<sup>22</sup> denoting intake significance. Unsurprisingly, Greek students<sup>23</sup> outnumber ethnic minority students in schools in the west of the City. Inner-city schools have higher levels of ethnic diversity. The difference between low and high intake of minority students is reduced in the schools of the east part.



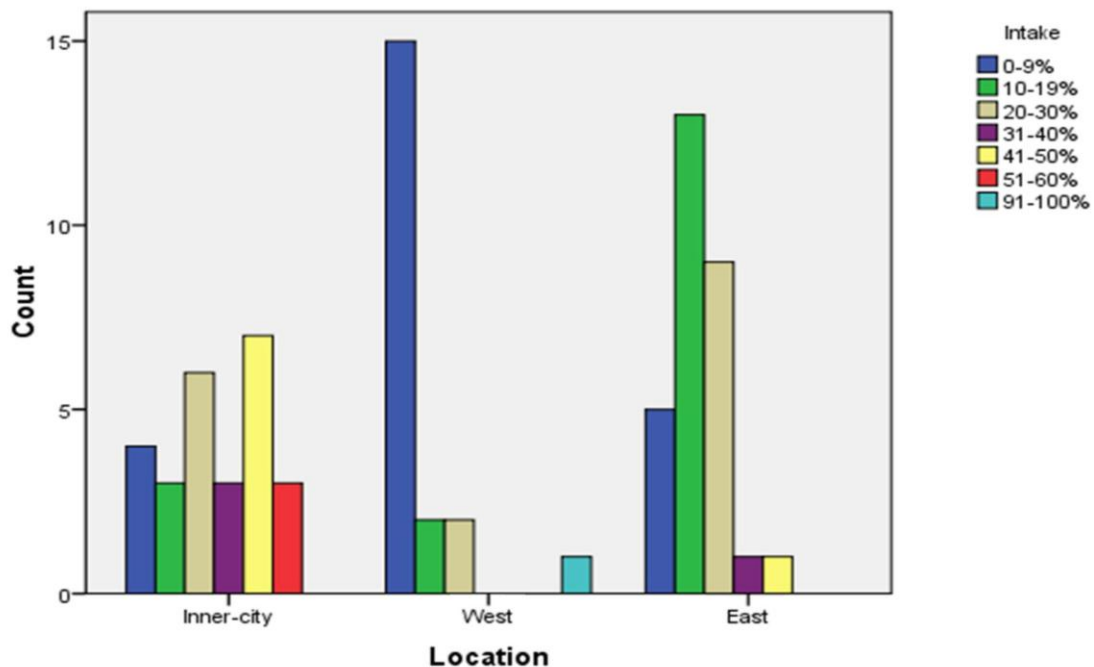
**CHART 1:** Distribution of ethnic minority students in mainstream secondary schools across the City's regions, based on the 2003-2004 data provided by the Hellenic Ministry of Education.

Chart 2 shows a more detailed analysis of school mix. The west of the City is predominated by almost homogenous Greek schools, with few schools having minority

<sup>22</sup> As explained in my methodology strategy, 20% or higher is considered to be a substantial presence of ethnic minority students.

<sup>23</sup> When I define students as Greek, I do it on the basis of their ethnic identification by the school (based on their parents' background and country of origin). However, I understand that minority students may also define themselves as Greek.

students more than the 20% benchmark. Most schools on the east of the City have a low representation of ethnic minority students or just above that benchmark, and there are a few schools with less than 9% which seems to reflect the upgraded boroughs. On the contrary, the minoritised student population, in the vast majority of inner-city schools, is beyond the 20% benchmark. It is crucial to point out that most schools appear to have more than 40% of their population of a non-Greek ethnic origin. Intercultural policy allows mainstream schools with diversity higher than 40% to be converted into ‘intercultural schools’. However, these have remained ‘mainstream’, possibly due to financial reasons (i.e. high operational costs) and - arguably - political reasons (Damanakis, 2002; Nikolaou, 2005).

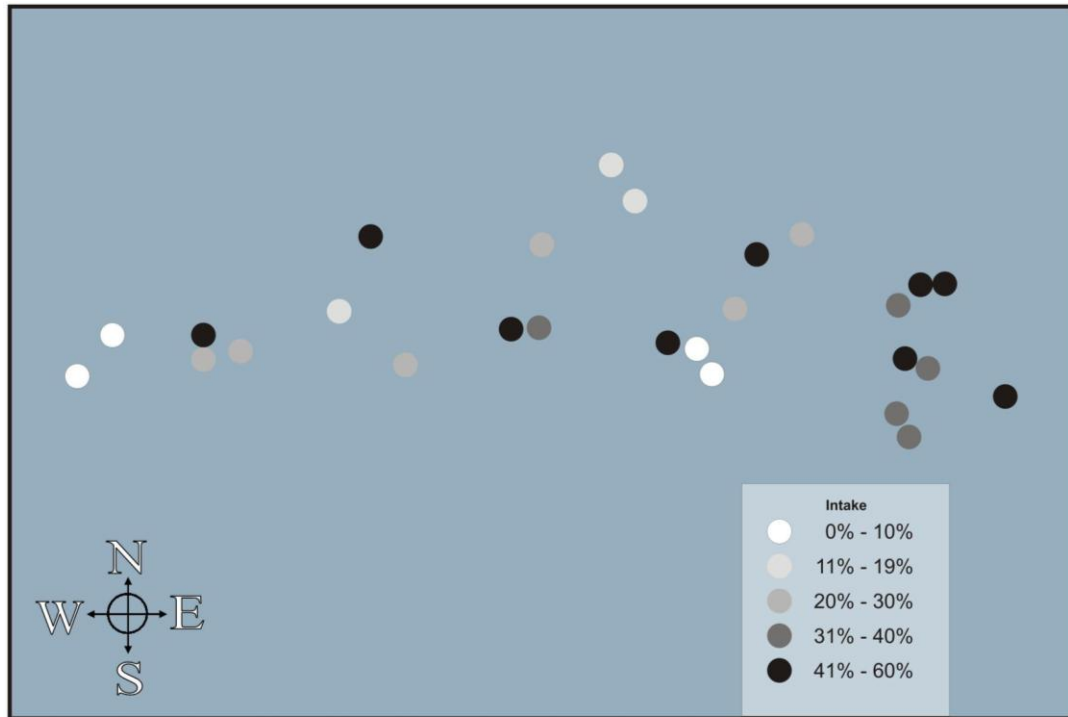


**CHART 2:** Mainstream secondary schools’ intake of ethnic minority students per City region, based on the 2003-2004 data provided by the Hellenic Ministry of Education.

The City does not appear to have developed ‘ghetto-like situations’, where ghetto is defined as ‘large numbers of [immigrant groups] in specific downgraded neighbourhoods and gradual displacement of locals’ (Hatziprokopiou, 2003, p. 1045). Labrianidis, Lyberaki, Tinios and Hatziprokopiou (2001) describe the mixed dwelling of immigrant and local populations as a ‘new social geography of the city’ (p. 208). Nevertheless, this social



geography does not necessarily mean the absence of population segregation. Picture 1 is a graphic representation of the location of the 27 inner-city schools, which I produced scaling it on an electronic version of the City map. Each dot represents one secondary school and it is coloured according to the proportion of ethnic diversity in the student population.



**PICTURE 1:** Graphic representation of inner –City mainstream secondary schools according to their ethnic minority intake, based on the 2003-2004 data provided by the Hellenic Ministry of Education.

A first thing one notices is that as we move from the east (right) to the west (left) part of the City centre, fewer schools are attended by ethnic minority students. This reflects the immigrant population distribution across the whole of the City, and justifies the two ‘white’ - predominantly Greek - schools at the far left. Hatziprokopiou (2003) and Labrianidis, Lyberaki, Tinios and Hatziprokopiou (2001) observe that as immigrants settle down for longer period, their life quality and housing conditions improve. On the one hand, thus, it is possible that more and more immigrant families move towards better,

predominantly 'Greek' neighbourhoods, changing the social landscape of the west part of the City. On the other hand, the case could be that as they move towards the west side, the Greek population moves to the suburbs. More research would establish whether immigrant populations blend harmoniously with the Greek, or they fill in the unwanted space previously occupied by the latter.

A critical aspect relating to student population emerges from the location of the two 'white' schools near the city-centre and towards the east part (Picture 1). These units are almost surrounded by highly ethnically diverse schools (dark grey dots), with 6 of them accommodating over than 41% minoritised students (black dots). The two schools represented by the white dots, however, have kept their Greek homogeneity. A similar pattern is observed in most of the City's outer boroughs (i.e where the Ionian and Cretan schools are), with one or two schools concentrating higher numbers of ethnic minority students. Especially in the west boroughs this phenomenon is more intense. In the biggest west borough, all schools have from 1% up to 7% immigrant students, except for one school where the proportion is 25%. We can discern a pattern that works vice versa: in areas of higher ethnic diversity, a few schools keep their immigrant population low; whereas in areas with lower ethnic diversity, a few schools concentrate higher numbers of immigrant students.

Since there are no allocation policies other than the postcode, it seems that other factors are creating these vast differences in the formation of school populations. One could argue that students and families make school choices depending on their friendships, and social connections. Bunar (2010) studied the choices of minority families in Sweden to keep sending their children in 'bad' multiethnic local schools, instead of moving to predominantly white, middle-class 'good' schools. He found that the choice of 'staying' was based on feelings of belonging to the community and feeling safe within "'my own" people' (Bunar, 2010, p. 148). Similar results were reported by Ball, Rollock, Vincent and Gillborn (2013) about the school choices of Black Caribbean-heritage middle class families. Therefore, immigrant students in the City would choose the school attended by their communities, making a case of community social (and along cultural) capital forming the institutional

habitus. At the same time, this could also be a result of the processes of the interplays between the institutional and the individual habitus similar to those described by Reay, Ball and David (2005) for university students. Reay, Ball and David (2005) suggested that students choose tertiary institutions depending on whether that institution is 'for them' or not; this choice is a result of various combinations of criteria based on conceptualisations of class and ethnicity.

Without discharging the above scenarios, an additional reason emerges as possible from the following personal accounts:

*I asked Giorgos, the principal of the Aegean School, why it is that those two 'white' schools have much lower ethnic diversity than his school.*

GIORGOS: They just don't accept immigrant students there [in a disapproving tone].

EM:<sup>24</sup> With what excuse? What happens when an immigrant parent goes to the school principal to enrol her child?

GIORGOS: The principal simply tells her that the school does not have vacancies. Even if it does. So parents have to search for other local schools that do accept them. Those two schools ['white' school names] are known for their strategies. They think that this way they keep the educational quality high, but in reality they do not do as good job as other schools with immigrant students do.

(Giorgos, male, principal)

*Manos, the principal at the Cretan (Intercultural) school, talks about the difficulties of managing his school due to the large number of students (about 500):*

I have told the borough [the council] to say to the other schools of the [borough's name] to not send their immigrant students to ours [the council has a say in the allocation of students]. We are trying to keep an intake balance between Greek and ethnic minority students according to the 'Intercultural Education' policy [40% minority/60% Greek]. Teaching such schools [with immigrant students] requires more effort from those teachers [of the other neighbouring schools] and that's what they don't like over there.

(Manos, male, principal)

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<sup>24</sup> The researcher (white-Greek, middle-class, mid 20s).

A few years earlier, G. Markou, former Head of the Intercultural Education Office, interviewed on the talk show *Nostos* (Toparlaki, 2002) stated:

It happens that Greek parents take their children from downgraded schools with a high intake of ethnic minority students, and enrol them at more homogenous ones in order to get a better education.

School choice is related to the ethnic aspects of the student intake, which is perceived by parents and teachers as a factor of good or bad schooling, depending on the school's 'otherness'. Therefore, for a Greek principal who wants to run a 'good school'; a teacher who wants to teach at a 'good school'; and a parent who wants to send her/his kids to a 'good school', a low ethnically diverse educational environment seems to be the best choice – even if reality does not necessarily verify such claims. Concomitantly, when teaching material, teacher support and teaching resources for multilingual and multicultural classes offered by the Greek state is poor (Nikolaou, 2005; Damanakis, 2002; Skourtou, 2011), then the quality of education offered is questionable. In Chapter One I presented criticisms of such inadequacies and the ethnocentricity of the Greek educational system (Fragoudaki and Dragona, 1997). As I will explore in chapters to follow, through this systemic (and systematic) negligence of the immigrant communities by Greek schools, minoritised students are constituted 'bad learners' (Youdell, 2006b). And since these students deviate from the 'ideal client' type (Gillborn, 1990), so their schools will too deviate from the 'ideal' institution for Greek (middle-class) parents.

Each of the above quotes reveals a different source of constraint on the schooling choices of immigrant students. Giorgos refers to the principal, who makes the 'choice' for the students by sending them to neighbouring schools. The issue of school principalship obstructing the enrolment of particular students (mostly immigrant and Roma) has been documented by the Greek Ombudsman (Hekimoglou, 2010). Manos highlights the constraints set by the teachers of other schools and the Council; and G. Markou (Toparlaki, 2002) those set by Greek parents. All quotes reveal how 'degradation' is blamed on the ethnically diverse school mix. Although, as argued earlier, schooling choices for minorities

can rely on feelings of safety and belongingness, here the data suggest a different scenario. Greek students can choose whether to attend an ethnically mixed and 'inferior' school. Immigrant students have follow the choices made for them by others.

Student exclusions through assessment policies and school marketisation processes have been well documented in other research, which make a strong case that institutional discrimination is intrinsic to these processes (Thrupp, 1999; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Taylor, 2002). There is no assessment policy or research on the academic performance of secondary educational institutions<sup>25</sup> in Greece to make correlations between student ethnic background and inequity of educational results. However, the above data advocate that ethnicism works against ethnic minority students through three elements: exclusion, blame and manipulation. The state excludes them from getting a good education, due to inadequate provisions; it blames them for the 'degraded' school quality; and manipulates their choice of schooling, excluding them from the 'good' education, which is provided to Greek students. I revisit the issue in the following chapters, as further data contribute to my argument.

The school demographics, which I have presented earlier, showed that an openly ethnic 'screening' –selecting students based on their ethnicity – was practised only by a minority of the City's schools. However, practices of discrimination are realised beyond school registration as well. Immigrant students will still be doomed to inferior schooling, since the blame placed on them by the state casts them as the ones to be punished by attending 'bad' schools. These 'bad' schools suffer from 'institutional triage' (Youdell, 2004), a term describing the discrimination of schools based on their assumed quality. This quality is built around ethnicised (and classed) conceptualisations of what a school - and its students - should be, defining as 'failing' those schools that do not match the needs of the Greek (middle-class) community. Ethnicity emerges as a constitutive of the institutional habitus, which gives a certain characterisation to the particular school. The school intake

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<sup>25</sup> The matter of school assessment has received strong criticism and opposition, and has recently put on the agenda again.

acquires the nature of an institutionalised capital, evaluated by Greek ethnocentricity: the more diverse the school mix, the less reliable the school.

I will now turn to more data to support my argument of the formation of a local quasi school market (Ball, 2006) which operates on the basis of the schools' ethnic mix and social class. Taylor (2002) describes four 'components of the [educational] market place': the 'institutional space', the 'producers', the 'consumers' and the 'competition space'. Even though in the Greek case it is a 'quasi' market, since education is free and no league tables exist for schools creating fierce competition, nonetheless its effects are still obvious. To start with, Manos (principal at the Cretan school) struggles with the borough – the institutional space - to 'keep an intake balance' between immigrant and non-immigrant students of his school, as the intercultural education policy suggests. He fails to do so as the borough succumbs to the demands of neighbouring mainstream schools to send immigrant students to the 'intercultural' Cretan school. This situation creates an additional issue for the school. As it becomes overpopulated, the school management built additional rooms in the basement which – at the time of my research - accommodated the Greek language support ('preparatory') classes for the immigrant students (more on these later on). Immigrant students with language difficulties attended those lessons, while the rest of the students attended, for example, core lessons in Ancient and Modern Greek literature (demanding mastery of the Greek language). Immigrant students returned to core lessons (i.e. Arts, Music, Technology etc.,) for the rest of the daily curriculum. As the rooms were formerly constructed to function as storage rooms, their conversion into classrooms was problematic. Construction work was considerably delayed and bungling was obvious in the space; for example, there were parts on the walls with no plaster; the floor had no insulation and this made the space feel cold in the winter. Moreover, there was no natural light, since there were no windows. In order to get fresh air circulating in the rooms, they have built a bulky ventilating system, which overpowered the space. Metallic tubes run from its main body across the walls and ceiling, and through the classroom walls.

All these frustrated Manos, who was in constant friction with the local authorities, demanding to have the classrooms properly done. It was one of the first issues he raised on my first day at the Cretan School, while giving me a tour around.

[Showing me the new rooms] It's unacceptable! They've turned us into "The Enterprise"<sup>26</sup> [pointing at the ventilation system]. That's really the feeling you get down here with this hideous installation. It makes the space claustrophobic and unnatural. How can you have effective teaching going on here if there is no light and no fresh air for the students? We are also responsible for the health and well being of these kids, and they [the local authorities] don't give a damn...Bloody hell, it's for those kids we're fighting for!

I did not ask Manos why it was particularly the language-support classes that had to be accommodated at the basement rooms. However, my guess is that the choice was based on the fact that they were used only for some hours during the day, unlike the core classes which run throughout the day. Even if it was the practices of the local authorities to allocate immigrant students to the Cretan school that have resulted in overpopulation and the consequent lack of space, the borough have now neglected it. The institutional space (Taylor, 2002) here is shaped by the borough and its schools with their mainstream and intercultural policies. It appears that this space is driven by Greek ethnocentricity: students are moved around on the basis of their ethnicity, defining the schools' ethnic mix, and so their social landscape.

The school market is also linked to the 'producers' of education, the commodity-at-stake. The quotes particularly refer to the management of the schools and their staff. Giorgos (principal at the Aegean school) talks about other principals who "simply tell[ethnic minority parents] that the school does not have vacancies". Manos also says that having mixed classrooms is "what [teachers of neighbouring schools] don't like over there". School principals and teachers try to manipulate the production process, by deciding who gets in and out of their school, but also to whom their teaching practices will be addressed. Clearly, these decisions and preferences are based on the ethnicity of the students. Therefore, the process of educational production is affected by ethnic discrimination.

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<sup>26</sup> The spaceship from 'Star Trek', the popular science fiction series.

The producers' (school staff) conceptualisations resonate with the demands of the third component of the educational market place, the consumers (parents and children) (Taylor, 2002). As G. Markou (former Head of the Intercultural Education Office) observes, Greek (middle-class) parents identify schools with high levels of ethnic diversity as "downgraded", and instead prefer to enrol their children to "more homogenous ones". Accordingly, what the consumers want indicates what the role of the school principal (and their staff) should be. 'Good' quality education, in this instance, is conceptualised in relation to the Greek homogeneity of the school mix. More evidence of how perceptions of 'good' - 'bad' students and 'successful' - 'failing schools' are presented in the next section, as well as in Chapter Seven.

Educational institutions in the City are thus participating in a 'competition space', the fourth and final component defining a market place (Taylor, 2002, p. 11). The data suggest that ethnocentrism is a constituent of this space. Schools are evaluated based on their student mix, which appears to work as the school's token - an institutional capital. The market place is formed by educational institutions which are hierarchised, selected or rejected by parents. To meet with the demands of the competition space - or, in Bourdieu's (1993) theory, the field - schools should have less ethnic diversity and more Greek homogeneity. At this point, a question mark is raised on the participation of minority parents as the consumers in the local school markets, and how they affect its formation. I understand that even if minority parents are choosers of their children's education (Bunar, 2010), the fact remains that this choice is restricted by the marketisation processes discussed here. If they actively opt to enrol their children to ethnically mixed schools to ensure belongingness and safety, yet they are excluded from all other institutions that do not offer them these qualities. Therefore, the local quasi - school market creates discriminatory schooling options for two unequal consumer groups, the Greek and the ethnic minority parents.



### *Teacher preferences over educational institutions*

Choice for mainstream schools in Greece is primarily controlled by the centralised allocation system. Teachers are asked to place in hierarchical order their most preferred municipalities when they apply for relocation<sup>27</sup>. School preference for the interviewed teachers was based on a variety of criteria, including proximity to their houses, convenience of transportation and established relationships with their colleagues. However, the school mix, as well as the type of the school, also seemed to work as a criterion. The following quotes were recorded in the mainstream Aegean School, which had 60% ethnic diversity.

*Giota and Giorgos are having a chat in the principal's office about next year's teacher allocation. Giorgos suggests that she could stay in a school at the centre of the City if she applied for the principal's post.*

GIOTA: [with a scorning touch] Hah, I haven't gone nuts yet! I'm not trying to stay in the centre. I'm trying to get out of it [...]! Ah, it's about time I went to some school on the west [part of the City], had enough of these students.

(Giota, female teacher; Giorgos, male, school principal)

Because of the Russians, inner-city schools are less preferred by teachers, and vice versa schools on the west part of the City are higher in demand.

(Voula, female, vice-principal)

*This statement follows a discussion between Giorgos and Kimonas on the forthcoming 'principal evaluation', the process of assessment and allocation of present and prospective principals. As Giorgos was undergoing assessment to renew his post at the school, Kimonas was estimating the number of applications.*

There won't be too many applicants for your post. Principals do not ask to be allocated at inner-city schools, because they are too difficult to manage. They'd rather choose schools on the west side.

(Kimonas, male, Physics; Giorgos, male, school principal)

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<sup>27</sup> Permanent school teachers are appointed to particular schools as public servants in the beginning of their career. At the end of each academic year, teachers can apply to be relocated based on the available vacancies; otherwise they serve their current school.

The above extracts signpost a link between school mix and teacher choice. They reflect constiutions of teacher preferences over 'good' schools, and rejection of 'bad' schools depending on attributes of their socio-economic location and the student ethnic mix. The first two extracts talk about "easier" schools on the west part of the City, which are preferred by principals as a manageable context, in contrast to those in the inner City. Schools of the west City have far fewer ethnic minority students, and therefore have students which are not like the ones of which Giota "had enough". The other, good students – or in Gillborn's (1990) words the 'ideal clients' - who are to be found in schools on the west City, seem to be the factor that makes those schools preferred by teachers. Voula talks about constiutions of inner-city schools as 'bad' due to the Russian minority, which makes schools on the west more attractive as teaching environments.

Teacher complaints about the low levels of the achievement of immigrant students and their 'disobedient' behaviour were a daily occurrence. A characteristic example of this is the following incident:

*I'm conducting observations in the staffroom, when the English Language teacher (female, early 40s) walks in, obviously irritated. She tells me:*

This [classroom] is giving on my nerves! Just gave them a test and they always give me such a hard time. They are tough boys. Many of them look like traffic-light kids too, and you know how it is... [lowering voice in a conspiring tone]

The term 'traffic-light kid' is widely used in Greece to describes children, mainly from Roma families, who wait at the traffic lights to clean the window screen of cars in exchange for money. The teacher refers to her classroom (in generalising terms) as "tough boys" and as looking like "traffic-light kids". For her the 'gypsy-looking' faces of students are accompanied by a negative attitude towards learning – and presumably I "know how it is". I should also reflect on my involvement in the construction of these meanings. I probably did "know how it is", or what she meant, as I did not ask for further explanations. My own conceptual constructions of what those "tough boys" could be, led me to suppose how they looked like. Their facial traits, darker skin and sloppy clothes – elements which have constructed the teacher's (and my) image of those students – are signifiers of distinctions

between what a 'good' and a 'bad' learner looks like. It follows that the boys' bodies – their embodied cultural capital – are conceptualised as constituents of 'undesirable learner identities' (Youdell, 2003, p. 3). Within the field of school, constructed images of what their 'ideal client' should be work as a scale, which evaluates students according to their class, gender and race (Gillborn, 1990). The dark-skinned, sloppy-dressed, gypsy, male body appears to contest a white, clean-dressed, middle class, female body. Connecting it with the earlier analysis, when the school mix is represented by negatively ethnicised/classed /gendered bodies, the school is positioned lower in the teachers' preferences.

On the contrary, most interviewed staff at the Cretan school (5 out of 7, including the principal) chose to teach there, exactly because of the ethnic mix and school model. Manos, the school principal, was one of them.

I chose the Cretan school and stayed here from the very beginning of its establishment, because of the ideology of its curriculum. This school model works; it helps immigrant students integrate but also helps Greek students to open their minds to the 'different'. I would never teach to a 'Palinnostounton' ['Repatriates'] school. These are ghetto schools.

Manos refers to the school model of 'Repatriate' schools, the first educational establishments to provide education to returning Greeks in the 1970s. As inward migration started, these schools accommodated other ethnic groups as well, but no 'native'/local Greek students. These schools have then been renamed into 'intercultural', but their student mix remained as before. For Manos, thus, integration has two processes: to provide immigrant students with proper educational skills; and to educate Greek students in a culture of acceptance. Other teachers have noted the importance their job has in battling social injustice. However, 2 of the teachers did not prioritise this social role when applying for a position at the school. Instead their motive was faster employment, since there is a different appointment track for intercultural schools from mainstream schools. Nonetheless, they appreciated the intercultural school environment, while teaching there. One of them, Katerina, talks about her expectations of the school before her appointment:

I did feel a bit apprehensive about coming to an ‘intercultural’ school, because you hear about [them being] ‘ghetto’ schools and of lower educational level... But this school is truly good, it has experienced teachers on the subject and a good support network... And it certainly is very inspiring to teach here, there’s a... let’s say... a vibe of respecting every child, floating around the school.

(Katerina, female, Religion)

Katerina’s account highlights the stereotypical conceptualisations of ‘intercultural’ schools, which by definition have the catering of ‘different students’ at the centre of their agenda. Reverberating Manos’ comment about “ghetto” schools, these conceptualisations are presumably an aftermath of segregationist school models, but also of assumptions about the educational level of their immigrant student population. Nonetheless, she also underlines the actual good quality of the school, the level of teaching and teacher support, as well as the ethos (she calls it “vibe”) of accepting 'otherness'.

The data showed how teachers’ preferences of schools as working spaces are based on their conceptualisations of a ‘good’/‘easy’ or ‘bad’/‘difficult’ school mix, but also of ‘good’/‘inspiring’ environment. Their accounts indicate the institutional habituses of the schools: the mediation of the dominant (ethnocentric Greek) culture through the choices of the Aegean school teachers; and the mediation of a ‘counter’ (intercultural) culture through the choices of the Cretan school teachers.

### **Mapping the fields and subfields of Greek educational practice**

In this subsection I map the fields whose structures are evidenced in the educational practices of the schools. My analysis focuses on those fields that are primarily manifested in my data. I have thought of fields as ‘spatial’ and ‘abstract’, to distinguish between spaces of physical (tangible) and non-physical (intangible) properties. In this sense, I treated the term ‘field’ both in its actual and metaphorical use, as this helped me in the research process to

make difficult, abstract relations more accessible to me by translating them into objects and bodies.

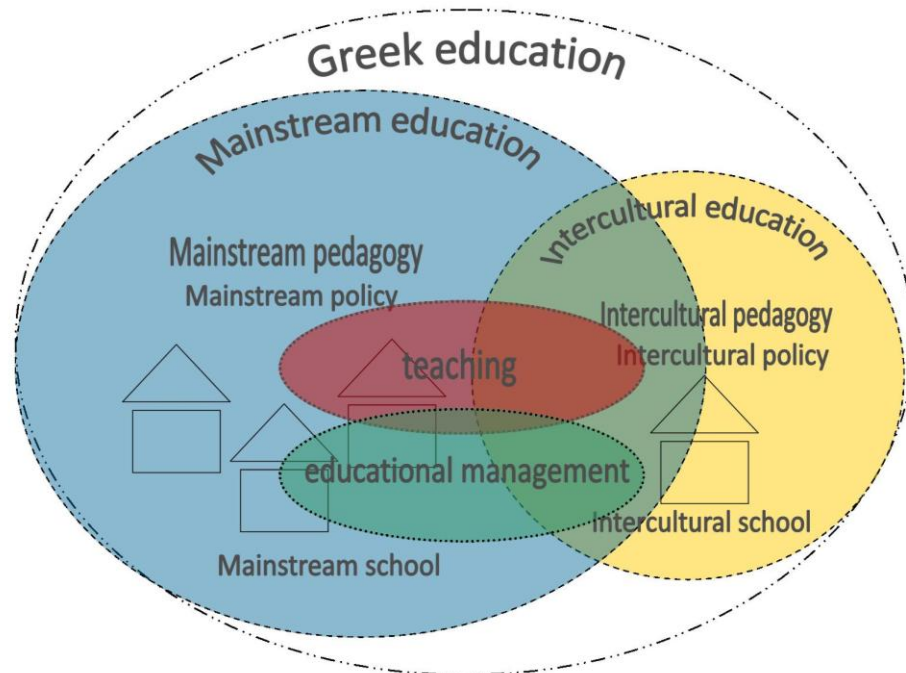
Each field has its own logic of practice. My empirical work has identified various spatial and abstract fields, each one operating within a degree of distinct logic, different rules and capitals. To start with the former, the school is one spatial field with distinct spatial borders (the outer school walls) and structured spaces (offices, classrooms, gym, corridors, laboratories, storage rooms, school yard, toilets etc.). For my research I worked mainly with four spatial sub-fields: the principal's office, the staffroom and the classrooms, which I considered them as school sub-fields. Even though these physical spaces are micro fields, they are still distinct from each other, accommodating different bodies and objects and operating under different rules (Bourdieu, 1990).

I have identified the staffroom as the spatial field that belongs to the Teacher Body – the staff assembly. It is the property of teachers. Within this quite large space, there were various objects (desks, drawers, chairs etc.), all of which were shared amongst staff. However, they were clearly a property of the staff. During my observations I often had to move around desks because the teachers wanted their space. As McGregor (2004) suggests, the staffroom is a space, as all other spaces in the school, which is used within the school to manifest and deliver authority; in this case teachers over students and the principal. The staffroom was dominated by teacher issues and beliefs about their classrooms, as well as the school management – often complaining about it. Second, it was a larger room since it hosted more people. This numerical difference also reflected the way important decisions for the school were taken: it was by vote that the Teacher Body decided (i.e. to go on excursion, decide a student's punishment for serious disciplinary offenses etc.). Therefore, since major decisions happened in the staffroom by teachers, this also demonstrates the contestation between logics of different fields: the numerical dominance of teachers over the principal, and of the 'licensed authority' of the principal (Ball, 1987, p.82). Experiencing similar issues as those reported by Paechter (1998), I felt that I participated in the contestation between the two spatial fields (staffroom and principal's office) as a researcher. For example, when conducting observations in the staffroom of the Aegean

school a teacher jokingly (but also with a hint of seriousness) asked me 'Are you writing down in your note book anything we say for Giorgos' [the principal] to see?'

I also regarded the classroom to be a field, whose main practice is cultural inculcation, and the evaluation of students on the degree of achieved inculcation (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1990). In other words, the classroom is the place for the delegation of pedagogic authority, and its reproduction (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1990). Any student in the classroom, by definition of their role in the school, knows that their participation entails learning and undergoing assessment of their levels of knowledge, achievement, skills and behaviour by their teachers. At the same time, teachers are, by definition of their job, implicated in the delegation of pedagogic authority. This is a packet-deal: participation in the classroom is meaningful, 'endowed with sense or with value', for students as well as teachers, while pedagogic authority is being delegated (Bourdieu cited in Reay, 2004, p. 435). The objects and the arrangements of bodies in the space reveal the above social relations. The typical seating across schools in Greece follows the traditional instructional arrangement: two students share one desk, which faces the black/whiteboard, arranged usually in three vertical rows and straight parallel lines. The teacher's desk, which faces the classroom, is adjacent to the board, lifted on a wooden platform to ensure a wider view range. This spatial arrangement reflects the delegation of authority by teacher towards the under-aged students. The elevated teacher's desk has a practical - and yet symbolic - use. Within this space, students can be moved around by the teacher in order to regain control of the classroom, i.e., by moving 'trouble-makers' at the front desks, or pairing 'naughty' students with 'well behaved' ones (Wegmann, 1976). However, the classroom is also the space where students can construct their resistances (McGregor, 2004). Student withdrawal from classroom activities, back-chat and noise could be considered as practices of resistance (Youdell, 2011).

Having these physical spaces as a starting point, I have then identified the abstract/non-physical fields of educational practice in Greece and concern my data, which are shown in Diagram II.



**DIAGRAM II:** Abstract fields of social practice.

I examine two educational models, the mainstream and the intercultural education. These two subfields of Greek education are realised in the physical space of relative schools. Each educational model entails particular pedagogies (discourse and practice) (Lingard and Christie, 2003) that are expressed in particular policies, both of which are also subfields of the Greek education (Lingard and Rawolle, 2004). Two other distinct fields that appeared in my data were the field of educational management and the field of teaching. These abstract places of struggle affect the spatial field of School and its sub-fields (classrooms, staffroom and principal's office); the ways in which this happens is explained throughout the thesis.

I have purposefully noted the field borders with dashed lines to underscore their dynamic nature and the overlaying and interplay of structures across fields, their logics infusing into each other's. Moreover, one should imagine that outer, wider fields of social practice affect each one of these sub-fields; for example, Greek education is linked with the field of Greek politics and Greek economy, but also with educational systems and theories outside Greece. Similarly, intercultural education has interlocking structures with the field of interculturalism, as wider theoretical field within which particular practices are

generated; the Greek sub-field of educational management is affected by a wider field of educational management as theory and practice, and so on. The transparent colours of the circles note the interrelation of structures between fields and sub-fields. In particular, the circle of intercultural education is shown to partly overlap with that of mainstream education, signifying that the design of the former has incorporated many elements of the latter, and many policies are common; something for which intercultural education in Greece has been criticised. Moreover, the circle of intercultural education is smaller than that of mainstream education, representing the limited application of this scheme across schools and, thus, their hierarchisation within the Greek education. In my texts I name the various abstract and physical spaces as 'sub-fields' or 'hyper-fields' to annotate their relative position to each other; or just 'fields', when their hierarchisation is not as relevant to the analysis. This makes the text less confusing, since any of the above fields is a 'sub' or 'hyper' field to other fields.

Thinking with fields is 'think[ing] relationally' (Bourdieu in Wacquant, 1989, p. 39). Each field is distinct due to the particular practices it fosters; fields exist in relation to other fields. For example, the field of teaching is different to that of educational management because they have different (and often opposing) purposes and capitalise on different values. Moreover, we can presume that intercultural education in Greece was formed as a separate field because the ethnocentrism of mainstream education kept intercultural pedagogy outside its aims – otherwise an intercultural educational agenda would have been widely adopted by the Greek system. A final issue relates to the borders of abstract fields and the participation of individuals in them. I show that my participants are caught up between contesting logics of practice operating at the same time. This suggests that field borders are played out on individuals' practice, and whether one will follow this or that logic depends on the strength of the fields' influence at that moment.



*Policies as fields: normalising and abnormalising educational institutions*

This section discusses the policies of the two sub-fields of Greek education, the mainstream and the intercultural schemes. Looking into policy is important since, as Ball (2006) puts it 'policies are *textual* interventions into practice' (p. 46). Policies regulate practice by imposing particular rules, even as they are open to different readings and implementations (Ball, 2006). At the same time policies are not just texts to be made into practice. They are also 'a *production* of "truth" and "knowledge"' – discourses in the Foucauldian sense (Ball, 2006; p.48). Paraphrasing Ball (2006), '[principals] are spoken by policies, [they] take up the positions constructed for [them] within policies' (p. 48). Lingard and Rawolle (2004) draw on Bourdieu to propose that policies are the product of the social struggles that happen inside, across and throughout the fields of social practice. In fact, every policy could be conceptualised as a social field (Lingard and Rawolle, 2004). Greek educational policy distinguishes between 'mainstream' and 'intercultural' schools and their curricula- which are being described as 'special education'. The Greek Constitution states:

Education is the State's essential mission and it aims at the moral, intellectual, professional and physical education of the Greeks, the development of *national and religious consciousness* and their moulding into free and responsible citizens.

(Article 16, Paragraph 2, cited in Damanakis, 2002, p. 100)

The above articulation states that 'the Greeks' constitute the main concern of the policy, and places the Greek nation and Orthodox Christianity<sup>28</sup> as essentials to be transmitted through educational programs. Greek nationhood and religion are being raised as the values of the field of Greek educational policy, which should be transmitted and reproduced through education. Nonetheless, it becomes obvious that other cultures and ethnicities are implicated through their exclusion in the use of the words 'Greeks' and 'national and

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<sup>28</sup> Greece acknowledges Orthodox Christianity as the State's official religion. The history of the Greek nation, as taught at school, is inseparable to Orthodox Christianity since the Byzantine Empire era. However, the Constitution also acknowledges freedom of religious choice (Article 13, Paragraph 1 of the Greek Constitution).

religious consciousness'. Troyna and Williams (1986) argue that such terms operate as 'proxy concepts' to discriminate against those whose culture, ethnicity and religion do not 'match' to the concerns of educational policy. In other words, non-Greeks, non-Orthodox Christians are left outside the State's responsibilities. Similarly, Damanakis (2002) suggests that the Greek state does not leave space for diversity and cultural pluralism, but is rather dogmatic and ethnocentric.

The 'Intercultural Education' policy in Greece was enacted in 1996 by the Law 2413 and it states that:

1. The objective of Intercultural Education is to organise and operate school units of Primary and Secondary education which will contribute to the education of youths with educational, social, cultural or learning particularities.

(Article 34, Law 2413/1996, my translation)

The policy primarily establishes the conversion of mainstream schools into 'intercultural' schools when these have an intake of repatriate and/or foreign students higher than 45% of the student population; once converted, these intercultural schools should maintain this ethnic balance. Intercultural schools can have special curricula with extra or alternative modules, so as to correspond to the special needs of their ethnic minority students, including Greek language as second/foreign; and other adjustments concerning the examination of students (exclusion from Ancient Greek, oral examination etc.).

Damanakis (2002) argues that the reference to the 'particular needs' of those students, along with the creation of 'special' schools to correspond to their 'particularities', results in the establishment of a discriminatory and segregationist policy. The normalisation of a mono-cultural education becomes obvious in the fact that out of 3000 secondary compulsory and non-compulsory schools<sup>29</sup>, only 13 are designated Intercultural (Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, [http://www.ypepth.gr/el\\_ec\\_page117.htm](http://www.ypepth.gr/el_ec_page117.htm)); when several inner-city schools have more than 45% of ethnic diversity.

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<sup>29</sup> The figure includes mainstream, special, vocational, state and private schools.

The construction of mainstream schools as normal, suggested by the policy and its implementation, is reflected in Yannis's words, the principal of the Ionian School.

*Talking about the 20% of minoritised students of his school, Yannis mentions that there is an intercultural school in the same borough.*

You know there is an intercultural school close by. They are a different kind of school, they do cultural stuff related to the students' ethnic backgrounds. We are not like that. We are a normal Greek school.

This quote shows how Yannis understands his school as a normal Greek school which does not do "cultural stuff" that concern the students' cultures. I should add that both Yannis and Giorgos – principals at mainstream schools - referred to their schools as "normal"<sup>30</sup>, while Manos, the principal of the Cretan, used the 'inverted commas' gesture referring to mainstream schools, connoting his objection to the assumed 'abnormality' of intercultural schools. The above reflect the structuring work of the policy framework, which casts Greek ethnocentricity as its projected value and regulates the work of schools regardless of their student population. The fact that intercultural education is placed on the periphery is further highlighted by EUMC's (Luciak, 2004) report that due to financial reasons the Greek state has overlooked the demands for some ethnically mixed mainstream schools to be converted into intercultural ones, which were put forward by parents (Greek and immigrant) and teachers attending those schools. At the same time, other teachers avoided the intercultural schools. Manos, the Cretan school's principal talks about his difficulty to find a teacher for the post of the secretary:

Eh, you know how the situation is... someone hears that the school is "for immigrants" and they don't know what kind of school they'll be facing...

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<sup>30</sup> The Greek word they used was 'kanoniko'. In English it could be translated as 'mainstream', 'normal', 'regular', 'ordinary' and 'usual'. Feeling that all the above words express the opposite of deviance, I chose the word 'normal' which in this context serves my purpose of showing the discriminatory workings of the policy frame. I use the word 'mainstream' to distinguish between the widely implemented educational models and those with limited application. However, I believe that the term 'mainstream' also denotes the normalisation and abnormalisation of policies and institutions.

Manos' account shows how the students' mix ("immigrants") and the school type (intercultural) work as criteria for school choice. It appears that the school's intercultural policy creates particular expectations and assumptions about the students' 'quality'. At the same time, by proxy, it assumes what kind of students should be attended by mainstream institutions, and that is 'non immigrants'. This indicates the demonization of the intercultural education policy: although needed, it is not funded by the Greek state, and so remains a 'particular', 'other' form of education, which is for 'immigrants' only. By referring to 'particularity', otherness/sameness and normality/abnormality become dualities of opposite signifiers. Consequently, while Greek ethnocentrism is normalised as a value, otherness becomes abnormal. This also denotes that the subfields of Greek education are placed in a hierarchical order: intercultural education is for 'other', 'abnormal' students who are placed on the periphery because of their 'otherness'; whereas education for the Greeks is prioritised. Institutional habituses are constructed upon this hierarchy, which is realised in every day school processes through the conceptualisations and educational practices of principals and staff.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **Assembling a Greek principal habitus: from teaching to managing**

In this chapter I venture on an exploration of what Greek principal habitus appears to be through accounts and ethnographic observations of the day-to-day job of principalship. I understand that the principal's job has two distinctive areas of practice, school administration and pedagogy. I would like to note why I am not talking about the principal's *role* and instead use the term *principal habitus*. 'Principal habitus' escapes seeing the post as a 'predetermined role adjustment', but instead as 'contain[ing] important contradictory tensions, which the [vocational] learner must negotiate' (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003, p. 489). I attempt a detailed examination of vocational dispositions; dispositions that have made the three men the right people for the principal's post (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003). This discussion reveals the logics of practice of the field of Greek educational management. Following Ball's (1987) suggestion that 'leadership styles do implicitly assume particular forms of followership' (p. 116), my analysis of principalship incorporates rules and contestations arising from the field of teaching.

#### **The Men who are the Principals**

The three principals of my study, Yannis (Ionian, mainstream, 20%), Giorgos (Aegean, mainstream, 60%) and Manos (Cretan, intercultural, 40%) were all (randomly, but not coincidentally) former Maths and Science teachers, at different stages in their principalship career. My research at the Aegean and the Cretan schools happened to take place during the so-called 'principals' assessment': a process by which candidate new principals are appointed for the first time, and old principals are re-appointed or ceased. Giorgos, early 60s, was in his final months of his 5-year principalship. Manos, on the contrary, in his early

40s, was the newly appointed principal at the Cretan school, taking over a few weeks before the start of my fieldwork. Yannis, mid 50s, was an experienced principal in his 12<sup>th</sup> year at the time of the pilot study (a year before the main research). Therefore, the three men were at different levels in their learning to be principals (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003), a situation which may obstruct straight-forward juxtapositions of their practices, but gives a richer picture of principalship in Greek schools. It illustrates a range of 'idealised' and 'realised' dispositions as Yannis, Giorgos and Manos talk about the principals they would (have) like(d) to be and those that they now are (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003, p. 471).

### *Yannis*

Yannis had been serving at the Ionian school (300 students, 20% ethnic minority, 38 teachers) as principal for 12 years, since the school's establishment. His school subject was Maths. He was a tall and slender man in his mid 50s, who usually wore suits in earthy colours and bright ties in yellow and red. Yannis was the exclusive office occupant. His work routine appeared mostly relaxed and without the stresses of a heavy workload. Yannis was married and had two children. He talked with pride about his sister being married to an Iraqi man and moving to the United Arab Emirates. We had a long chat about his experience of their trilingual family (Arab, Greek and English). His approach to colleagues and to me was friendly. The vice-principal described Yannis as very active both in his personal and professional life and always involving the school in extra-curricular projects and events. Three hours per week Yannis had to teach Maths at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, usually during the last teaching hours. He was the chair of the local schools' committee (the financial management body of neighbouring schools) and so responsible for the committee's leadership, finances and organisation.

Yanni's office was an average sized room. It had a long professional desk with a big comfortable black leather armchair, a leather table mat, and other stationery accessories in the same style and colour. I should note that these items, as well as some cabinets, were common across the schools<sup>31</sup>. The room also had two safes where school money and valuable documents were kept. A long wall opposite his desk was covered by two big cabinets, which contained 35 numbered school files (these were common across the schools). On the wall of the corridor next to his office hung 'Alexander the Great's Oath' which pledged peace between Greeks and 'Barbarians' and equality regarding skin colour.

### *Giorgos*

Giorgos, a man in his early 60s, had been the principal of the Aegean School (200 students, 60% ethnic minority, 24 teachers) for the past 5 years. He was of average height, had a thick moustache and usually came to school wearing a suede cap, dark blue trousers and woollen waistcoats or sleeveless woollen sweaters with a white shirt. Unlike Yannis, he shared his office with Voula the vice-principal (female, mid 50s) and Dina (female, early 50s), a teacher acting as the school's secretary. He mostly carried out his principalship inside the office, apart from occasions when he would have to run errands outside the school (i.e. bank, post-office etc.). Giorgos daily routine was often busy and with tensions, having to resolve issues with his staff and students. Like Yannis, he was the chair of the local schools' committee. Giorgos was very passionate about his background in Maths and given the chance he would point out how mathematics is in everyone's way of thinking. He referred to a small Greek village as his origins, but he was a refugee, whose family escaped the 1955 Turkish pogrom against the Greek diaspora in Istanbul. He was married and had two children. He manifested his family commitment daily in the office and he usually shared stories about their family

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<sup>31</sup> This is due to the centralised management of school property.

lives. Dina, described him as a patriarchal figure which “suits well to the post of the school principal”.

The office space was a big room but it felt crowded as it hosted four big desks (Giorgos’, Voula’s, Dina’s and a free desk). Giorgos’ desk was located at the back of the room, facing the entrance. Giorgos had a big professional leather armchair. His desk was usually very busy with documents that should be dealt with or dispatched. Next to Giorgos’ desk there was a bookcase with a collection of educational laws and school policies, personal books, documents and files. The office had the cabinets with the 35 files and the safe (common to all schools), a cupboard with student records and two photocopy machines. On a wall hang a couple of byzantine icons and two framed diplomas awarded to Giorgos for his participation in a principals’ training workshop.

### *Manos*

Manos was in his early 40s and had just been appointed as the principal of the Cretan School (500 students, 40% ethnic minority, 60 teachers). He had previously worked as a mathematician for nearly 10 years at the Cretan school – since the school’s establishment - and then as the vice-principal for 3 years. He was tall with a robust figure and dressed very sporty, wearing jeans and a fleece jumper daily. Manos had an impressive portfolio of qualification, training and achievements. He held a Masters and a doctorate degree in Maths didactics and spoke three languages. Manos did not stay in his office for long periods of time, but wandered around the school or visited the vice-principal’s and teachers’ offices. The size of the school kept him very busy throughout the day. Unlike the other two principals who taught three Maths sessions per week, Manos did not do any teaching due to his heavy schedule. When Manos did stay in his office, he would be working in front of his computer.



The office was a big space, sparsely furnished. He did not share his office on a regular basis, but since it was a big room teachers would come to work quietly using another available desk. Manos' office was located in the centre of the building, in front of the open space which students used for their breaks on rainy days. The typical file cabinets with the same binders were placed on the wall opposite to Manos' desk.

### **Becoming principals**

Since becoming a school principal presupposes that one becomes a teacher first, it is important to pay also some attention to why and how they became teachers.

### *Becoming teachers*

The three men, similar to the accounts of Braun's (2009) teachers, talked about the pleasure of coming in contact with children; saw teaching as a satisfactory profession with career prospects; enjoyed the challenge of teaching and offering service to society. However, their love for their academic subject was more strongly posed than the teaching profession itself. In the case of these three men the subject was Mathematics<sup>32</sup>. Yannis, Giorgos and Manos had first chosen to become mathematicians; then they made the choice to teach. This order of things was manifested in their accounts. The later choice of going into teaching was primarily based on the pragmatic reason of securing a job.

Being from a rural, working-class, refugee background Giorgos explains his career choice:

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<sup>32</sup> For example, someone studying History at university level can become a Greek literature and history teacher; a Physicist can teach Physics at secondary and high school. In Greece one becomes a secondary school teacher through her/his choice of academic discipline and enters the job market without additional training on teaching and learning (e.g a PGCE-type courses). Candidate teachers sit national exams that decide if they get appointed and where or not.

I considered what I wanted [to become] and what I could. My first choice was to become an agriculturist, the second an architect and the third a mathematician. When the time came I applied only for mathematician [...] I had to find a way to survive. The only way I could survive was to become a mathematician; because the very next day [getting the degree] you were named 'professor' and you started teaching. The mathematicians who chose to follow a theoretical route didn't know what poverty meant.

I should note two facts about the profession as it evolved in Greece so far. In earlier years, especially in the 1980s and 1990s, entry in the teacher job market was easy. After that, unemployment in the teaching sector grew, particularly in the secondary education, and teacher unemployment has risen again, since, due to the economic crisis, the Greek state has stopped hiring teachers. Second, the word 'professor' – in Greek '*kathigitis*' – was of particular gravitas back then and still draws a statutory distinction between teaching grades. The word '*kathegeetis*' (male, singular) is used both for academics at the rank of professor and secondary/upper secondary school teachers. The word '*dáskalos*' (male, singular) is used for primary school teachers. What Giorgos points out is that not only did the teaching route mean immediate market absorption, but was also accompanied by particular professional and social status.

Giorgos' option between the three disciplines was formed in such a way that 'the most improbable practices [were] rejected as unthinkable' while these three routes had been his only options (Reay, 2004, p. 433). Ball, Davies, David and Reay (2002) talked about the Higher Education choosers and the way their decision-making is underlined by social conditioning. Here decision-making refers to the 'non-rational aspects of choice and strategy' (Ball, Davies, David and Reay, 2002, p. 55). They argued that choice happens through a combination of 'cognitive/performative' and 'social/cultural' processes of 'meaning and action' (Ball, Davies, David and Reay, 2002, p. 52). For Giorgos' case this meant that choosing teaching over architecture and agriculture was based on cognitively being and/or feeling able to do the job and evaluating positively and/or culturally fitting to the job. This is evident in the importance he places on the quick entry to the job market and the particular status he attributes to the profession as socioeconomically appropriate for

him. Giorgos' account offers elements that help us to understand this social and cultural process. Mathematics was his third (and final) career option. I see that he demonstrates quite strikingly Bourdieu's (1986, p. 178) notion of 'taste':

Taste is *amor fati*, the choice of destiny, but a forced choice, produced by conditions of existence which rule out all alternatives as mere daydreams and leave no choice but the taste for the necessary.

Mathematics was for Giorgos the taste of necessity (Bourdieu, 1986) as it was "the only way [he] could survive". Going for any of the other two career paths, it would have been daydreaming or 'taste[] of luxury' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 177). Similarly, the distinction that Giorgos makes between theoretical mathematicians and teachers depicts the former career as luxury and unconcerned with "poverty". His use of the word "poverty" may or may not respond to the actual financial situation of his family; nonetheless, its use in this context shows the emotional investment of his decision to abandon the dream of academia. Giorgos did not opt for a profession with less chances of socioeconomic survival, because it would not relate to his system of beliefs and lived experiences – his classed habitus. Fast market absorption as well as job stability were similarly pointed out by Yannis and Manos regarding their occupational choice, but they did not stress out the issue of survival. This could be explained by the fact that they were from middle-class homes; therefore getting into an 'educated' profession was obviously expected for them (Ball, 2006, p.265).

Common across their accounts was the awareness of what teaching entailed before entering the profession, which they actually learnt to do 'on the job'. For example, Manos' says:

I did like the idea of teaching when I chose my path into education [...] Er, you are thrown in deep water and you have to figure out how to float. It's challenging in the beginning, there is no education on pedagogy for us mathematicians. But through the years you learn how to communicate with your classroom [...] It takes time, but you gradually earn satisfaction from it.

Idealised and realised dispositions of the teaching vocation are clear in this passage, as well as the tension between them. Manos "like[d] the idea", which shows that he felt he could

be ‘the right person for the job’ (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003, p. 488). However, reality had a non-romantic “deep-water” feel as well, towards which he had to orient himself. The passage echoes Colley, James, Tedder and Diment (2003) suggestion that the realised vocational habitus entails ‘tempering effects’ for controlling the overwhelming ‘emotional demands of the work’ (p. 489). In this sense, Manos learned how to manage the distance between the idealised “idea of teaching” and its real demands for overcoming disappointment when not communicating with the classroom and feelings of failure.

A teaching post was something that Giorgos and Yannis were not comfortable with giving up for the sake of principalship. Giorgos, for example, stated with a hint of pride:

I have been engaged in teaching for only 31 years [mockingly] [...]. But even now that I am a principal, I continue to go into the classroom...I have never let myself get out of teaching.

Being an in-service teacher for that long is an accomplishment for Giorgos. Saitis, Feggari and Voulgaris (1997) suggest that the majority of questioned principals wanted to continue teaching, so that they preserve their vocational identity. Saitis (2008) adds that this way principals also do not lose their professional relationship with their colleagues. Manos draws on this divide between teaching and principalship:

You never stop being a teacher; otherwise you do not have a place in the school, right? It’s that your practice now regulates the school and all the things that make teaching happen inside the classrooms. But it wouldn’t be possible to regulate it, if you didn’t understand it first. That’s why you...you have to have served as a classroom teacher for at least 8 years [by policy]... that is before you can apply for the principal’s post.

Principalship, as Manos sees it, is based on understanding “all the things that make teaching happen”. This shows that principalship requires internalisation of teacher dispositions. However, as the next sessions present, the principal vocational habitus is built upon, but not reduced to, a ‘teacher habitus’ (Braun, 2009). In fact the dispositions for becoming and acting a principal may often contest or override those of the teacher – even if the principals have ‘mastered’ the logic of the classrooms.

### *The leap to principalship*

Applying for the post of the principal was a decision that the three men felt was an expected next step in their careers. They all linked their reasons for going into principalship to their prior engagement with administrative tasks, either from the position of the teacher or the vice-principal<sup>33</sup>. Moreover, their decision appeared as the culmination of skills acquired through their professional career. Yannis, who had been a principal for the last 12 years, said about his decision:

I always wanted to become a principal, even when I first started teaching. As soon as I was allowed to, I applied. Before getting the post, I also served as a vice-principal, so I knew the job. [I ask him whether he saw power or financial gains]. You feel like you do something more for the school, but there's no power involved in the post; teachers and principals are of equal power. Financial gains... well, there's some help with the bonus we [principals] get, and it is a small addition to our salary...but no, this wasn't one of the reasons when going for it.

Yannis was sure from the very beginning where he wanted his career to go. His familial dispositions could have played some part in this, since he was much influenced by his father, a teacher himself. He sees principalship as a contribution to the learning community – he wants to “do something more for the school”. He does not see authority or financial gains in the post. He oriented himself towards school managing from his early career stages, and successfully made the leap to principalship. Giorgos talks in detail about his own leap.

I was always involved in some kind of managerial work, even as a newbie [...] My supervisors assigned me with payrolls or doing the schedule or this and that. I knew all about policies [...] Consequently, I knew management from the very beginning. Those people [who do not choose principalship] who say that are low-profile are not low-profile, but low-labour. When someone says ‘I'm not interested’, it's not that he<sup>34</sup> is actually not interested – he is! [...] If they could be principals without

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<sup>33</sup> Vice-principals are administrative assistants but still continue with their teaching post. They do not have distinct managerial jurisdictions (i.e. decision-making, sign documents etc). They replace the principal upon absence.

<sup>34</sup> Here and in all transcripts gender use is kept as in the original.

investing time, they would do it. Alright? Now, about me. I always spoke my mind out [...]. So I had to be led to this post. [...] The decision that I actually was obliged...that I should become a principal was planted in my mind by my principal when I was a vice-principal. I told him I didn't want to become one yet, as I had to help my son through his Maths exams and I was more interested in being a Maths teacher. And he told me this, and he was right: "When those who can handle a school with 200-300 students and 30-35 teachers do not apply to be principals, and then a random guy becomes [principal] and the school is not doing well, then who should be blamed?" Anyway, I didn't apply then. But when his successor caused turmoil in the school, my colleagues came to me to complain; and what could I say? I was not the principal. I've told this story to many younger teachers, that one who can control a school has the obligation to become a principal. [...] And it's true, I felt guilty every time the school was in turmoil because of the mistakes the new principal had made.

Giorgos notes that knowing school policies and dedicating time to the school community is central to the work of school management. He also talks about the ability to handle relationships and controlling the school. He strongly believes that when someone is 'the right person for the job' (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003, p. 488) it is not just a matter of a personal decision to take over the school's headship, but one's 'obligation'. Yannis' and Giorgos' views of principalship as 'contribution' to the learning community draw it as a disposition towards which someone needs to orient themselves. Contribution comes with investment of time and labour. This 'obligation' was a disposition which had to be realised; when it was not realised, guilt filled Giorgos. Had Giorgos not gone forward with principalship later on, he would be like a fish kept out of its water (paraphrasing Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 127), with all the affective consequences this would have brought. Another important aspect for Giorgos was being able to speak out his mind and make his opinion heard. This I see as a flag of the authority invested in the principal habitus, which entails a dispositional yearning to become the 'licensed authority' (Ball, 1987, p. 82). Elsewhere, Giorgos commented about principals that "everyone's after positions with authority". I come back to this later on.

Manos, who had just taken over the principal's post, answers my question on why he chose to do so.

Because I'm a masochist and I like to put myself into trouble! I will tell you in the future if I've regretted it. Actually, seriously speaking, it was the natural evolution of things. I was one of the longer-standing school staff [since the Cretan was established] and it was the natural evolution to become the school's principal. This is also how I became a vice-principal in the first place; there was no one else to do the job.

Like the other two men, Manos saw this step as the expected thing to do for his school and career. The leap from teaching to principalship appears as an inevitable – almost fated – pathway. The words “always” and “natural” in the men's accounts implicate a continuous process of apprenticeship, through which they learned how to become the people for the job. This was done by taking over bureaucratic or administrative duties within their role as teachers and vice-principals. Wolcott (1973) refers to the work of Blood (1966, cited p. 196) on how this ‘natural’ evolution involves a recognition and acceptance of the workings of authority within the school. In other words, it is the internalisation of the pedagogic authority which they have to embody and serve that appears as naturalised, as a habitus (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Their apprenticeship, which has “always” been underway, establishes their righteous ownership of the post. Manos' seniority in the school was his claim for the post, since “there was no one else”. Giorgos' knowledge of policies and bureaucratic processes deserved him the principalship. Finally, Yannis' long experience as the vice-principal ensured that he became principal. These claims are based on a ‘know-how’ of paperwork, bureaucracy and administration. The ‘mastery’ of the system's structures of authority and control through bureaucracy is a requirement which emerges through many aspects of the principal's everyday job.

## **Who a principal is: gender, class and ethnicity**

The three principals in my study were male, mathematicians and Greek; this matching was unintentional, but not coincidental. This section explores the structural processes involved in the selection (or self-selection) of individuals to become the school's 'licensed authority' (Ball, 1987, p. 82).

### *Gendered principalship*

Research in Greece regarding gender in the teaching profession has evidenced that – similarly to other countries – it is a feminised field where men are under-represented (Deligianni-Kouimtzi, 2008; Kantaraki Pagkaki and Stamatelopoulou, 2008). Even though fewer in numbers, men still obtain those few higher status positions within the profession; women, as Maragkoudaki (2008) suggests, are outnumbered, if not excluded. In primary education, for example, men teach the higher grades, which are seen as more academically demanding than the lower grades. On the contrary, women opt for what are seen less demanding grades, as their time prioritises family commitments. This happens through the gendered conceptualisations of the household, where the women's role is positioned closer to the family than the labour market – which is hegemonised by men. Moreover, Reay (1998a) talks about the importance middle-class mothers place on supporting their children's education through mothering practices. I understand that women teachers fall into this category. Regarding principalship, research documents that even if women outnumber men in teaching, the opposite goes when it comes to occupying managerial posts at the level of school and at district/prefectural level (Kantaraki, Pagkaki and Stamatelopoulou, 2008; Maragkoudaki, 2008; Kantartzi & Anthopoulos, 2006). Family obligations are an obstacle for women's managerial ambitions; albeit they *do* have ambitions (Maragkoudaki, 2008). Dina, a female teacher at the Aegean school, had applied for the principal's post during my fieldwork. Even if she always wanted to be a principal she



said: “now it’s the right time, as my girls have grown up and have left home, so I can devote more time at school”. Gkantartzi and Anthopoulos (2006) also report that women are not given any share in the school’s decision-making, which demotivates them from becoming principals.

Another reason for the outnumbering of women principals in Greece by men, according to Maragkoudaki (2008), is the male role model advocated for managerial posts. This has two consequences. First, women feel their role in school is distant from that of the manager’s; and second, becoming female and principals, their post would have more tensions that challenge their job. Maragkoudaki (2008) and Gkantartzi and Anthopoulos (2006) report that there is a demand for women to fit into the male norm, while they also retain their femininities. However, when they adopt more ‘masculine’ management styles, they are still assessed negatively, because this behaviour is seen too ‘unfeminine’. Therefore, even if a male and female principal show the same levels of ‘harshness’, the female will be judged as a woman who is irrationally ‘harsh’ and the former as a man who is ‘naturally strict’. Papanou’s (1995) research notes that female principals are more engaged with creating a good working environment (i.e. interpersonal relationships, atmosphere etc) than their male colleagues, and that they spend more time addressing students’ personal issues. Nonetheless, Reay and Ball (2000) state that feminist texts with homogenising representations of a female principalship style underplay the structural forces that form their practice. They argue that women heads draw on different identities (i.e. that of the mother, the stereotypical ‘female’, the powerful head etc.,) to deal with the competitive (and masculinised) context of the labour market. In other words, female principal practice should be seen as contextual.

The process of principal assessment and appointment is highly gendered. Regarding qualifications, women are reported to lose points because they do not have titles beyond their first degree; this is mostly attributed to their prioritisation of the family over career development (Gkantartzi and Anthopoulos, 2006). However, women are further eliminated through the more subjective part of the assessment. Apart from the qualifications and credentials (the ‘objective’ criteria), the process includes an interview and a report by the

candidate's supervisors (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2006). The principal assessment is done at a local level. Maragkoudaki (2008), Kantaraki, Pagkaki and Stamatelopoulou (2008) and Gkantartzi and Anthopoulos (2006) report that this is particularly disadvantaging for the assessment of women as they do not have enough social capital to win themselves points. Having fewer female principals, and even fewer in higher managerial posts (i.e. local/district bureaus), means less female representation in the electorate committees. Therefore, women candidates are judged upon masculinised criteria and, most often, win fewer assessment points compared to their male colleagues.

It becomes obvious that gender plays an important role in conditioning the habitus of the school principal. The successful candidate – the one that is the person for the job – is shown to be primarily male. This, in turn, conditions gendered practices of principalship. However, we should keep in mind that principal masculinities (and/or) femininities are played out in complex and contextualised ways; and undermining context, means undermining deeper structural discriminations (Reay and Ball, 2000).

### *Classed principalship*

The classed aspects of principalship can be understood by using the concept of cultural capital instead of directly observed economic elements. As Reay (2006) notes, we should move our analyses from the economic to the cultural if we are to grasp 'how class is made and given value through culture' (p. 290). My analysis does not suggest different class belonging for principals and teachers. It works, however, through the cultural elements that serve as prerequisites for the post; and which become the cultural (and symbolic) gains once within the post. This section concentrates on the ways in which the status of principalship is established through the kind of recruits it selects (and/or attracts) and the vocational lifestyle it offers, both of which distinguish principalship from teaching. The discussion here is important for understanding authority and hierarchy as dispositional

constituents of principalship. I argue that the Greek principal habitus is classed within school so that on the one hand it remains a higher- status post than teaching, and on the other disseminates the structural control imposed by the centralised educational system. Here I show why principal recruits, unlike teachers, might predominantly be from a 'Science' background (and male) and enjoy minor occupational advantages and ownerships in their day-to-day job.

Since principalship is a post within the teaching profession, it is obvious that the two institutional positions teacher/principal fall into the same classification of social conditioning. According to Gaine and George's (1999) class stratification teaching is identified as an 'Intermediate/non-manual' middle class profession (p. 33). Braun (2009) names teaching a "'borderland" position', as a middle-class occupation which attracts candidates from working-class backgrounds (p. 70). This creates a paradoxical situation, once education is mainly serving the middle classes (Ball, 2003; Reay, 2006). Of the three principals, Giorgos was the one with a strong working-class background. I earlier discussed how Giorgos felt that opting for teachership was an act of survival. His service in this 'borderland' profession (Braun, 2009) was not free from social class tensions. Talking about the low socioeconomic and immigrant status of the school's population, Giorgos criticised the educational system for running schools for 'the elites' while neglecting the education of the working-class (see also Chapter Six). He further commented that when survival is prioritised, education comes second.

Gender has an essential role in the classing of teaching. Historical analyses of the Greek case suggest that the entry of women in teaching related to the socioeconomic degrading of the profession (Kantaraki, Pagkaki and Stamatelopoulou, 2008). This, in turn, led to a decline in male recruits (Gkantartzi & Anthopoulos, 2006). In contrast, Maragkoudaki (2008) notes that even if teaching is not generally considered a high-status job, among women is a highly desirable profession. The reasons for this are the space it provides for reconciling family and job; the stability it offers as a 'public servant' post

(appointed for life); and its higher pay<sup>35</sup> compared to other sites of female employment (Maragkoudaki, 2008). I would suggest that principalship acquires a higher status for women compared to men for two reasons. First, because teaching is appreciated more by women in the first place; and second, because for them principalship is a hard game to win. Therefore, teaching and principalship acquire different values and status across genders. This resonates with Braun's (2009) findings of hierarchies existing within occupations as well as across them, which are formed by the interplay of classed and gendered structures and dispositions.

Bourdieu (1986) talks about the 'effect of occupational milieu', the 'reinforcement of dispositions (especially cultural, religious or political dispositions) by a group that is homogeneous in most of the respects which define it' (p.104). He suggests that while looking at qualifications as cultural capitals, we should also look at how these fit in the effect of the occupational milieu. That is to say the particularities entailed in the job, such as its characteristics and conditions; in this case, whether a science background relates to the principal's job as it is formed through practice. According to Papanou's (1995) research, the major problems that preoccupy principals in Greece concern the school's functionality, finances and building maintenance. My data agree with her results. Technicalities concerning the operation of the school mostly kept the three men busy, such as finances, building maintenance and administration. I understand that the principal's job demands accountancy and technical skills. Earlier the three men described these skills as a part of their preparation for the post. At the same time, it seems that skills regarding the affective and interpersonal labour of the post are underplayed, as other tasks are hierarchised in the day-to-day job. Gunter (2003) has offered an analysis of educational management as a field, as being affected by the practice of its members; the field practices also constitute the professional identity of its members. Ball (1987), Lauder, Jamieson and Wikeley (1998) and Thrupp (1999) argued that the language used by most educational management texts is

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<sup>35</sup> This source dates back to 2008. Since the economic crisis in Greece, the teaching profession is among those seriously hit by salary cuts and high unemployment rates. Therefore, its status might have shifted in more recent years.

technicist and dogmatic. Ball (1987) suggests that theories of management focus on the 'rationality and efficiency to provide control' as essential skills (p.5). This occupational milieu agrees with the academic disciplines from which the three principals orientated. Giorgos (Math), Yannis (Math) and Manos (Science) backgrounds respond to the profile of the 'right' principal candidate that possesses accountancy and financial skills. I see this occupational pattern being substantiated by the opposite dualities that have traditionally been constructed around academic disciplines: 'sciences'/ 'humanities and arts'; 'positivist'/ 'interpretative'; 'numbers'/ 'words'; 'proofs'/ 'assumptions'; 'masculine'/ 'feminine'; 'logic'/ 'sentiment'; 'sturdiness'/ 'weakness'. Class and gender have traditionally been working together in shaping occupational statuses and rewards.

According to Katsillis and Rubinsons (1990), the countenances of a class can be found in 'ownership and authority relations' and/or 'occupational prestige or status score' (p. 270). As far as ownership and authority relations are concerned, I could see properties and qualities accompanying the post of the principal, which differentiated it from the post of the teacher. These formed a distinct occupational life-style for the two posts and different daily practices. Principals enjoyed 'luxuries' that teachers did not, and even if they were minor they still at moments seemed to widen the distinction and cause conflict. Ownership of space (i.e. office) was a privilege only of the principal. The principals had their personal desk and chair, as well as their individual bookcase, where they kept their files, books etc. Teachers all shared an open-plan room, with desk availability following a 'first come-first served' model. This caused inconvenience to teachers, who often complained about the lack of space (particularly in the Cretan School) and for having to move their stuff around. Office ownership was evidently attributed to 'the principal'. Space was also accompanied by the luxury of isolation and quietness, by simply closing the door. This was important for carrying out work without disturbances. Other comforts included a professional desk-chair; computers/internet, telephone and fax; the freedom to smoke in the office (this was later banned by an anti-smoking law); listening to music (which was not possible in an open-plan office); and ordering coffee from the canteen to be delivered in the office. None of these were available to or practised by the teachers of the three schools.

The above small 'luxuries' were both generated by and generating the post of the principal as the highest ranking within the school. These 'luxuries' stem from the responsibility and work hardships – the need for quietness, technology, communication means etc - in order to carry out the job properly. The post is rewarded with the 'principal's allowance' (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2003b), an additional amount added to the monthly salary of principals. However, the above also bestow a degree of hierarchy and authority to the post so that, as I argue in the next section, they work as a kind of reward for or decoy from the centralisation and the contestation of their authority with which principals are faced.

Bourdieu (1986) notes that the habitus is 'the capacity to produce classifiable practices and works, and the capacity to differentiate and appreciate these practices and products (taste), that the represented social world, i.e., the space of life-styles, is constituted' (p. 170). Similarly, the principal habitus is an internalised distinction between a (quasi) 'elite' and regular staff, since principals were selected on special criteria as holding the best (or more) capitals (cultural, social, gender) for the job. At the same time, the candidates were drawn by the occupational ethos, style and practices. However, as I have stressed, these distinctions do not in any way create a 'principal' class fraction. They do, though, create a distinctive staff workforce within schools.

### *Ethnicised principalship*

In this sub-section I discuss briefly the nationality prerequisites for becoming a principal and I give examples of ethnic dispositions as embodied by practices and objects in the office space. Chapter Six focuses exclusively on the matter of the ethnic dimensions of principal practices in effecting an education-for-all, manifested through personal understandings about the education of ethnic minority students. According to the Hellenic Constitution (Article 4) '[o]nly Greek citizens are accepted in all public services, except from exceptions

which are issued by special laws' (Hellenic Parliament, 2010). This applies to the nationality of principals and teachers, since they are public servants. This prerequisite should be read together with the stated purposes of education, the 'development of the national and religious conscience' (Article 16, recited in Chapter Four). It is therefore obvious that principals, as the heads of their school, should be Greek citizens in order to lead the school in the state's interest. There is an underlying notion that being a Greek national reinsures the 'Greek *paedeia*' [education] (Mattheou, Roussakis and Theocharis, 2006, p. 52). Non-Greek nationals are unable to meet these ethnocentric prerequisites.

To date there are no available data on the ethnic backgrounds of in-service principals. However, given the political, financial and social circumstances, an immigrant becoming naturalised and thus claiming the principal's post is very difficult. Naturalisation laws in Greece, as well as the bureaucratic procedures which ignore socioeconomic circumstances, have been under severe criticism, i.e. by the Hellenic League for Human Rights and the Greek Ombudsman. Moreover, Theodoridis' report (2008) notes the unequal access to tertiary education that non-Greek national students face. This results in less chances for someone from an immigrant background becoming a state school teacher.

However, naturalisation processes for Greeks repatriating from the Greek diaspora are reportedly more lenient than those for immigrants (Christopoulos, 2004). Nonetheless, Christopoulos (2004) argues that policy leniency has been discriminating between different repatriate groups based on constructions of what a 'Greek' ethnic is. He reports, for example, that the Greek repatriates from the EU and Albania were less favoured by naturalisation and welfare policies than those repatriating from the former USSR countries. These relations have also been changing through time (Christopoulos, 2004). As a result, across the three schools there have been repatriated Greeks returning from different countries who have had different immigration statuses. Two foreign language teachers, one from a Greek repatriate family from France and another from Germany, had been naturalised and therefore had been allocated as permanent staff at the schools. In contrast, a male teacher of Language Support in the Cretan (intercultural) school who had repatriated from the Greek diaspora in Georgia was still waiting for his naturalisation and thus he was

employed only as temporary, hourly-paid staff. Giorgos, the school principal of the Aegean school was also from a repatriated family from the Greek diaspora in Instabul. He and his family were forced to flee Turkey when Giorgos was seven following the Turkish pogrom of the 6-7 September 1955 against the Greek (and other Orthodox Christian) minority in Instabul . As Giorgos informed me, these Greek refugees were given Greek passports at the borders, and so they were naturalised immediately. Therefore, Giorgos was able to become a state school teacher and later a school principal.

This national/ethnic disposition, as a state prerequisite, places particular expectations on the work of teachers and principals as the agents of the dominant (Greek ethnocentric) pedagogic authority (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Ethnocentrism infiltrates the structures of both mainstream and intercultural schools. Greek nationality/ethnicity was also objectified in the three men's offices. All offices had at least one byzantine-style icon of Christ and the Virgin Mary, symbols of Greek Orthodox Christianity. Yannis' office also had a miniature table-sized Greek flag on the shelf behind his desk. I read these as expressions of the institutional dispositions for an ethnocentric education, and concurrently of the expectations imposed on principal practice. This is better understood by thinking that these ethnic/national items were not necessarily possessions of the three men but of the office (i.e. bought with school money or a gift), which have followed and will continue to follow any new office occupant.

Nonetheless, there were objects in the offices which counteracted this logic. Next to the door of Yannis' office (Ionian, mainstream, 20%) hung 'The Oath of Alexander the Great', pledging peace and solidarity between Greeks and 'Barbarians' and the equity of skin colours. Giorgos (Aegean, mainstream, 60%) had on his wall the verification from a seminar on intercultural education which he attended. More evidently, the bookshelves in Manos' office (Cretan, intercultural, 40%) contained books on intercultural and bilingual education, and the framed the 'Human Rights' Constitution' hung on one wall. I read them as manifestations of opposing institutional and vocational dispositions; with the latter I refer to idealised dispositions such as egalitarianism, equality etc. These contestations shape the office as the primary field of principal practice. However, one should take into



consideration familial dispositions working towards resisting practices. Giorgos was originally from the Greek diaspora in Turkey from where his family has returned as refugees. Yannis' family was multi-ethnic, as his sister was married to an Iraqi man and their children were raised trilingual. Manos could not relate his sensitisation to issues of migration to his familial experiences. Therefore, his choice to become a teacher and then the principal of an 'intercultural' school could point to workings of agency.

Within this ethnocentric context, the intercultural education policy could be seen as a resistance to structural ethnocentricity. Processes of staff employment to intercultural schools (teachers and principals) takes into account relevant qualifications, such as degrees and other training (i.e. seminars) on intercultural education; as well as the knowledge of a foreign language, preferably one of the languages spoken by immigrant students (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2006). Therefore, the institutional habituses of intercultural schools, as well as the teaching and principal (vocational) habituses developed within them could be understood as dispositions of resistance. Having in mind the criticisms against intercultural education as theory and practice (Damanakis, 2002), this resistance could only be understood as minor, since intercultural schools and their staff do not challenge the deeper structural inequalities against ethnic minority students.

### **Who a principal becomes: realised and idealised dispositions**

As Colley, James, Tedder and Diment (2003) observe, the specificities of the work make the process of becoming a professional a 'learning as becoming' process. Dispositions are developed on site as individuals learn what it takes to become the 'right person for the job' (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003, p. 477). 'Sense' of the job, as well as 'sensitivity' in the job are evoked as a part of the vocational habitus (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003). While knowing how to be a principal (i.e. what to do, expect, aspire etc.) one also learns how to feel like a principal (i.e. how to use emotional resources, prioritise feelings,

connect to others and support them emotionally etc.). The three men in my study have all stated that they learnt the job as they did it. For Manos, the newly appointed principal, the principal habitus was yet to be developed. However, as shown earlier, principal dispositions were mobilised long before they became the post holders, through the familial and also the teaching milieu. Here, I focus on three distinctive dispositions of principalship: authority, hierarchy and pedagogic involvement. The first refers to the authority the principals have over the school processes. The second regards the position of the principals as someone of a higher authority than the teachers. Finally, the third relates to the influence they can have on the pedagogy and education offered by the school. What I argue is that principalship moves between authority and non-authority and the school principals learn how to embody both. Each of the aforementioned dispositions has a realised and an idealised side; the former are what principals do while the latter what the principals would have liked to do (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003). I make a case for three logics of practice upon which the principal habitus is manifested: illusion of authority, pseudo-hierarchy and pedagogic (dis)engagement. In naming the first two I was inspired by the work of Ball (1987) and his discussion about the relationship between teachers and heads. He talks about the illusion of teachers' autonomy and their 'pseudo-participation' in decision-making and school control (Ball, 1987, p. 124). Borrowing and paraphrasing the terms, I appropriate this argument to the conditions of principalship in Greece, to argue that illusion of authority and pseudo-hierarchy are experienced by the principals as the logics of school management. These logics of practice keep the principals tied by limitations of which they are aware and which they accept, but at the same time they provide them with 'baits' which make those limitations tolerable and also perpetual.

### *The illusion of authority*

Earlier I presented the principals saying that what drove them to become principals was a sense of 'duty', the idea that they were the ones to 'save the day'. Giorgos talked about the authority entailed in any position from which one can articulate her/his mind – one such is that of the principal. It is the urge to become what Stephen Ball (1987) names 'the licensed authority' (p.82). The post is burdened by responsibility, from which also stems a particular authority. Many tasks fall under this authority relating to the school as a state property, starting from the building maintenance, school finances, staff supervision, record/book keeping, logistics etc. However, this authority comes with contestations and limitations rather than being sovereign (Ball, 1987). This paradoxical position is evident in Manos' words, when he states that "the school counts on the principal", which reveals a certain degree of authority; and later that "the principal is basically just the superintendant" with a hint of discontent. Although the policy (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2002b) states that the school principal is the head of the school community, questions are raised on whether the principal can actually exercise this position beyond just bureaucratic and administration duties (Papanaoum, 1995; Saitis, 2008; Kouloubaritsi *et al*, 2007; Thody, Papanaoum, Johansson, Pashiardis., 2007). The centralisation of the school processes and lack of delegation of authority and devolution to the basis (i.e. local authorities, school units etc.) has been criticised as a fear of the Greek state to lose power (Saiti, 2009).

Bureaucracy was an issue burdening all three principals, who complained about being forced to deal with paperwork while more important issues, such as the educational aims and pedagogical vision, were left outside of their jurisdiction (more on this later). The workload of forms to be filled in, stamped and mailed was evidenced on all three principals' desks, which were covered by documents. Giorgos commented on that:

Extensive records are kept at all state institutions. There's a philosophy which says – I'll tell you this, it's no big deal - that any kind of paper you sent out, wherever you sent it, you have to keep a copy; but for toilet paper. Of course this is an exaggeration, to highlight that we always have to duplicate any

mailed document. That's why we end up having piles of documents in public institutions.

Paperwork was often for trivial matters. For example Yannis had to fax formal letters to three different offices in order to get lamp-bulb supplies. The 35 files – common to all principals' offices - stored in-coming and outgoing documents, after these had been registered in the school protocol. Other policy documents, the Minutes Book of the Teacher Body meetings, the Student Records, the Protocol etc., were kept in the safes inside the offices. This also shows their value as important documents that need to be guarded. Bureaucracy, systematisation and conformity, then, structure the field of Greek educational management and its practices. The bureaucratically loaded work of the principals suggests the strong presence of the Greek state as the main author of school processes. Thomson (2010) offers an interesting discussion of how both de- and re- centralising processes in Australia and England aimed at the state having access to scrutinise what happens inside classrooms. In the case of Greek schools it is clear that the latter is the case. Across interviews the principals demonstrated awareness of the bureaucracy that the post entailed prior to their appointment; they were preparing for it while being teachers and vice-principals. They also knew of the restricted authority that the post entails when they decided to apply for it. An important question emerges here: why would those three men (and any other) want to take a post which is based on conformity and restricted authority?

My understanding follows that of Thomson (2010) who talks about the request for autonomy by principals as a disposition of the institutional position within which they sit. Similarly, the three principals engaged themselves in acts of claiming authority, from trivial complaints to outspoken resistance. When I saw Manos spending more than an hour in his desk dealing with documents and asked him about this part of his job, he said:

Well, I can only tell you that the school receives daily whole packs of documents. Few of them I consider important, and so they have to be

registered in the Protocol<sup>36</sup>, stamped and filed. All the rest just have to go in the recycling bin. They are totally useless.

Manos makes a judgement about what is important and what is not. Depending on this, particular documents become institutional papers as they are filed. This attribution of value practised by Manos is a claim of authority over what was authored by the local educational authorities and the Ministry of Education. There were other cases where the principals resisted orders given by the local authorities; for example, talking over the phone with local officials, Yannis explodes as he disagrees with a bureaucratic procedure. Giorgos gives an insight as to how he thinks principals act on school policies:

When it comes to policy you can't say [I'll act] "according to *my* opinion"; that opinion is defined by the policy. However, the principal does not always act by the letter of law. Policy may not have exclusions, but has flexibility. It could go from here to there [gesturing with his hands]. And there enters the personality of the principal, who is called to take the more lenient position, the harsher or the middle [within that policy]; to take basically the position which serves the common good. And there one principal can act like this, and another principal differently; and be judged by some as good [principal], and by others bad.

What Giorgos raises as an issue is that principals have space to act within the policy and resist it. However resistance does not mean acting outside the policy, but rather from within, in such a way that it fits with individual circumstances. This resonates with Ball's (2006) note that policies define the framework of practices, but individuals may act upon them in undetermined ways, yet still within the text limitations. Accordingly, principals gain authority over the interpretation and practices corresponding to policy texts, but are still bound by them.

Nonetheless, the urge for principals to claim authority over the school processes is also evident in their visions, the hopes for transformations and improvements they want to bring to their schools. As a new principal, Manos talks about what he intends to achieve through his principalship:

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<sup>36</sup> An official book where documents with some significance for the school have to be registered and then stored in the school files.

The aims for the school are decided collectively in the beginning of the year, with the Teacher Body. Personally, I have one motto that I want to establish: “Many [things] unite, few divide”. That’s the only way the school can work properly [...]

Giorgos, at the end of his career, reflected on his achievements. Earlier he discussed the fact that as “equal amongst equals” a principal counts on the power of words and labour, and he continues:

Personally speaking, and egoistically, I could say that in this powerless position I brought some power. [I ask whether there is space for a principal to have ambitions] No, no, I never had ambitions, I was never out of reality. But this role that I had, I tried to play it right [...] Like everyone, I set goals and tried to materialise them using the means I had available, and up to the point I could, and the power I had available. [...] I had many goals and I achieved them all [he mentions infrastructural developments and relationships with colleagues] I managed to bring something new, a new working atmosphere, to the school.

In both accounts the principals express their aspirations for bettering the school processes, and thus a certain authority they want to impose through these interventions. While it is evident that Manos and Giorgos want to bring (or have brought) a certain authority over the post (i.e. work ethos), they indeed understand the limitations they face. On the one hand they talk about what has been realised and can be realised, and on the other they recognise the unrealisable aspects of their job, what is idealised. There is therefore a dual side to authority: the realised and the idealised. Even though principals learn to and eventually become the ‘licensed authority’ of their schools (Ball, 1987, p. 82), yet they know that in reality they are not and constantly try to claim it. I understand that authority is a – by definition - disposition of principals, but one that is at the same time a realised and an idealised one (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003). The realised disposition is the one that makes principals practise authority within constraints and ‘inside reality’. The idealised disposition is what makes principals aspire to authority. Without the idealised authority principals would have no reason to become principals; without the realised authority, they would not have been able to handle its cancellation.

Having in mind the practices of realised and idealised authority within which a principal sits, I would suggest that this reveals the logic of practice of Greek educational management. This logic is one that devolves enough authority to lower agents of school management (i.e. the principal) so as to retain centralisation and control, but also make sure that agents will be willing to take up this post. Borrowing Ball's (1987) suggestion that the autonomy of teachers is 'in effect a cosy illusion' (p. 122) and reversing the focus from them to the principal, an 'illusion of authority' is the educational management field's logic: authority is not really available to claim but a minor amount is granted as 'bait' in order to perpetuate the submission of principals to the central authority.

### *Pseudo-hierarchy*

Hierarchy emerged as one of the major constituents of principalship. I have suggested that the property of space and particular occupational comforts contribute to the sense of the principal as the head of the school. The fact that the principal has a personal office which is referred to as 'the principal's office', in contradiction to the sign 'management' hanging on the door, and that they enjoy small luxuries that teachers do not, all attribute a kind of importance to the role. Moreover, their position is one imbued with responsibility, which is manifested both in objects (i.e. safes and cabinets hosting state documents) and the monthly 'responsibility' allowance. This responsibility evidences hierarchy in principalship as a school post that can be trusted with management of state property. Undoubtedly, authority and hierarchy are interrelated; the one exists within the other. Similar to the analysis of the previous section, hierarchy too is both awarded and retrieved and thus works as a realised and idealised disposition. To start with, the policy on educational management (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2002b) defines the relation of principals and teachers in a way that on the one hand secures a collective management of the school, but on the other it creates a tight frame for the principal's practice. The main arrangement is

that the principal is 'equal amongst equals'. Even if it sounds meaningless, this phrase was recited by all three principals when asked to describe their position in the school. Thus it acquires a particular meaning for them, one that articulates the reality of their post: both what they think it is and what they are made to think it is by the state. The Teacher Body is cast as the main decision-maker, while the principal's jurisdiction falls on minor everyday matters.

In relation to the Teacher Body, the policy defines that the principal duties involve supervision and mentorship, working, however, on an 'equal' basis (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2002b). Evidently there is a contradiction within the two positions of the principal as a supervisor/mentor and as an 'equal', since the former implies a kind of authority over and hierarchy across the staff. In addition, teachers do not see their role linked to school management, and this stems from confusing arrangements made by the school management policy (Chatzipanagiotou, 2003). At the same time, even if the policy defines a co-management scheme, the principal is the one cast as the first accountable for school processes (Kouloubaritsi *et al*, 2007). It is only the principal who undergoes periodic assessment and risks loss of the post. However, because of this, the principal is also the only one that is 'judged' by superiors as capable of running a school; thus, a hierarchy is already established by the principal selection as 'elite' staff.

The principals in this study had a very clear view of their 'equal' standing, mainly seeing it as an impediment to their role. Giorgos gives an account of this:

The principal is just [for keeping] the boat afloat [...] The principal is the "grand conductor", because he practises inside the school with no power, but for persuasion. The principal can do nothing [in disappointment]. The only thing he can do to a colleague is to make a remark, to accuse, to report to superiors about this and that, according to what the law says. And that's the principal's role, whether he can convince those who should paddle on the right, on the left, at the front or the back, so that the boat makes a turn towards improvement...

In this "boat" analogy Giorgos expresses that the principal is the "grand conductor", the one that gives the pace but is equal to the rest of the crew, since the position has restricted



authority. It is obvious that authority and hierarchy are interconnected. Similar views were held by Yannis:

The principal is basically responsible for supervising the school procedures.  
The real power is with the Teacher Body. They are omnipotent!

The use of the word “power” by Yannis underpins a zero-sum understanding of authority, instead of it being relational. Having said this, there were practices in the principals’ offices which revealed a latent – but also contested - working of principal hierarchy. The following two incidents portray this.

*Manos is doing work in his office while two female teachers come to the photocopier machine [located in the office] to produce some copies. The teachers try to find their way around its functions and end up producing a copy on A3 instead of A4 sized paper. As they struggle with the on-screen guidelines, Manos seems crossed:*

[almost shouting] Are you nuts? Be careful! This is like a medical tool, if it breaks then the school has to pay for it! What ignorance!

*The teachers look at each other in surprise and in an irritated way one of them answers back ‘It was just a simple mistake, nothing will break’. Manos murmurs something unintelligible and gets back to his work.*

*It’s a busy day in Giorgos’ office today. Voula [the Vice-Principal] and Dina [the secretary] are sitting at their desks. The two other available chairs are occupied by other two teachers. As I enter the room I look around trying to spot an empty chair, but the only one available is Giorgos’. Noticing my uncertainty over whether I should sit, one of the teachers says in a teasing tone:*

So, has Giorgos given you the impression that this chair is his throne?

The first incident depicts Manos’ outburst about the misuse of the photocopier. As the person responsible for the school’s property, and with the anxiety of a new principal, he becomes very cautious of any faults. His responsibility is accompanied by the ‘right’ he feels to tell off teachers so as to protect school property. Watching the scene it felt as if he was telling off two careless students/inferiors and not two colleagues/equals. I have recorded many other similar incidents in all three schools, which demonstrate a kind of hierarchy in

the principals' position through their entitlement to scold teachers acting against what they understood as the school's benefit. The second incident shows the conceptualisation of the 'principal's chair', both by me and the commenting teacher, as the property of the highest ranking person in the school – a 'throne'. It reveals a latent notion of the principal occupying a particular position of hierarchy and authority objectified in the 'chair', which is not to be claimed by anyone else, at least not without the principal's permission. I should note that during my fieldwork across the three schools I never saw anyone else sitting in the principals' chair; instead, I saw them using the chair of the vice-principal. Of course, this is not a position that is simply accepted, but rather it is contested. The irony in the teacher's words obviously demarcated the challenging of the principal's status as a supervising/superior post.

Resonating with my analysis on the disposition of authority, hierarchy emerges as a constituent of the principal habitus, both as an invested and contested condition. The former is evident in the very word 'principal', as the highest level of authority within school, and objectified in space (office) and objects (chair and school valuables). The superiority of the post over that of the teacher's is necessary for supervising school processes, in order to report any malfunction to higher authorities; thus it keeps the school open to the state's scrutiny (Thomson, 2010). On the other side, the principal's hierarchy is restricted by policy and practice. As a realised disposition, the principals are in higher rank within the school so as to ensure the school's supervision; as idealised, it motivates the principals to practise staff management. Therefore, principals in effect practise under a pseudo-hierarchy, which I see as an additional logic of the field of Greek educational management. As stated, I paraphrase Ball's (1987) definition of 'pseudo-participation' of teachers in school control (p. 124). For the Greek situation, the pseudo-hierarchy of the principals is essential in preserving the field within the demands of centralisation and state control. On the one hand, the state has the school running through the principal; in this way there is also someone at the level of the school who is cast as responsible for successes and failures (Kouloubaritsi *et al*, 2007). On the other hand, this hierarchy is controlled, so that no person has the authority to make important decisions. At the same time, the main body of

decision-makers within the school is the Teacher Body, yet their power is also controlled through centralised structures. Therefore, even if one imagined that authority is with the 'many', the case is that it is not a devolved form of school governance but a restricted one.

### *Pedagogic (dis)engagement*

Greek literature reports that the principals' role entails pedagogy, yet it is not vested with any authority over the curriculum content and classroom practices (Saitis, 2008; Papanou, 1995). The principals' pedagogical practice is mostly exerted through the management of school structures, i.e. ensuring the school's democratic organisation; conformity; preservation of rules and hierarchy etc.; and through the principals' immediate contact with students (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2002a; 2002b). Moreover, according to the guidelines issued by the Hellenic Ministry of Education (2002b), communication with students should be based on 'love, interest and care'. The policy expresses the realised and idealised dispositions of principalship. Pedagogy is delivered, yet mostly indirectly through administrative and organisational practices. It is only through direct communication with students that pedagogy is practised in a more immediate way. This echoes Hallinger and Heck's (Lingard and Christie, 2003) suggestion that the principal effect on student outcomes is mediated.

The three principals of my study were aware of their marginal position regarding pedagogy, which was clearly located outside the classroom. Yannis (Ionian, mainstream, 20%) stated that "once the classroom door closes [the principal] can't intervene". Giorgos expressed that he had no jurisdiction to interfere with the teachers' work. The men's accounts were underlined by discontent. Both came in contestation with their staff on pedagogical issues, but Giorgos (Aegean, mainstream, 60%) was more outspoken of his dissatisfaction:

You have to convince your colleagues that the school's goal is to bring about the maximum of every child's achievement. The aim of the school is the child to come to school. The aim of the school is [the child] to listen to the teacher. By saying "Bugger off, child, bugger off, bugger off" the only thing my colleagues do is to save themselves from the trouble of attending the child's needs; but then the child no longer listens to them. The greatest punishment for the child is to force him to listen to the teacher. If the child listens though [by interest and not by force], may come a day that he have to make a decision and will remember some opinion he heard [from his teacher], which could affect this decision. That's why I've told my colleagues many times that I wouldn't want a student to fail the grade more than once. Of course, I cannot convince them.

Giorgos feels discomfort that he has to "convince" his staff to be 'good' pedagogues. Elsewhere, he relates this to the lack of teacher assessment in Greece. He appears disheartened by some of his staff's pedagogical approaches and unable to influence their practices. Yannis expressed similar disbeliefs about his staff (Ionian, mainstream, 20%), particularly in relation to educating ethnic minority students. These reflect the struggle between the two fields of practice. Giorgos understands that he and his staff practise under different and contesting logics of practice: the teachers' logic is based on a 'trouble-free' approach to education; and the principals' logic that no child fails the grade twice. I read an affective and a rational shade in his account. The affective relates to Giorgos' emotional involvement with students as a vocational disposition of teachers (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003). His clash with staff has to do with his demands for their emotional investment in what they practise. The non-affective, rational side to this is that Giorgos' school (and above all his service) must come across as being effective. That is fewer unsuccessful students per year. Therefore, his pedagogical demands – and thus the conflicts with his staff – are formed through dispositions that are both affective and rational.

Manos (Cretan, intercultural, 40%) was not particularly bothered with being distant from classroom practices. He said that pedagogy was not an issue for him, and expressed positively about the handling of pedagogical matters by his staff, noting their good qualifications. I should remind that Manos was a newly appointed principal. He was thus preoccupied with setting his organisational rules, administrating tasks to teachers and

dealing with infrastructural issues. Even though he appeared to accommodate his bureaucratic post, Manos was indeed involved in the pedagogical practices of his school – at least to some extent. He initiated educational projects with teachers and supported extra-curricular activities. This, he felt, was particularly important for the kind of students his school served (Cretan, intercultural, 40%):

My role is to make sure that the students have access to many different educational activities, and that they make networks inside and outside the school yard; and later on with the labour market. Extra-curricular activities are very important for students. They particularly help immigrant students integrate. [...] There are many talented kids and activities like music and drama, which really help them to express themselves and establish their position in the school.

Manos capitalised on extra-curricular activities and programmes, as these particularly make a difference for ethnic minority students. Having said this, Yannis and Giorgos also supported programmes as being important pedagogical tools, but they would rather follow teachers' initiatives than instigate them. Yannis clearly stated that this was the teachers' duty. Elsewhere Manos commented that his involvement with pedagogy happened through teachers, while he focused on supporting their work. For this he was working to make his office a resource centre for teachers on matters of immigration and community (language learning support, policies regarding accommodation, labour market, asylum etc). However, Manos too came in contestation with his staff on pedagogical matters.

Yannis' and Giorgos' accounts alluded to a pastoral, more direct approach to pedagogising.

The thing I do is to advise and guide and, whenever needed, discipline students who need some additional help; or offer them support by contacting and discussing their case with the parents.

(Yannis, Ionian, Mainstream, 20%)

Regarding children, [the principal can give] advice, always in cooperation with the teachers [...] Children are usually manageable. In those difficult cases, you work with each individual student. Particularly in secondary school you come across some difficult teens. In most cases it's your

experience that helps you and nothing else. Sometimes you take the softer way, and other times the tougher, but [it is] always [done] with love towards the child. And of course you always act according to what you feel it's right for the child.

(Giorgos, Aegean, Mainstream, 60%)

Yannis and Giorgos suggest that their pedagogical practice affects mostly those who face challenges with complying with school rules. This practice - a pastoral approach to pedagogy - suggests a 'particular truth' (Foucault, 1994, p. 312), which troubled students should accept in order to become better learners. Foucault (1994) calls this 'pastoral technology' (p. 303) as 'the development of power techniques oriented toward individuals and intended to rule them in a continuous and permanent way' (Foucault, 1994, p.300). Through different approaches all principals showed their caring for students. Caring, according to Braun (2009), is one of the two cornerstones of the teacher habitus, the other one being discipline. Caring, as a disposition, follows teachers in the post of the principal. Manos' care was manifested through the organising of structures (i.e. extra-curricular activities, projects) and information (i.e. policy and educational resources). Yannis and Giorgos had a pastoral way of caring through individualised sessions with students in their office. Yannis' and Giorgos' accounts, presented earlier, also underline that 'discipline', for them, is a form of 'caring'. This echoes Preston's (1995) proposition that often male principals 'exercise authority and a paternalistic type of care' (cited in Braun, 2009, p. 139). In my research all three (male) principals practised both care and discipline, reverberating Braun's (2009) findings that these dispositions were practised by teachers of both sexes.

Discipline in the two schools was done in different ways, and manifested both in school practices and personal conceptualisations. Here, I draw on data from the Aegean (Giorgos, mainstream, 60%) and the Cretan (Manos, intercultural, 40%) schools to unpack the matter. To start with, I observed that more students were sent in Giorgos' office by the teachers to be reprimanded compared to those sent in Manos' office. I also observed that these students were of an immigrant background and mostly male (I come back to this in Chapters Seven and Eight). The data were collected across 35 breaks at the Aegean school

and 29 breaks at the Cretan school (10' each). During this time I have recorded 57 student interactions with Giorgos and 25 with Manos on four reasons: administrative issues, attendance, behaviour and socialising. 24 of Giorgos' interactions with students and 7 of Manos' related to discipline. Disciplining practices regarded attendance (how many times a student was absent) and behaviour issues (i.e. 'naughtiness'). Giorgos had more interactions with students overall compared to Manos; but also his role in the school was more connected to that of the disciplinarian than Manos' was. Giorgos acknowledged his role as a disciplinarian, which he connected to 'caring' for the students – a pastoral guidance.

The next passage shows that the principal's disciplinary practice is located between teachers and students:

Above all, we care about the student ... There will be moments when a colleague, driven by his emotions, in the heat of the moment or due to a personal reason, may come in clash with some student. You [the principal], then, have to be the calm one who will show to that colleague the things in which he was right, and the things in which he was wrong. Possibly it was his spontaneity, his emotion at that moment etc. He [the teacher] has to see it, though, from a different perspective.

Giorgos sees himself as mediating discipline between teachers and students, practice which is strongly imbued by an affective quality. He has to act as a regulator of emotions, put in work his 'calmness', right judgment and rational mind in order to show to others where their emotions have taken over. Giving the example of engineers, Colley, James, Tedder and Diment (2003) suggest that the masculine vocational habitus is 'rational, detached, logical' (p. 489). This fits well with Giorgos' description of his post (which is to a great extent masculinised) and his role in mediating disciplinary practice. This male/rational versus female/emotional divide is further substantiated by the fact that the staff at the Aegean school is mostly women (20 out of 25 teachers). Therefore, Giorgos sees himself as the rational, self-controlled male that needs to regulate the tempered, spontaneous females in order to protect the students from unfair punishment. This emotional labour of self-controlling, that Giorgos needs to do, is the idealised disposition, since the realised disposition is the labour to suppress his emotional involvement. Frustration, agitation and

worrying were other emotional aspects of realised dispositions that Giorgos enacted when 'caring' for students (see Chapter Eight). These feelings realise the emotional engagement required by a pedagogue.

Manos (intercultural, 40%) did not engage with disciplining students in the same way as Giorgos did. As I mentioned earlier, his daily routine did not involve teachers sending students in his office. This was a striking difference between the two offices. When I asked Manos to comment on it he said:

We don't have behavioural problems with the students in our school. They are good kids. Any minor issues we have, normal when we're dealing with kids, we solve them inside the classroom.

The practices between schools are different, so is Manos' practice. He feels that the students of his school do not require much disciplining; this role has been delegated to his teachers, as he trusted their pedagogic abilities. He highlights that most of his staff is well qualified by "hold[ing] Masters and quite a few PhDs". This strongly contrasts Giorgos' dissatisfaction with his teachers. There are, therefore, institutional factors, such as staff qualification and student 'quality' (and possibly curriculum and school practices in general), that do not impose 'behavioural problems' to Manos. Nonetheless, Manos did not negate discipline whatsoever. For example, during a break Manos nearly screamed at two boys who run inside the school to stop, to avoid hurting themselves and others. This shows that he did not reject his role as a disciplinarian, but embodied it in a different way to Giorgos' 'traditional', pastoral manner. Manos' disciplinary practices happened on the spot in the corridors and rarely inside his office; I did not see students being sent to him by teachers. Manos, therefore, did practise discipline, but he did not seem to acknowledge it. I attribute this misrecognition to the fact that Manos might have particular (maybe more traditional) images of what practices count as 'discipline'. Therefore he understands that he does not participate in disciplining students who were sent to the principal's office, yet he embodies the disciplinarian in a different mode.

A final note relates to the principals' disciplining practices as understood and co-constructed by teachers. Teacher accounts at both schools alluded to some idea of the



principal as a disciplinarian. However, there was a clear difference between them. The Aegean school teachers (Giorgos, mainstream, 60%) described the principal as a more traditional, strict disciplinarian/pastor; while the Cretan school teachers (Manos, intercultural, 40%) as milder disciplinarian and a pedagogue who is focused on the educational content. Maintaining the school's order and solving student problems was mentioned in 6 out of the 7 interviewees at the Aegean school. For example,

He has to be able to keep the school order. [I ask her to comment on this more] To be able to solve behavioural problems...to be ready and keep his cool when trouble arises caused by particular groups of students.

(Philitsa, female, late 50s, literature teacher)

Another teacher commented positively on Giorgos' qualities to handle 'troubling' students:

When Giorgos shouts he is heard across the whole school. You should see then how they [misbehaving students] run away to hide!

(Thalia, female, mid 40s, literature teacher)

The above accounts show how these teachers want a school principal who, as a disciplinarian, uses his authority to take control of students. They mostly relate the principal's pedagogical qualities to having a right judgment and to handling 'difficult' students. However, there were 2 out of 7 teachers, who either did not refer to discipline at all or who, along with discipline, gave some attention to the educational work of the principal (i.e. initiating projects, involving the students in extra-curricular activities etc).

The Cretan school teachers portrayed a principal, whose practices were mostly engaged with the content and method of the education delivered. However, half of them (3 out of 6) also related his practice to disciplining.

[It is important] that he keeps the school updated with new knowledge on the educational and pedagogical stuff. He has to be a sort of reference point...a mentor if you like...I think our principal is trying to do this.

(Fani, female, early 40s, literature teacher)

The principal's pedagogical role....is err...to keep the students disciplined. He needs, of course, to start from advising when needed. [...] Regarding the

foreign students, it is also important...that he...makes them feel they belong to the school.

(Markos, male, early 50s, Physics)

It is obvious that the accounts of the Cretan school teachers portray a principal whose pedagogical involvement entails, apart from disciplining, also engaging with the educational content and methods.

I have therefore examined what principals feel they (can or do) practise as pedagogues and what teachers feel their principals do (or should do). Giorgos embodied a disciplinary/pastoral principal, while Manos a more education-focused principal. These embodiments agree with what staff expected from their principals. I argue that the process of 'learning as becoming' (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003) happens within a particular working ethos. The analysis of the previous chapter showed that the students' ethnic mix of the mainstream Aegean school (60% ethnic diversity) was constituted 'naughty' and 'tough', and the school as 'failing'. Teachers portrayed principalship as being closer to controlling students and punishing 'unruly' behaviours than to affecting the educational content. The principal, thus, was seen as someone who needed to rectify the school in the market and 'rule' students. On the contrary, the Cretan school (40% ethnic diversity), established by the 'intercultural policy', clearly aimed at the education and integration of ethnic minority students. Even though this constituted it a 'special', 'for immigrants' and thus 'abnormal', school in the school market, nonetheless its ethos was more focused on the educational content compared to the Aegean school. Teachers there talked about a principal who should be engaged more with the educational content and the particular aims of the Cretan school, and less with disciplining/ punishing. Chapter Seven shows this being reflected in their classroom practices. This does not mean that all teachers agreed with their principals' pedagogical approaches. Nonetheless, Giorgos' and Manos' principalships were 'working' principalships, in the sense that there were no major conflicts jeopardising their post.

In conclusion, the logic that rules the field of educational management in Greece is pedagogic (dis)engagement. The three principals (Yannis, Giorgos, Manos) embodied pedagogy as a disposition of their habitus, which was manifested through practices of caring and discipline. The principals acknowledged that their pedagogical jurisdictions were limited, but were given the space to be pedagogically engaged, which satisfied their teacher dispositions. Concurrently, this limited pedagogic involvement meant disengagement from classroom pedagogy: Manos organised the educational resources and extra-curricular activities, and Giorgos advised and disciplined students; but both were practising pedagogy in their offices. This pedagogical disengagement alludes to a field logic that keeps the principal engaged with other duties, namely paperwork and administration. Pedagogic (dis)engagement as a field logic preserves the field of the Greek educational management by having the principals running the schools, while making the limitations on the principals' pedagogic work tolerable, and therefore perpetual.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **Principal conceptualisations of multiethnicity in schools: practices and restrictions**

This chapter looks into two central issues, the principals' dispositions towards intercultural/inclusive education and towards their students' educational experience. I understand their practices as the product of constellations of institutional, vocational and familial (individual) dispositions. I understand these logics as multiple, with principal practice informed simultaneously by different fields and their rules. The analysis weaves the resistances and compliances ingrained in the principal habitus.

#### **Principal understandings of intercultural education: what it is, who it is for and what it has to offer**

In Chapter Five I showed that an important disposition of the principal habitus was the sense of contribution to their learning communities, which stemmed from a sense of 'duty' principals felt towards their schools. With pedagogical involvement restricted by field structures (what I call 'pedagogic (dis)engagement'), principals spoke about their wish to advise teachers and support their classroom work. Here, I present the principals discussing their views on intercultural education, and together their understandings on what their multiethnic schools need or not. Is intercultural education (in theory and practice) something they relate to their duties towards their school community, and why is it so? Concurrently, their understandings about what multiethnicity is and how it should be treated emerge. I find that principals are positioned in-between vocational, institutional and wider social structures that shape these understandings and crystallise their practices towards ethnic minority students.

*“We don’t need” it: Yannis and the curriculum of ‘normal’ schools*

Yannis (Ionian, mainstream, 20%) shows me a pile of documents circulated across schools, concerning seminars, student activities and staff allocation, and suggests that I browse through them to get an idea of the school processes. He identified these announcements as non-important, so instead of becoming registered or filed they will end up in the recycling bin. Skipping through the pages, I see a seminar on ‘Intercultural Education’, organised by the Borough in co-operation with the Ministry of Education. Given the chance, I ask him:

EM: There is this call for a seminar on Intercultural Education [I show him the announcement]. Did any of the staff attend?

YANNIS: Uh, no... no, our school doesn’t need to...We are not an intercultural school; this is what the intercultural school does...They have a different curriculum... They focus more on the promotion of the students’ cultures; they do various cultural activities, dances from various countries, theatrical plays...It is a special school [...] We don’t do that here, we consider them all equal, we don’t want to distinguish them from Greek students. They are not considered immigrants, they are almost Greeks, integrated...We follow the Greek curriculum for normal schools.

In Chapter Four I argued that intercultural education (policies and schools), as a ‘special’ sub-field of the mainstream field of Greek education, is placed on the periphery of the Greek state’s concerns. Yannis made a distinction between his school, which he defined as “normal Greek”, and the intercultural secondary school in the same Borough. Again, ‘normality’ emerges as a constituent of the mainstream institutional habitus which he, as the principal, serves and reproduces (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). He sees that the subject of the seminar does not relate to mainstream schools, and so neither he nor his staff needed to attend. His account echoes the separatist Greek schooling model. Intercultural pedagogy is for ‘other’, ‘not normal’ (or ‘abnormal’) students and their schools, which are distinguished from the ‘normal’ and mainstream.

Nonetheless, Yannis shows caring towards their ethnic minority students and the way they are treated in his school – a cornerstone disposition for teachers (Braun, 2009),

and principals in that matter. I also suggest that his positive dispositions towards immigrant students relate to his multicultural family (his sister being married to an Iraqi man). This caring, though, is materialised in practices which are framed by institutional dispositions. Yannis attributes a particular meaning to the words 'equal' and 'different'. Seeing students as "different" means that he distinguishes them from the normative student type, which is the Greek, non-immigrant, student. Therefore, a school that recognises any type of difference for its students practises educational inequality. On the contrary, turning a blind eye on the different ethnic backgrounds would mean that the school acts sensitively towards ethnic minority students perceiving them as "equals". I see his views reflecting an ethnocentric projection over what 'equality' is. Yannis is aware of the ethos of his (and other) mainstream school. Immigrant students should be seen as 'Greeks' to be 'equal', because he knows that if they are 'different' they are doomed to inequality and discrimination. Having said these, Yannis does not disvalue intercultural education and its work. However, he understands that what intercultural education has to offer does not fit his students' needs, which are to be as more 'Greek' as possible in a mainstream institution.

*"Everyone is equal" theories and other "hysterias": Giorgos and the pragmatism of an inner-city school*

On the other hand, Giorgos (Aegean, mainstream, 60%) did attend a training seminar for school principals on the subject of 'Managing Multiethnicity in Schools' organised by the education faculty of the local university. Noticing the framed 'Certificate of Attendance' hanging on the wall next to his desk, I ask him to comment on it.

GIORGOS: I hang that particular certificate over there just to mock it, not to show it off [...] This seminar was one of those given by academics [in a disapproving tone]. I attended because I thought it would offer me something [...] So then they gave us this toilet paper [showing the certificate], supposedly that we learned something by attending [...]

EM: They [the academics] didn't have to offer you anything at all?

GIORGOS: For me, nothing. Of course I occasionally attended a few good seminars ... I can't say that all is same [he mentions he enjoyed one that had practical training on teaching and pedagogy]. But this professor was just sitting there [...] saying "we could say...we could do...if we had said, if we had done...", rocking his chair back and forth. And his audience was teachers, who know that [when teaching] we must start by making sense [to the audience], and take it from there, step by step, then conclude and finish.

This training event was open to all principals of both mainstream and intercultural schools, which shows that some attention was given to multiethnicity in mainstream schools by educational authorities. The organising of this seminar suggests that intercultural education, as a sub-field, has an effect on the structures of mainstream education attempting to impact on the way things are done in schools. Giorgos' choice to attend suggests that he sees particular reasons to do so. First, by attending he gains qualifications/credits to be used in his re-appointment for the post; I construe this as a working of his vocational habitus preserving its position. Second, he leads a school whose students are by 60% of ethnic minorities; thus the seminar offers knowledge that responds to the needs of his school. Institutional dispositions that relate to the multiethnicity of the Aegean school, such as advancing the educational experiences of its students, may have contributed to his attendance. Concurrently, being the principal of an inner-city school that -due to its ethnic mix - is not at the top of the league in the local quasi-school market (Chapter Four), he should find ways to improve its 'quality'. Therefore, principal dispositions working together with institutional ones advocated that it was worthwhile to engage himself in this field of intercultural education by attending the seminar (Bourdieu, cited in Reay, 2004, p. 435).

However, Giorgos did not find himself agreeing with the content of the seminar. He used strong negative words to describe the seminar certificate ("toilet paper"). He criticised the seminar as not corresponding to reality and expressed his dissatisfaction for the practical training he did not received. Understanding academic knowledge to be hypotheses of "coulds" and "woulds" about the educational reality, Giorgos could not see these relating to his everyday experience. There is evidently a strong antithesis between two fields of

educational struggle, theory and practice, and Giorgos appears to prioritise the latter. Thinking in terms of Giorgos' vocational habitus, both as a teacher and as a principal, I see that it has been sculptured through time by the educational practice of the school and its everyday challenges, rather than by academic practice. He has to run an inner-city school, with students which staff characterises as 'tough' and 'naughty'. The 'street realities' of his principalship (Ball, 1987, p.80) necessitate a more practical outlook, which the theories presented at the seminar did not offer. I would also suggest that his age (60, close to retirement) is linked with his attitude towards theory. The years of experience which were built practising education turned into a crystallised belief system. The embodiment of time, manifested in his body, clothes, values and attitude, means that his habitus has become more rigid as it went through structuring and restructuring – a process of reproduction and substantiation of particular structures while practising in a particular field (Bourdieu, 1990). Through this process, Giorgos' vocational habitus was strengthened and used to practising according to particular logics. Eventually, it has now become less adaptive to new structures, in this case new academic knowledge.

The significance of Giorgos' disapproval of the theoretical approach of the seminar towards multiculturalism is elucidated by the following quote. Earlier in the interview he talked about how only a few modern ideas in education have worked out in practice:

The school as an establishment is conservative, because it tries to make the man disciplined; to question but, in the end, to conform. The "everyone is equal" and other nihilist theories do not apply [to the school]. Such modern ideas work only in well-organised societies. When society becomes disorganised, those with the modern ideas and free thinking [...] realise that nothing works as they have imagined [...] They say that history is illiberal when we talk on national and social issues. "It's illiberal! History is illiberal!" [raising his voice pretending to be someone who protests]. But when all of us become liberal, and you'll be taken over by others, then you'll be asking for an organised society, with laws and discipline. [...] "You are fascist pigs!" "You are Christians!" If we let these hysterias enter the school environment, then we'll end up creating a society which is faulty.

Giorgos shows belief in the conservative role of the school, and questions modern and liberal thinking as a way of practising within school, as well as the difficulty in handling



ideological pluralism. However, he does not reject pluralism and equality as theory and practice. Rather, he is cautious of the effects these can have in schools of societies which are not strongly structured and he insinuates that Greek society is not such. Pluralism may include both antiracist and racist voices, liberal and close-minded. For his school and his ethnic minority students such “hysterias” could be dangerous, if ideological polarities are expressed.

At the same time the account alludes to his more general conservative ideological positioning which he projects on his school practices. While listening to the audio file of this recorded extract, I remembered his conservative appearance: a man close to retirement, dressed as what could be described a ‘typical’ folk Greek man of his age, with a moustache and a cap. However, Giorgos does not find progressive ideas worthless. During the interview he positively referred to Neill’s Summerhill School, noting however that it practically failed to be established as a widely adopted educational programme. What he therefore seems to discard is the practical usefulness of applying ‘progressive’ ideas to the school. This resonates with Papanou’s (1995) research that principals do not feel comfortable introducing novelties to their school. I see this possibly linked to the centralised and conservative structures of Greek Education. I argued in chapters One and Five that the practices of school principals are tuned towards the accommodation of the system which they have chosen to serve and by which they have been chosen (Wolcott, 1973; Bourdieu, 1990). If Giorgos rejects progressive educational approaches (i.e. “everyone is equal”) this could be the product of a principal habitus that accommodates and reproduces the structures of the Greek educational system. Reading it together with the previous extract, the embodied pragmatism of this school principal becomes evident. Even though Giorgos does not reject pluralism, he yet knows that resistance to conservatism will practically fail. The above suggest that institutional dispositions, which make processes at the Aegean school very ‘real’, work together with principal dispositions, putting the principal as the gatekeeper of school policies (Ball, 2006) and thus of state structures. This way Giorgos ends up being hesitant towards theories of intercultural education.

*Schools on “their own fate”: Manos and a school for interculturalism*

The Cretan school, by terms of its model, endorses interculturalism and thus the role of the school principal is defined within this framework. Manos (Cretan, intercultural 40%) talks about the support he finds from the local university (the same one organising the seminar in Giorgos’ case) and also the teachers in his school.

The teachers of our school and I are always searching for projects that we could get involved in ... or some other cultural event. I am very into web searching and I search for initiatives by UNESCO...we participated in a couple of them [he mentions the titles of the projects]. We also team up with the efforts of the [name] university...as I said we have teachers who co-operate with the university [as visiting associates]. Many of our teachers support the seminars it organises, and they attend on their own initiative.

Obviously Manos appreciates academic knowledge around the issues of intercultural education, as do his staff. This I see relating both to the school model being intercultural, but also to the particular vocational background of teachers. As explained earlier, it is required that staff at intercultural schools hold post-graduate qualifications in educational sciences and/or additional teacher-training (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2003a). There is thus an institutional ethos that attributes status to theoretical knowledge, which Manos himself meets as a doctorate holder. Manos and his teachers fit comfortably within the field of academia. I suggest here that the vocational habitus of Manos and his staff is oriented towards a culture of constant self-development. I am thinking of the growing competitive space of the educational labour market (which requests for more and higher qualifications), but also of the rapidly produced new knowledge. This strongly contrasts the situation at the Aegean school, where teachers are older and without further training or qualifications. This is because postgraduate qualifications in Greece became more popular quite recently; and also because the Aegean school teachers had long established their position in the labour market, when competition and entry in the profession was not as demanding. Therefore, the institutional dispositions of the Cretan school support and reproduce practices relating to an ethos of building new knowledge by advancing staff qualifications.

Concurrently, by definition, the educational and pedagogical focus of the Cretan school is the integration of ethnic minority students, a task which requires specialist training and up-to-date knowledge. I still often come across Manos and Cretan school teachers at seminars, training and conferences on intercultural education. Moreover, Manos and his teachers also see a particular practical value in such training and student involvement in cultural and educational projects (i.e. UNESCO initiatives). Contradicting Giorgos' experience, Manos finds the involvement with the aforementioned tasks purposeful and necessary. Later on he explains that such school activities help ethnic minority students "establish their position in the school" and also creates integration conditions. I understand that this experience relates to the institutional habitus of the Cretan school, which necessitates inclusive pedagogies; in turn, these are based on expert knowledge, which makes intercultural theories and school practices work.

Nevertheless, the intercultural work of the Cretan school was not supported by the state. Manos says

Intercultural Education was a policy that was established but not implemented as it was promised. It started as a good initiative, but the law makers just did their job and then left the intercultural schools on their own fate. The law promised mother-tongue teaching, but it did not set the grounds for it, and now [the matter] is forgotten. The same goes for promises and plans about funding. I've seen the money as much as you have seen it... [ironically].

I have discussed how intercultural education was not attended by the Greek state as it should due to the ethnocentricity of mainstream education. Manos practice shows how ethnocentricity creates obstacles and restrictions to his practice as an educator and as the principal, particularly regarding policy implementation, student support and teaching resources. The infrastructural problems caused by the overpopulation of the Cretan school is added to this situation (i.e. accommodating Greek language classes in the inappropriate basement). Having said this, I should note that the Greek state is widely critiqued for the lack of financial support to schools in general and for its unwillingness to invest in education. Nonetheless, the fact that multilingualism and multiculturalism is ignored by the

syllabus of mainstream classrooms (Damanakis, 2002; Nikolaou, 2005; Tsokalidou, 2012) points at reasons beyond financial for the state's lack of support towards intercultural schools. The introduction of minority languages in Greek schools and their legitimisation through educational practice is politically weighted (Tsokalidou, 2005; Gkaintartzi and Tsokalidou, 2011). Manos has been very passionate about introducing the teaching of mother tongue in the school's curriculum and it was one of his major disappointments that his initiatives always came to confront institutional obstacles.

I see this as the effect of contesting logics of practice which Manos has to juggle. On the one hand is the ethnocentric (and ethnicist) logic of the field of Greek mainstream education that excludes other cultures and languages. On the other is the logic of the field of Greek intercultural education, which advocates for inclusive pedagogies. As the field of Greek intercultural education is a sub-field of Greek education (Diagram II, p. 121) the latter poses restrictions on the implementation of interculturalism in the Cretan school. Being a state school principal, Manos' vocational habitus resists but finally succumbs to the workings of Greek ethnocentricity.

#### *Principals in-between structures: opting or not opting for intercultural education*

The understandings and decisions of all three principals to implement school practices for ethnic minority students were moulded by the interplay of institutional and principal dispositions, and these, in turn, by structures that formulate the processes in their schools. The three principals had different understandings about how to act for their ethnic minority students. For Yannis the restriction posed by the mainstream habitus of his school formed his understandings about the Ionian school (20% ethnic diversity) as a school that did not need to engage with an intercultural educational scheme. At the same time, his understandings (re)shaped the ethnocentric institutional habitus of the Ionian school through his decision to not have his staff informed on the seminar. Giorgos' pragmatism as

an experienced principal serving the mainstream Aegean school (60% ethnic diversity) which runs under the conservatism of the Greek state, restricts him from pluralistic, 'progressive' ideas. On the contrary, for Manos, the very condition of his principalship inclined him to adopt interculturalism. His vocational dispositions (being appointed a principal at an intercultural school, investing in further training etc.), as well as the institutional dispositions stemming from particular conditions (policies, staff appointed to serve interculturalism, culture of self-improvement etc.), all these work together towards the inclusion of minority students. It is important to note that the institutional habitus conditions the principal habitus, and vice versa. Manos directed the Cretan school towards inclusive school practices, and the ethos of the Cretan school presupposed that Manos did so.

This does not mean that Giorgos and Yannis were not positively dispositioned towards their ethnic minority students. Nonetheless their accounts alluded to different conceptualisations of what it means to work towards inclusion. Yannis followed the "normal Greek" curriculum which, as he understood, did not see immigrant students as others/inferior/abnormal, but as same/equal/normal. Giorgos declined the 'everyone is equal' approach as too theoretical to be successfully applied to his inner-city school. He also believed that pluralism would bring ethnic and religious "hysterias", which could not be handled appropriately in a conservative institution. Their understandings are shaped by ethnocentric institutional dispositions towards multiethnicity, but also of wider fields of social practice and their interrelationship, such as the inferior positioning of the field of intercultural education in relation to that of mainstream education. Therefore, intercultural education is particularised to specific students and specific 'non-conservative' institutions. Through similar reasons of field hierarchisation, Manos' practices were bound by the restrictions of the ethnocentricity of the Greek educational system, and so he was unable to introduce mother tongue teaching, or cater for resources and infrastructural issues. The discussion here showed that the three principals, through different processes, found themselves in-between structures of vocational, institutional and educational conditioning,

which created an intricate blend of orientations regarding the education of ethnic minority students.

### **Principals and ethnic minority students: views, expectations and emotions**

While the previous section focused on the principals' understandings on intercultural education and inclusion, this one looks at the conceptualisations of the three principals about their ethnic minority students. Here the principals talk about their views on the 'kind' of students their immigrant students are, and the future they imagine for them. Consequently, the principals identify the schools' contribution and their own in constructing this future. Their accounts also reveal the positions in which these students are placed as learners by the principals, and concurrently their educational intentions towards them. The principals mobilise their conceptualisations on ethnicity and class to pinpoint the varying locations of minority students in the respective schools, but also to relate their work accordingly. Their narrations often reveal the principals' emotional engagement: love, pride, sympathy and/or empathy; but also anxiety, frustration and disappointment. This affective aspect, which is a part of the 'sensitivity' of the principal habitus (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003, p. 471), suggests the emotional labour that the principals undergo in their effort to respond to their school's multiethnicity. The analysis shows that the understandings principals hold about their immigrant students are a result of the complex and often conflicting interplay of vocational, institutional and familial dispositions.

#### *Yannis and the (in)visible students*

I started my interview with Yannis (Ionian, mainstream, 20%) by asking him to talk about the Ionian school. He described it as follows:

Our school is very open [to multiethnicity]. We have many students, Albanians, Bulgarians [simultaneously opens the student records and reads out their last names, trying to figure out the students' ethnic background]. And we have many great students, the holder of the Greek flag this year was Albanian...However it's not always like that... Do you remember that incident in 2000, it was on the news, with that Albanian top [female] student, who was to hold the flag<sup>37</sup>? Parents and community put barbed wire all around the school, and did not allow the girl to access. Closed-minded people...And you know, recently I saw a report on TV about her, that she is studying in the US and is a brilliant student! I personally don't have any objection, and there was no negative reaction [against the Albanian girl at his school].

Yannis thinks positively about ethnic minority students, stating that his school is "very open". As presented in Chapter Five, his family had multicultural elements and whenever he referred to his stances towards multiethnicity he referred to his trilingual nephews. The framed Alexander's the Great Oath in his office, which praised inter- and cross- ethnic respect and egalitarianism, could also be understood as reflecting these dispositions. Here, he appears critical of the "closed-minded people" that do not leave space for inclusion of minority students. He adopts a 'progressive' stance by accepting 'other' students to participate in national school practices, which is significant especially considering the prevailing nationalistic climate regarding such issues.

Similar incidents with the one that Yannis narrated were widely broadcasted by the media at every national celebration. The matter, often titled as 'the flag issue', was first sparked in 1999- 2000, when an Albanian student earned top grades and was awarded with holding the Greek flag at the local national parade and school celebrations. The broadcasting included reports, talk panels and intense debates. In the following years, as a result of such mediatised arguments between academics, teachers and politicians, non-Greek and/or non-Orthodox Christian students were given the right by educational policy to hold the Greek flag at their will (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2001b). With the

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<sup>37</sup> Top students are awarded for their performance by being appointed at school celebrations as the 'Greek flag holders'. The flag not only is considered to be the symbol of the Greek nation, but also of Orthodox Christianity, as it has a Christian cross on the top of the flag pole. 'Nation, Religion, Family' is the 'trptych' often rehearsed as capturing the values of the Greeks. As a high-school student myself (1995-1997), I was regularly asked to write small essays on how I understand this triptych.

broadcasting of such events, which Yannis has experienced as a concerned viewer, the media served as a platform, which allowed liberal voices to clash with nationalistic ones, via the field of education, and cause policy changes. Lingard and Rawolle (2004) have sutured the concept of 'mediatization of politics and government', introduced by Fairclough (2000), with Bourdieu's argument that the media construct policies, to show how educational policy is 'mediatized' (cited in Lingard and Rawolle, 2004, p.361). Yannis' principal habitus is subtly implicated in these field configurations, which work together with his familial dispositions. Yannis, following the mediatization of the flag-holding policy, honours the Albanian student for her achievements with a national symbolic practice, resisting the exclusion of ethnic minority students from school practices. However, Yannis did not problematise the significance of awarding a national flag to students for their performance. I suggest that this is because it feels to him as a 'right' or 'natural' institutional and principal practice: to do otherwise it would not be in his (ethnocentric) school or principal habitus.

McDonald and Wingfield (2009) use the term '(in)visibility' to describe organisational practices of discrimination, where ethnicity and race become visible or invisible according to what privileges each time the dominant racial/ethnic culture. They take on Williams' (1997) conceptualisation of "hypervisibility and oblivion" which renders members of the black community "seen "everywhere" and overlooked at the same time" (cited in McDonald and Wingfield, 2009, p. 33). Here Yannis constantly shifts the position of his ethnic minority students between 'otherness' and 'sameness'. Yannis praised the Albanian student for her (unlikely?) achievements by highlighting her 'Albanian-ness'. Simultaneously he makes her 'same', by involving her in Greek national practices. I remind Yannis' earlier statement that, unlike intercultural schools, his school sees its minority students as "equal", "almost Greek". On the one hand, these different ethnic positions that Yannis attributes to these students stem from his effort to include them and his caring disposition. On the other, and from a critical perspective, the way Yannis performs (in)visibility underlines deeper processes of exclusion that relate to the workings of the institutional and principal habitus. He retrieves the ethnic identity of non Greek students at particularly convenient moments. The girl's visible ethnicity when holding the flag means that his school is "very open" to



multiculturalism. This serves to underline on the one hand, the personal efforts of the girl. On the other hand, though, these efforts would only be possible in a school that does a 'good' job, by offering appropriate education. Similarly, Yannis notices that the school has "many great students" and so he reassures us that succeeding in a mainstream Greek school can be done - and without intercultural education. On this note he looks up the immigrant students' last names to define their ethnicity. Pointing them out, Yannis establishes that his school is open to multiethnicity; but also that these few 'other' students are just a minority in the Ionian school (20%).

Moreover, when the girl is awarded with the flag (a symbolic Greek national practice), her Albanian ethnicity becomes invisible, while she is now seen as "almost Greek", "integrated". In this and other cases the shift between 'otherness' and 'sameness' may be expressive of the dual ethnic identity the students embody. For example, the flag-holder girl might feel both Albanian and Greek. Nonetheless, what I argue for is that these ethnic positionalities are manipulated by the ethnocentric institutional and vocational structures towards the benefit of the dominant culture. The following extract from my field notes contributes to my argument:

Whenever ethnic minority students enter his [Yannis'] office, for various reasons, while I interview him, he immediately introduces me and asks them about life in Greece [...] A girl walks in and Yannis says 'we were just talking about you' and that miss EM wants to learn about immigrant students at the school. The girl is originally from Russia. He asks her to say how she likes school in Greece. She hesitantly says something like 'it's great', and then awkward silence falls. I try to break the ice by asking her for how long she has been in Greece. She answers 'from when I was very little...just over 12 years'. I'm taken by surprise and I say 'many years that is...' She says 'yes' smiling, and then leaves.

Yannis brings the girl's 'otherness' into spotlight and surprises her, for she has lived almost her whole life in Greece – yet she is still cast as 'other'. This should be read together with the way Yannis refers to his ethnic minority students by highlighting their non-belongingness to the Greek ethnicity, even if they were raised in Greece. This shows the

existence of a barrier in his thinking about them as Greeks, or Greek-Albanians, or even Albanian-Greeks. For Yannis, they are the “Albanian”, the “Russian”, the “Bulgarian” student.

The consequences of (in)visibility are more strongly exhibited in Yannis’ statement on the ‘drop out’ numbers of ethnic minority students:

Last year we had 27 students dropping out...27! This means I’ve lost a whole classroom! [...] And the hard thing is to convince them to stay in schooling. Some of them fail to be promoted from the 1<sup>st</sup> grade and they stay there for over three years. Can you imagine how bad they feel for themselves? And how are we to expect them to complete their education?

Undoubtedly, Yannis sympathises with his students and worries about their future in education. He sees they leave school in significant numbers (a Greek classroom has about 27-30 students) and that they have lost their eagerness to continue with studying. However, one would wonder whether their ethnicities were visible in the school’s educational work before their ‘dropping out’. I remind that Yannis believed his school did not need an intercultural educational content. Yannis sees the ethnicities when counting 27 of them leaving school; but in effect, he ‘sees’ them in these numbers now, exactly because he had not ‘seen’ them before. The struggle for Yannis and the teachers is to “convince them” to continue school, insinuating that these students are not eager to study. However, apart from connecting their lack of eagerness with school failure, he does not bring up the matter of the quality of education. Concurrently, there is a subtle discharge of himself and the school from responsibility, as he positions himself and staff as observers and not participants in the students’ ‘failure’ to complete school. They cannot expect them to complete education, but there is also nothing they can do.

I ask him on the reasons behind their quitting:

EM: So why do those students drop out of school? Teacher friends tell me that work is one of the reasons. What is the case in your school?

YIANNIS: Nah, those children in our school don’t work...It’s family issues that make them stop schooling. Like a student we have here...her mother drags her around to the different places she migrates from time to time to work...They have changed 3 different cities so far... [hint of disapproval]

The responsibility of minority families in their children's school failure was a motif which appeared in all teacher accounts including those from the Cretan school, to which I come back in Chapter Seven. Unlike the case of the Aegean school, where immigrant students were seen to drop out of school in order to enter the labour market, Yannis shifts the responsibility to their family state. He holds that minority parents are, due to work demands or family issues, the ones who keep students out of proper, stable schooling. The correlation of immigrant family life and low student participation in school life is evident for Yannis. This resonates with research in the UK noting that many working class parents are regarded by policy and institutions as 'in need of guidance, intervention and ultimately coercion with respect to the "proper" public conduct of their children' (Braun, Vincent and Ball, 2008, p. 534). At the same time, the reference to the working mother reflects the pressure on women to balance their dual role of being productive members of the labour force and 'good' mothers, i.e. to prioritise their children's needs and education (Braun, Vincent and Ball, 2008; Vincent and Ball, 2006). The negative tone in which Yannis makes the remarks indicates that for him this immigrant mother does not do what is best for her daughter. Even though Yannis does not make any such claim here, it is useful to note that in teachers' accounts, which I present in the next chapter, good parenting appears to have ethnic characteristics, and Greek middle-class parental practices are appreciated more by the school (Gewirtz, 2001). The immigrant background becomes again (in)visible as it is rendered 'inadequate' in a school system which does not recognise its own inadequateness. Such workings and strategic shifts between visibility and invisibility have been internalised by Yannis' principal habitus: he mastered the art of selectively seeing and over-seeing the students' ethnic backgrounds, so on the one hand he claims authority over successful student stories, but on the other reproduces the ethnocentricity of institutional habitus. Even when minor student inclusions are introduced by Yannis and his school (i.e. Albanian, non-Christian students become the flag-holders), still this happens within the limitations set by the field of Greek education.

*Giorgos, “proud” students and gloomy expectations*

Giorgos (Aegean, mainstream, 60%) talks about the high percentage of ethnic minority students in the Aegean:

GIORGOS: I am personally very proud that our school is like this, wretched; the wretched society consists of proud [dignified] individuals. Because the richer people are, the more corrupted they become. Those people [...] have a lot of money, but no ethics. The poorer a man is, the bigger his ethical worth is. Our school shouldn't have a high number of low [level] students. It's the society of those who have the means that condemns them to this low level.

EM: What do you mean by this?

GIORGOS: Those that have the means create the supposedly elite schools [Criticises Switzerland and its elite schools]. This is what happens at schools here. Those who have the means and the power to wangle, they move their own children and themselves to [social] spaces who they claim are high – in terms of life convenience. [There] they don't see people suffering, they don't see people crying. On the contrary, wherever there is poverty, there's of course beating [used metaphorically to suggest life toughness], but also solidarity, compassion and humanitarianism.

Giorgos describes how discriminatory societal structuring has affected the immigrant students' position in the education and labour market, and expresses his regret for the injustice they suffer. His view of his school as “wretched” due to the many “low” students it accommodates resonates with the analyses of Chapter Four, which revealed processes of ethnocentricity in the school 'market'. Greek (middle-class) parents - who have the choice - choose ethnically homogenous Greek schools, transforming the ‘ideal client’ case (Gillborn, 1990) into an ‘ideal-commodity’ case: the Greek ideal parent-client does not ‘buy’ the low level multiethnic school. Giorgos understands these workings of the market and that his school is a ‘bad’ commodity. He appears to empathise with the struggles the students face, which I see as the result of his familial habitus: a refugee child himself and of a working class background, he has been shaped by similar situations and emotions.

Nonetheless, and most interestingly, Giorgos does not resent being a principal in such a school. On the contrary, he feels proud of the ‘kind’ of students the Aegean school

has, who are of low socioeconomic backgrounds and by 60% of ethnic minority. He refers to the emotions of the “poor” (he means the working-class) as assets; values that the middle and upper classes cannot acquire through their social becoming. He sees his “wretched” students being proud (in the sense of being dignified), ethical, solidaristic, compassionate and humane. Giorgos’ account alludes to the notion of emotional capital (Reay, 2000; Zembylas, 2007): ethnic minority students’ possession of such emotional palette is seen by Giorgos as having a particular value; a capital. These emotional resources of ethnic minority students, gained through their class and ethnic conditions, help them to endure the educational injustices of the school market. Zembylas (2007) argues that emotional practices can be ‘forms of resistance to prevalent emotion norms’ (p. 444). I suggest that Giorgos resists the social structures that create schools to be normatively ‘ashamed of’ by shifting the value of schooling from the economic to the affective. He thus capitalises on this affective quality of his ethnic minority, low-class students and feels pride. Arguably this way he defends his own familial habitus as well.

However, Giorgos knows that students will be evaluated on their educational qualifications. In the next passage he talks about the paradox of his students’ living conditions and their repercussions on education.

Of course, those low [socioeconomic] societies, like the kids in our school, put survival first. And once they put survival first, the school comes second... Once there was a shepherd who went to see his son’s teacher. The shepherd’s son was a good student so the teacher gave him high grades. The shepherd said to the teacher: “Teacher, you’re trying to win my child over and you don’t understand me. No matter how high grades you give him, I will still need him to guide my flock.” In other words, this [working-class] society primarily struggles to survive. And you know, the skilled workers are those who support the lettered ones; and the lettered ones most often become society’s parasites [...] But don’t listen only to what I say, I see things more gravely than they might be.

Of the three principals, Giorgos was the one with a strong working-class background. I earlier discussed how Giorgos felt that opting for teachership was an act of survival. Braun (2009) suggested that teaching is a “‘borderland’ position’, as it is a profession of middle

class distinctions attracting candidates from working class backgrounds (p. 70). This creates a paradoxical situation, since education is mainly serving the middle-classes (Reay, 2006; Ball, 2003). Giorgos' account expresses these tensions of the social class, as he understands that the needs of his working-class students come in disjunction with the content of education. The clash between his working-class background and middle-class practice is evident in the disavowal of the "lettered" as "parasites", even if his job entails the production of "lettered" people. This demonstrates the dispositional paradox within which Giorgos sits: a working-class principal serving working-class students within a middle-class educational system. Underpinned by ethnicity, the social class of the Aegean's school mix emerges as a constitutive of its institutional habitus: students have to prioritise survival over education and thus its academic ethos is constrained, and so its position in the local quasi-school market is aggravated.

Giorgos is very realistic when he talks about his students' needs in a society that limits their chances for survival. This resonates with the earlier analysis about his disbelief in the "everyone is equal" theories – he knows that they are unrealistic given the particular social reality. Giorgos is compassionate and empathises with his students and their families. Examining the emotional practices of teachers towards refugee and asylum-seeking students, Arnot, Pinson and Candappa (2009) argue that compassion is a part of the professional identity of teachers. They also note that compassion is often understood as pity, leading to victimised views of these students. Giorgos demonstrates this emotional aspect of his principal dispositions when he empathises with the needs of his students. However, he escapes victimising them. Without dismissing the necessities of their social conditions, he portrays them as the authors of their educational choices, instead of preys to those conditions. The parable he narrates indicates that it was the shepherd who made the choice for his son to leave the academic space for what was more necessary. Giorgos also made a similar choice, when he rejected the theoretical career of a mathematician over the practical career of teaching. His familial habitus works together with the principal one to produce emotional practices of compassion for and empathy with his students.

Giorgos reflects on his role in this setting and the future of those students:

The principal tries to help these children, but it is only occasionally that he succeeds. My personal aim is to make them get the secondary school certificate. [...] If someone doesn't have this certificate and hasn't completed the 9-year compulsory education, he cannot obtain the licentiate not even for becoming a house painter or a hairdresser. [...] You fight for the children just to get the secondary [compulsory] education certificate. You fight. They don't succeed always [in a very disappointed tone].

Giorgos knows how important it is in the rules of the market for the students to gain the certificate. This certificate is necessary in order to enter in the job market as skilled workers, i.e. hairdressers, car mechanics etc; otherwise they could only become unskilled workers, i.e. in building constructions or domestics. Giorgos foresees that the probability for his students is to become unskilled workers, if they cannot complete the 9-year compulsory education. With his customary pessimistic tone he reveals a latent understanding that the school serves the logic of the job-market, reflecting Sayad's (2004) views: 'any OS [unskilled worker] position is seen as a job for an immigrant worker and, conversely, that any immigrant worker is seen as a potential OS' (p. 166). He estimates that a considerable number of the immigrant students in his school seem 'destined' to become such workers. The attendance figures available from the Aegean School did not include the number of immigrant students that graduated from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade. Some suggestions, though, can be drawn from the number of students attending that grade. In the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade immigrant students outnumbered the Greek (74% and 60% respectively); whereas in the final grade they are much less (37%). These should only be seen as suggestions, since, in order to have an accurate picture, we should follow the attendance of the same students throughout the three grades, in order to see how many have stopped and at what grade (such data were not available). Nonetheless, the rough indication is that immigrant students are underrepresented in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade. Theodoridis (2008) validates this indication on a national scale, showing that as immigrant students progress through educational grades, their representation in the student population becomes less.

Giorgos' disappointment was obvious in expressing that he, being the principal, does not always succeed in helping ethnic minority students through schooling and into the job market. He sees a gloomy future for these students, challenged by their educational and financial conditions, and the wider socioeconomic structures that have placed them in this position. Even though he sees that the possibilities are limited, he nonetheless sets educational aims for them – which is to get the certificate that will offer them proof of basic skills. Consistent with his pragmatic outlook, Giorgos' understands that this is their way to survive the labour market. Since helping them is not always possible, feelings of cancellation and disappointment are obvious. At the same time, however, keeping things real – that is, not raising his expectations over what he sees as feasible – helps him to keep his moral. This I see as his emotional strategy (Zembylas, 2007) to move on with what he can achieve for his ethnic minority students.

#### *Manos and students with a future*

Manos' (Cretan, intercultural, 40%) understandings of the educational needs of ethnic minority students have been shaped within the logic of intercultural education, which suggests inclusive school practices for ethnic minority students. Manos says what the aim of his school is:

... the involvement [in school practices] of students with different cultures  
.... To offer an intercultural educational content. This is why you see many cultural events going on in the school [participation at dance festivals, visits to theatres and museums, choir events with multiethnic content]. Through this cultural exchange we pass the meaning of the contact between cultures. That no culture is inferior to other and that we need to appreciate the different route of every culture in history. And of course another major aim is the learning of Greek language so that newcomers can use it as a tool for their integration in the host society.



Manos refers to the root principles of interculturalism on which policy makers aspired to build the Greek intercultural model: contact between civilisations, equity of different cultures and cultural enrichment (Damanakis, 2002). Intercultural education was an innovative movement in the Greek education, given the dominant ethnicist discourse. In this sense, the scheme is an act of resistance. However, I have raised some questions about intercultural theory in Chapter One concerning the way in which equity of cultures and cultural relativism have been conceived uncritically. In particular, criticisms regarded the failure to grasp the deeper structural inequalities which are being reproduced through education, which should have been the starting point of (Damanakis, 2002; Nikolaou, 2005). Manos' principal habitus becomes the agent of this field logic (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). We can understand this both through his choice to be allocated at the Cretan school and to become the mediator of the intercultural policy. This means that for the Greek situation he is a principal resisting the effects of Greek ethnocentricity on ethnic minority students. However, his resistance stops at the point where it could become too oppositional for Greek education. The fact that the Greek state opted for a 'softer' intercultural educational scheme (which is exhausted in the contact between cultures) instead of adopting a critical multicultural model reflects the resistance-within-compliance imposed by the dominant culture.

Nonetheless, intercultural education and its aims shaped the way Manos understood ethnic minority students and the expectations he bestowed upon them. The following come from my field notes:

[My comments about the school's notice board] On Wednesday the school organised for the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade to visit the [highly-praised boarding vocational] high school and college<sup>38</sup>. There is also a note of a past visit paid to the Cretan by the [name of mainstream] school.

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<sup>38</sup> The vocational institution which the students visited was private, however – as it states on its website – all students are funded by scholarships covering their fees, and families pay only a portion of the accommodation expenses.

[On a conversation with Manos regarding these events] The school tries to pay attention to the students' future. Manos wants them to know what institutions are there to choose from [referring to the vocational institution]. Three or four of the students who visited the [vocational college] have already shown their interest in this one. Many students continue their studies at the intercultural high school, and others continue at vocational high schools or private vocational schools. He doesn't know how many of those students make it into university [...] He wants other schools to learn about the Cretan school and its students, the way they operate and build networks between schools. He wants to show to the community that the school is a good school.

Manos' expectations for his students are to continue their education beyond compulsory education. Ethnic minority students are prompted to continue with schooling, and are not seen as 'failing' by the school. Manos encourages them by valuing vocational education and organising college visits. He is concerned with promoting the available career choices for his students; their future is one of the important aspects of his principal strategy. I suggest that the school's institutional habitus – working together with Manos' principal habitus – is one that instigates practices approximating a 'culture of improvement' (Chapman and Harris, 2004, p 224). Additional supporting data from classroom practices are presented in the next chapter. The building of educational expectations by the school principals in boosting student achievement has been considered important within literature (Pellegrini and Blatchford, 2000; Milona, 2005); particularly in relation to schools with ethnic diversity and challenging contexts (Tomlinson, 1984; Blair, 2002; Chapman and Harris, 2004).

Moreover, Manos tries to build a positive image of his school, by inviting mainstream schools to see their work. There is an effort to turn things around by enhancing his school's reputation, resisting the processes of the quasi-marketisation of schools that evaluate schools as 'inferior' or 'superior' on a school-mix basis. However, I would also ask whether there is an underlying belief that vocational education is their limit. In other words, whether Manos' principal habitus acts towards what is expected by the field of Greek education for those students: getting the lower-esteemed jobs while leaving the higher-esteemed ones for Greek students. Moreover, the fact that these students continue at the

intercultural high school, which also has some special provisions for them (i.e. Greek language support), does not mean that they get equal educational chances as the Greek students. Entering the university demands acquirement of knowledge that has been deemed 'official' by the dominant culture, which may not necessarily be the focus of the intercultural high school.

Manos could not give me an indication of whether the students of his school make it into university after completing high school<sup>39</sup>, as he did not have such data or data measuring the effectiveness of the Cretan school<sup>40</sup>. Looking, however, at the figures of student attendance across the three grades of the Cretan school for the previous school year (2006-2007) some preliminary suggestions can be made. The 1<sup>st</sup> Grade was attended by 50% of minority students of the total of students attending that grade; the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade by 42%; and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade by 28%. I remind the respective figures for the Aegean school for the same year: 74% of the 1<sup>st</sup> Grade students were of ethnic background; 60% of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 27% of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade. A first thing to note is the difference in the presence of ethnic minority students between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grades of the two schools. At the Aegean school, the presence of ethnic minority students in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade drops by 14% (74%-60%), while at the Cretan this difference is 8% (50% - 42%). As I noted, these comparisons are only indicative of a possible correlation, since we should have looked at the same students and their attendance across the school years. However, it seems that less ethnic minority students at the Cretan school stop their schooling as they move between the two first grades compared to the Aegean school.

This could be a significant find both in relation to classroom practises and the kind of bureaucratic issues relating to immigration faced by schools in different city areas. Regarding the former, and as I will establish in Chapter Seven, the Cretan school appeared to apply more inclusive pedagogies in relation to the Aegean school, and this could explain

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<sup>39</sup> The structure of Greek education is primary, secondary compulsory, high school (secondary non-compulsory) or vocational high school (as an option), and higher education (universities and vocational higher institutions).

<sup>40</sup> There is no official assessment of the schools' performance, or a standardised test on student achievement in secondary (compulsory) education.

why immigrant students are supported to continue with their education. Regarding the latter, official educational procedures require that undocumented students become unregistered, if they do not provide the school with official documents by the end of the first trimester. Students can, however, continue attending the school if the school approves it; albeit without being able to sit exams and thus graduate from the grade. Therefore, it might either be that the inner-city Aegean school receives more 'undocumented' immigrant students than the suburban Cretan school, who cannot continue to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade.

In addition, there is a significantly smaller gap between the percentages of immigrant students attending the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade of the Cretan school in relation to those of the Aegean school. 48% of ethnic minority students compose the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade of the Cretan school and this representation becomes 28% in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade; their presence is thus reduced by 14%. This difference is bigger at the Aegean school: 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade is attended by 60% students of immigrant background, and their representation in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade drops to 37%; that is 23% fewer ethnic minority students attending the last grade of secondary school. I should note that, in general, the representation of all students per grades and across the two schools followed a similar pattern, with similar drops in student attendance as school grades progress: 1<sup>st</sup> Grade was attended by the 40% of the total school population; 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade by 30%; and 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade by 25%. The fact that more ethnic minority students seem to 'quit' the Aegean school compared to the Cretan school, when the attendance pattern for all students across grades is similar for the two schools, indicates that there are particular institutional processes at the Aegean school which lead immigrant students to educational exclusion. Nonetheless, as stated, these could only be seen as rough indications needing more accurate statistical data.

Having said these, the educational conditions offered by the Cretan school to the ethnic minority students were not perfect. As Manos says,

There isn't basically anything different in the intercultural school apart from the provisions for the Greek language-support classes. There is no [multilingual-multicultural] material support for other subjects, so students have difficulties. And of course the teaching of their mother tongue is neglected, despite policy promises.

As reiterated, Manos' principalship came into confrontation with the embedded contradictions in the school's curriculum, and often succumbed to ethnocentric norms. The Cretan school operated preparatory classes for the teaching of Greek as a second/foreign language, where students attended subjects with important vocabulary (Modern Greek, Physics etc). They then returned to the regular classes with their Greek or non-Greek (but fluent) classmates, and teachers provided them additional support (vocabulary and customised exercises). According to Manos, this was a model that potentially worked, as it did not isolate ethnic minority students. Moreover, the model also addressed their language and communication needs in order to be integrated in the school's processes. However, the provisions seemed to stop there. On the one hand, the Greek State introduced intercultural education as an educational/pedagogic model, and on the other the intercultural education policy did not deliver the purposes of intercultural education. This could be understood as a 'contradiction-closing case' (Gillborn, 2008), with intercultural schools established to sustain social stability by giving some educational rights to ethnic minorities; but at the same time to control the boundaries of these rights. Therefore, immigrant students still face difficulties in their learning process since the state does not provide for multilingual and multicultural material for the teaching of the subjects. This leaves teachers to improvise, search for sources and teaching methods. Schools can get occasional support from educational programmes funded by the Ministry of Education and run by Greek universities. Currently implemented are the Education of Foreign and Repatriate Students; the Education of the Muslim Minority Children in Thrace; and the Programme for the education of Roma children. Even though these are important initiatives, they are optional, of short duration (2 - 4 years depending on funding), and not officially adopted by the curriculum. Moreover, the teaching of mother tongue was not planned appropriately (who will teach it, when, how, with what cost etc.) and so it was neglected.

I can see two different fields with conflicting logics shaping Manos' principal practice: intercultural education and Greek education. First, he resists Greek ethnocentrism by criticising the restrictions on intercultural education – an effect of intercultural

education, since he is the principal of such a school. Second, being a state principal he has only limited freedom to act against what the policy orders – an effect of the structures of Greek education. Manos complained at meetings with the local authorities about the schools' infrastructural problems<sup>41</sup>, as well as the mother tongue issue, but this did not yield any changes.

A final note relates to the ways Greek ethnicity was present in the school processes.

The school started every day with the [Christian Orthodox] Morning Prayer which was told by a student at the morning assembly, as this is regulated for all schools. When a student is not of Christian religion, s/he has the right to abstain from the prayer.

A critical approach would suggest that in an environment of Greek dominance, any practice of the hegemonic culture puts minorities in disadvantage. Manos' practice (but also possibly of the teachers) on the matter appeared to follow the cultural/ethnic norm. Doing justice to the Cretan school, this was an intercultural school where other cultures were acknowledged – at least to some extent - and so resisted the Greek monocultural approach. However, the practice of morning prayer could be considered discriminatory/exclusionary for those students who relate themselves to other religions, atheism or agnosticism. Moreover, knowing that religion is closely linked with the Greek nationality, this becomes a double discrimination. Therefore, Manos' principal habitus appears affected by Greek ethnocentrism, which seems to constitute – to some extent - the institutional habitus of the Cretan school and its uncritical intercultural framing. Therefore, instead of dealing with one of the root causes of discrimination, i.e. cultural hegemony, the Cretan school reproduces it and Manos legitimises this reproduction as his practice is affected by his ethnicity. Discarding the Greek religion from schools or introducing practices of other religions would arguably feel unnatural to do at any school in Greece.

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<sup>41</sup> Due to lack of space (see Chapter Four) the school turned the basement into extra classrooms, which however lacked basic facilities (i.e. natural light, ventilation, heat etc).

*'Hopeful' or 'doomed' learners? Further reflections from the principal's office*

Each principal portrayed different ways through which immigrant students were constituted 'hopeful' or 'doomed' learners. This process was underpinned by the principals' conceptualisations of the students' ethnicity and its intersection with class. In this section I look into data which draw on practices inside the principal's office of Giorgos and Manos. These indicate that there is a difference between the frequency and reasons upon which students visit their offices, but also a pattern in the 'types' of those students visiting Giorgos' office, who are mostly male and of immigrant background.

Yannis of the Ionian school (20%) interchangeably rendered his ethnic minority students visible and invisible at moments that served the ethnocentricity of the institutional and/or principal dispositions. Even though he sympathised with them and recognised that education is challenging for ethnic minority students, yet he did not place any responsibility on the school or the societal structures. Consequently, he saw his principal practice distant from affecting their future. Giorgos at the Aegean school (60%) was proud of his ethnic minority students, nonetheless, his pragmatic outlook on things was that their future is gloomy. In this rationale, his aim for them was the basic qualifications that could help them into the labour market. Manos of the Cretan school (40%) contrasted the other two principals. His practices included fostering the immigrant students' future educational choices and building a school network. However, the lack of state support and its ethnocentricity posed restrictions on his practice, to which Manos reacted but could not overcome. For all three principals the understandings they held for their ethnic minority students, and the positioning of their practices towards them was a result of a complicated interplay of vocational and institutional dispositions which were intersected by ethnicised and classed understandings. Out of the three principals Giorgos talked more pessimistically (or realistically) about the students' future, who he saw as mostly trapped in unskilled jobs. Manos was more optimistic about their future, and saw education as one of their choices. Yannis' views expressed a middle situation: he gave examples of the 'good' immigrant students, but also of those who did not make it through education. These varying principal

dispositions across the three schools towards their minority students as 'hopeful' or 'doomed' learners link with the differences in their institutional habituses. Aegean school was the inner-city 'tough' school, where the reality of the students' socioeconomic situation makes things very 'pragmatic'. The intercultural Cretan school by definition worked towards the integration of minoritised students and had the knowhow and (some) provisions (i.e. language-support classes) to cater for them. The mainstream Ionian school did not seem problematised by the discriminatory structural processes against its students so that an intercultural intervention concerned its practices. A final note relates to the emotional labour involved in identifying ethnic minority students as 'hopeful' or 'doomed' learners. Pride, hope, despair, frustration, compassion, empathy and sympathy, all these emotions (and more) show the affective side of the practices of school principals for their immigrant students. These show the 'sensitivity' of the principal habitus (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003, p. 471); that is the affective orientations which teachers (and, in that matter, principals) learn as they become pedagogues.

I noticed that Giorgos' office was busier with students than Manos. This led me to look closer at what students were those coming in the offices and on what reasons. I recorded the following reasons: administrative issues (i.e. book keeping, questions on schedule, reporting maintenance problems); attendance issues (both asking for permission to leave and justifying committed absences) and behaviour (i.e. classroom 'naughtiness'). Each classroom keeps an Attendance Book. There are two categories of absences: the 'justified' and the 'unjustified'. The first refers to either reasons for the absences proved by a doctor's certification, in case of illness for example, or absences which the parent can justify by coming to the office. The 'unjustified' concern absences that cannot be justified by the above ways or are absences committed during isolated teaching sessions. For example, if a student is late for class, then s/he is recorded with one 'absence'; the same goes if a student is expelled from the session for causing 'trouble'. These isolated absences are de facto unjustifiable, and students having more than 64 unjustified absences in total for the school year fail to pass the grade. I produced the following tables for each principal,



observing 35 breaks inside Giorgos' office and 29 in Manos' office. The breaks lasted about 10' each.

Student background <sup>42</sup>	Reason for visiting Giorgos' office (35 breaks) Aegean school, mainstream, 60%									
	Administrative			Attendance			Behaviour			TOTAL
GENDER	M	F	Sub-total	M	F	Sub-total	M	F	Sub-total	
EMS	4	4	8	7	4	11	10	4	14	33
GR	6	8	14	3	4	7	2	1	3	24
Sub-total	22			18			17			-
<b>TOTAL</b>										<b>57</b>

TABLE 1: Student interactions with Giorgos in his office.

Student background	Reason for visiting Manos' office (29 breaks) Cretan school, intercultural, 40%									
	Administrative			Attendance			Behaviour			TOTAL
GENDER	M	F	Sub-total	M	F	Sub-total	M	F	Sub-total	
EMS	1	-	1	2	1	3	2	-	2	6
GR	-	2	2	1	1	2	1	-	1	5
Unknown	4	4	8	1	2	3	2	1	3	14
Sub-total	11			8			6			
<b>TOTAL</b>										<b>25</b>

TABLE 2: Student interactions with Manos in his office.

Ethnic minority students coming in Giorgos' office outnumbered Greek students by 9 (33/24), and what is most interesting is the reasons behind their visit. Regarding administration (14 GR/ 8 EMS), most students came on typical reasons (i.e. taking/returning the Attendance Books, asking questions on the daily schedule etc.); three ethnic minority students had cases concerning their legal documentation. Regarding attendance, minority students (11) outnumber the Greek students (7); here attention should be given to the specific reasons, as well as the gender. Most female students (6 out of 8) of both origin

<sup>42</sup> 'EMS' stands for ethnic minority student and 'GR' for Greek.

categories came in to get permission to be absent during the last teaching session on the excuse on menstrual pains and headaches; 2 came in with their mothers to justify absences. Regarding the male students (10), 2 Greek and 1 of minority background came in with their parents to justify absences; the remaining 7 were called in by the office to be reprimanded on the basis of their many absences, from which only one was Greek. Striking observations result from 'behaviour': only 3 out of 17 students were of Greek origin; and from the 14 ethnic minority students only 4 were female. More specifically, one female ethnic minority student was reprimanded because of her 'inappropriate' clothes; two because of their 'inappropriate' classroom behaviour; and another on being caught red-handed by staff while playing it truant. The ten cases of male minority students all regarded their 'naughty' behaviour inside the classroom. There is, therefore, a pattern which shows that male immigrant students are sent more often in Giorgos' office to be disciplined either on their inadequate attendance or their behaviour. Both of these reasons are decisive for the continuation of their studentship.

A very different image comes from observing Manos' office. Manos' office was not as busy with students as was that of Giorgos. I explained how Manos was a newly appointed principal, working mostly on organising and computerising the school archives, and his line was any pedagogical student problems to be dealt with inside the classroom. This could explain to some extent the difference in the total number of students visiting his office (25) with those at the Aegean school (57). To this we should also consider the 6 more breaks I observed in Giorgos' office, which however do not account for all of the 32 cases difference. Nonetheless, the different reasons upon which students went to Manos' office are of interest. Regarding administration issues, these visits mostly concerned inquiries about changes in the schedule and students taking/returning the Attendance Books. Regarding attendance, reasons appeared to be very different from the Aegean school: only one female student of Georgian background was called in the office by Manos to be informed on her absences and to receive a warning. All other cases were students asking permission to leave on various reasons (i.e. feeling unwell, doctor appointment, attending a football match at the local student tournament etc.). The observations emerging from 'behaviour' show a

similar gendered pattern to that of the Aegean school, since out of the 6 cases only one involved a female student. Interestingly, the 5 cases of male students related to spontaneous disciplining outside Manos' office (running or making noise indoors during the break) and not 'trouble' caused in the classroom. Even though male students were more often disciplined than girls on their behaviour, I could not identify a pattern based on ethnicity.

The tables presented above show different principal practices regarding ethnic minority students. Giorgos was much involved in practices of disciplining (and punishment) revealing gendered and ethnicised patterns, unlike Manos. In Chapter Five I examined how disciplinary practices between Giorgos and Manos were different, but evident in both principalships: the former embodied a 'pastoral' role, while the latter a more disengaged role. This, I argued, is co-constructed by (and co-constructing) teachers' expectations of what kind of disciplinarian they expect their principals to be within a particular institutional ethos. Here I made the case that these different principal practices regarding attendance and behaviour related to the way (male) ethnic minority students are perceived as learners in the two schools.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Behind 'closed' doors: classroom practices of exclusions and inclusions of ethnic minority students

This chapter looks behind the 'closed' doors of classrooms, in order to examine how ethnic minority students are constituted as learners across schools (Youdell, 2006b). Looking into classroom practices is important to the purposes of this thesis for two reasons. First, the Greek educational policy creates a complicated and contradictory framework for the school principal regarding her/his responsibilities and jurisdictions regarding the school's pedagogical work. Policy (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2002b) grants the Teacher Body a range of pedagogical and educational jurisdictions, while leaving the school principal mainly with bureaucratic duties. Nonetheless, the principal has the overall responsibility for the educational and pedagogical work of the school. Second, it has emerged that Giorgos (Aegean, mainstream, 60%) and Manos (Cretan, intercultural, 40%) appeared to embody different roles regarding the pedagogising of students, and particularly of students from ethnic minority backgrounds. Thomson (2010, p. 14) suggests that

If headteachers' activities can be understood as a logical field practice, then the repertoire of activities that are normally described as school leadership practice[...] are, in reality, the set of moves that heads take in order to ensure that actors *within* the school also conform to the logic of the field.

This chapter aims to unpack the logics of the field of the two schools regarding inclusion through classroom practices and teacher understandings.

The inverted commas on the word 'closed' carry a particular meaning about my understanding of school processes. Yannis (principal, Ionian, mainstream, 20%) said that "the teacher is autonomous in the classroom". However, this autonomy is imaginary, since what goes on inside the 'closed' classroom doors travels through the principal's office and

beyond. Exclusions work in a loop of in-classroom and off-classroom practices which involve institutional, principal and classroom constructions of ethnic minority students as 'failures'.

### **Interrogating classroom practices**

In the following sections I present teacher constructions of ethnic minority students as good or bad learners in various school disciplines, such as Literature (modern – ancient Greek), Science (maths, physics and technology), Arts etc. I have also included data recorded in the Greek Language Support classes during the teaching of Greek language. I see the classroom as a (micro) subfield of the field of school, a space of struggle for capitals to be used in the pursuit of more capitals. The selection of the observed school subjects was based on the understanding that each subject entails the use, learning and assessment of a variety of skills i.e. linguistic, numerical, aesthetic, technical, physical etc. These skills could otherwise be seen as cultural capitals either gained through the family or available to be gained at school (Bourdieu, 1986; Grenfell and James, 1998). They also entail particular school manners; or otherwise, embodied cultural capitals.

Agreeing with Wegmann (1976), the behaviour of students varied from class to class, as did the teachers' ability in carrying out a lesson uneventfully. However, at both schools (Aegean and Cretan) there were certain ethnic minority students who were constantly singled out by teachers as the 'naughtiest' and/or 'underachievers'. I chose to structure the analysis of classroom practices around these groups or individual students. The following sections present 'the tough boys' of the Aegean school (mainstream, 60%, Giorgos); and Tanya 'the wildcat' of the Cretan school (intercultural, 40%, Manos). Even though a comparison between 'naughty' male ethnic minority students of the Aegean and the Cretan schools could produce a straightforward outcome, I chose not to follow this path. Tanya's presence (a female student from Russia) in the classroom appeared to have a significant impact on the classroom processes, as she was referred to as a 'troubling' or 'special'

student case. Moreover, the observations made clear that her femininity was involved in the teachers' readings. Therefore, the reader should not expect a point-by-point comparison between classrooms and schools, but the discussion of different elements which highlight the intricacy of classroom practices. This discussion will unpack the way in which inclusions and exclusions operationalise ethnicity, gender and class in various combinations.

The names I have given to these students follow characterisations attributed to them by teachers. The pseudonyms I gave to individual students are analogous to their true names, preserving their 'foreign' or 'Greek' references. My intention in using this method was to reproduce in my accounts (for myself and the reader who is acquainted with Greek/non-Greek names) the obviousness of their 'otherness'/'sameness' in the classroom being reflected in their names. For example, Tanya's true name is used both in the Greek and Russian language for females; so does the pseudonym 'Tanya'. Similarly, the true name of 'Konstandin', one of the 'tough boys', sounded Greek but had an Albanian ending. Therefore, 'Konstandin' is a name similar to the Greek name 'Konstandinos', but its ending alludes to his Albanian origin.

In presenting classroom practices, I have borrowed the format of a play script following Youdell (2003). As Youdell (2003) suggests, the analysis benefits from a detailed 'theatrical' description, as it portrays the complexity of practice at its full length and at the same time leaves space for different interpretations (p. 6). Moreover, it allows for a contextualised analysis, as whole periods of practice are exposed instead of isolated pieces (Youdell, 2003). Presenting detailed observational data also reveals the researcher's intention that the recorded description is a result of a subjective - instead of an objective - process (Youdell 2011). Accordingly, I will present classroom data of each group/student case using a playwright theme, structured as 'acts' and 'scenes'. Acts refer to the school subject/lesson observed, while each lesson is divided into scenes. It is important to note that, as Downey and Pribesh (2004) state, the classroom instances presented here are only 'snapshots' of 'the continuous dynamics of the student-teacher relationship' (p.277). Having said that, the perpetuation of similar snapshots throughout my observations, also

supported by teacher accounts and the analysis of the institutional structures in the previous chapters, form a photographic strip of reoccurring patterns of the exclusion of ethnic minority students from classroom practices.

### **The ‘tough boys’ of the Aegean School**

The ‘tough boys’ were in Class B of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade (13-14 years old) at the Aegean school, which was pointed out by teachers are the “worst class<sup>43</sup> in achievement and behaviour”. Some of the references in the staffroom about the ‘tough boys’ were:

Those students are such tough cases, and it’s not only them. This school is filled with lost souls with no future.

(female Physics teacher, late 40s)

Our lives would have been much easier, if we had the students other schools have. Like students which come from other good families, which care about their children’s education.

(female Literature teacher, mid 40s,)

The above extracts are representative of the deficit views expressed daily in the staffroom of the Aegean school about its ethnic minority students. They also pinpoint the issues which run across all teacher interviews regarding immigrant families – particularly of the ‘troubling’ students - and the educational perspectives of their children. The above will be the focus of my analysis. The ‘tough boys’ were a sub-cultural group (Youdell, 2011) consisting of four boys who sat in pairs: Akis, of Georgian background, 15 years old, and his deskmate Alexis, of Georgian background, 16; Dimitri, of Georgian background, 15, and his deskmate Konstandin, of Albanian background, also 15. I noted about these boys:

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<sup>43</sup> Students are allocated in classrooms alphabetically, so there is no streaming arrangement.

[The 'tough boys'] are older because they had to redo the grade. Apart from Akis, the rest attended the Greek primary school for 3 years. Akis attended all primary school in Greece [...] They sit in the back seats. They look tough and they are the classroom trouble-makers. They usually come in wearing baseball caps, or they have their hair styled meticulously with gel or wax. They dress in an 'urban' style, wearing oversized black jumpers, with tribal patterns or some metal band logo, like 'Iron Maiden', and baggy, low-waist trousers, which reveal their boxers.

According to Mac An Ghail's (1988) and Tyson's (2003) observations, the boys' seating at the back desks was not coincidental. It showed resistance to the school authority with the boys managing their bodies in the classroom space. The back seats would be what Willis (1977) names a 'space left unpatrolled by the school authorities' which, although not totally unpatrolled, was still the furthest from the teacher (cited in Mac An Ghail, 1988, p.99).

### *Act One: Maths (algebra)*

The maths' teacher of the 'tough boys' was Eleni, a woman in her late 40s. She had been teaching at the Aegean school for the past seven years, which she described as "the toughest school from all I've taught". In my field notes I described her as having a "low profile [...] distant and cold" and I noted that her lessons were "very boring". Class B had 20 students, 10 of which were of 'other' background (mostly Albanian and Georgian); 60% of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade was of immigrant background.

### Opening Scene

*I'm sitting at the back of the classroom in a desk alone. The class is very animated. Eleni enters. She spends the first 5 minutes shouting at students to take their seats, with a high-pitched but not sturdy voice.*

ELENI: Don't you remember that we're having an observer here?

Don't you respect her? [Points at me. All students have now sat down and the noise is less. Alexis is still talking loudly and



poking Akis, his deskmate]. OK, Alexis, that's it, if you're not in the mood to attend my class, you're out of here! [raising her voice in a victorious tone]

ALEXIS: [stands up making noise by pushing his desk with his body, in order to get out from his seat. Turning to Akis] Don't make noise, you pig!

*The boys laugh, while Alexis leaves the classroom.*

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Scene

*Akis is now sitting alone. A girl is solving an equation on the whiteboard, but she is having difficulties. Eleni directs the girl with low voice, not smiling, with a steady (or bored) unexcited tone.*

ELENI: So, your  $\chi$  is... [the girl looks puzzled]

AKIS: Two [He whispers the answer. Eleni hears him and gives him an angry look]

ELENI: [to the girl] If  $\chi$  equals two, then  $\psi$  is...

AKIS: One! [The girl smiles and in a low voice repeats the answer]

ELENI: [at Akis, in agitated tone] What do you think you're doing now? Being Mr Know-all? [I'm wondering whether he tries to show he's a good student to me]

AKIS: [in a playful and cunning tone] But I am, Mrs! Why didn't you call me today that I've done my homework? You always call me on the wrong days!

*Classroom laughs and Eleni gives him a cold look. The girl returns to her seat giggling.*

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Scene

*Only two girls and a boy pay attention. I can see two boys who have their books closed and three more (boys and girls), who do not take notes of what is written on the board. Another boy makes some paper craft. Alexis returns in the classroom. He gives a sneaky smile to Akis and looks at Dimitri and Konstandin. Dimitri pretends that he sticks a needle to his veins for his drug dose<sup>44</sup>. Eleni sends Alexis alone at an empty desk at the front.*

ALEXIS: How can I write Mrs, I left my pen back at my desk, and then you'll tell me off for not taking notes! [Students start laughing and there's motion]

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<sup>44</sup>A popular youth gesture noting that something is painfully boring.

DIMITRI: [at the whole class] Suuush! [Eleni, exhaling, brings Alexis a pen]

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Scene

*Eleni calls another female student to solve an equation. The girl makes mistakes and often has to wipe off the board and write again. Eleni guides her through the exercise, often interrupting the girl to tell off the boys who laugh when the girl makes mistakes. The girl giggles back. They try to whisper to her the right answers. I'm thinking whether they are they doing this because I'm there, watching. When the girl finishes the exercise, she returns to her seat giggling at the boys.*

KONSTANDIN: [at the girl] Oy! You've wasted the ink! You owe a whiteboard marker to the school! [classroom laughs and so does the girl]

ELENI: So, there's no difference whether I tell you off or not! It's like I'm not present! [she looks at Alexis, who jokes with Akis and the two Greek boys sitting at the desks in-between]

ALEXIS: What, me? The good student, who writes notes down? It's the others who talk to me Mrs! [in a comedic/dramatic tone]

ELENI: [it's 10 minutes before the end of the session] Get out Alexis! Akis, you too! But your bags stay in, and you'll have to wait outside till the class is over!

*Akis passes Alexis their bags, almost throwing them over the heads of the two boys sitting in the middle; Alexis grabs them with very coordinated moves and the two exit the classroom, while Eleni just stares. It feels like a scene from a Hollywood teen movie.*

#### Final Scene

*Eleni calls the top student – a Greek<sup>45</sup> girl – to solve the final exercise. While she's solving the equation, Konstandin and Dimitri have packed their bags. The bell goes off and the class storms out. Eleni sits silent at her desk saying nothing. I say "have a nice rest", she doesn't reply and I'm off.*

(late November 2007, final [7<sup>th</sup>] session of the day, 3<sup>rd</sup> visit in classroom [out of 5])

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<sup>45</sup>I remind the reader that by naming the students 'Greek', I refer to their nationality as defined by official documents and educational institutions and not according to how students may define themselves.

Act One depicts successive scenes of struggle between the pedagogic authority as delegated by Eleni (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990) and ethnic minority male students resisting to that authority. In the Opening Scene Eleni uses my presence to annotate their 'rudeness' in order to gain classroom control. When this tactic fails with Alexis she calls on expelling, her 'weapon' for classroom-control. While she thinks she won the battle (demonstrated by her voice tone and facial expressions), Alexis uses his body to challenge her authority by pushing his desk and ridiculing/lightening the gravity of the sanction. The Opening Scene concludes with Alexis' first exclusion from learning as he leaves the classroom. Beginning 2<sup>nd</sup> Scene, Eleni has regained classroom control, having broken up the resisting duet of Alexis-Akis. She dully instructs a girl through an exercise, upon which the girl will be assessed for the day's homework. Akis comes to the girl's rescue by whispering the answer, to be then told off by Eleni for obstructing her duty of assessment/teaching. He acts as 'relief' for the girl and 'pain' for Eleni at the same time. Akis challenges Eleni back, but does this with a humorous manner that wins him credits from his classmates. I should note that Akis' behaviour could have been assessed differently if he acted as a 'good' student. From my experience, while a student is having trouble doing an exercise, it is most probable that 'good' students raise hands to give the right answer themselves, in order to win the teachers' respect and gain 'good student' points. In other cases the teacher requests the answer directly from the 'good' students, legitimising their position as 'good' students in the classroom. Examining this 'good' student practice under a different light, it could be seen as student 'antagonism' or even anti-collegiality, since they use the right answer only to their own benefit. On the contrary, Akis chose to whisper the answer to his classmate, not only failing to gain 'good' student points, but also earning 'bad student' points. I would also suggest that he is clearly not pursuing to be liked by Eleni, but his peers.

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> Scene Alexis returns back to what the 'tough boys' feel as a dead-boring lesson, expressed by Dimitri with the graphic gesture of 'taking a dose'. Eleni splits Akis and Alexis up, but Alexis challenges her authority again. He fights off her attempt to impose authority on them by putting the blame on her: his changing of seat has deprived him the

student practice of taking notes. Dimitri also borrows Eleni's 'tools', and shushes the classroom – a practice ascribed to the teacher and not students. Therefore, Dimitri cancels Eleni's pedagogic authority twice, first by turning against her instrument of exerting authority, the act of taking notes as a 'good' student practice, and then by 'stealing' her practice of shushing. Most probably if Dimitri was a 'good' student, Eleni would have considered this as help and not as challenge.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Scene repeats similar practices to that of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Scene, with the 'tough boys' entertaining the classroom. They make fun of the mistakes of the female student – who appears to receive them with a playful spirit – and also help her out. I have questioned whether my presence had affected their behaviour, in playing the 'good' students by showing they knew the answers, or whether they show their support to the girl. Either way, it is constructed as a nuisance to the assessment process, since they embody 'troubled' students and not 'good' ones. Alexis challenges Eleni using ironically the 'good student' and 'others who talk to me' cards. He knows these claims are not substantiated, but he also knows that these claims will probably infuriate Eleni. Understanding that her authority does not work with Alexis and Akis ("it's like I'm not present!"), she resolves in their final exclusion from the learning process of that session by sending them out of the classroom, where they have to wait until the lesson is over. However, Alexis and Akis do not just 'accept' their sanction. They resist it challenging the rules by getting their bags (and finding rescue?) before the session ends, in what I experienced as a quasi 'hollywoodesque' escape plan. The Final Scene depicts Eleni concluding her teaching session by calling on the board the highest-achiever, a female Greek student, while the remaining two 'tough boys' have decided that the lesson has already finished for them. It was clear to me that Eleni felt exhausted and probably defeated.

First impressions would characterise Eleni as a teacher lacking the skill of controlling her classroom, and the 'tough boys' as misbehaving, troublesome misfits – judgements which I have myself made when recording. Through a critical speculation, though, it is a battle between exclusions and inclusions: 'tough boys' are excluded from the learning processes, both physically and mentally, while they struggle to remain included in the

classroom (field) processes. In between the first and final expelling of Alexis and Akis - their physical exclusion from the learning process - the scenes include sequential moments of the boys' effort to make themselves included. For example in the Opening Scene, when Eleni announces to Alexis his exclusion ("OK, Alexis, that's it, if you're not in the mood to attend my class, you're out of here!"), he makes his presence evident in the classroom processes by creating noise with his body and desk. This harks back Youdell's (2006b) analysis of the case of a male student, Paul, and how he used his body similarly to the case of Alexis here, in challenging the teacher's authority. Simultaneously, while joking with Akis ("Don't make noise, you pig!"), Alexis is the one who puts the classroom into motion and not Eleni. In Scene Two, Akis throws the answer to the girl, which I construe as an act of self-inclusion in the classroom process, motivated by peer acceptance and/or challenge to pedagogic authority. Eleni, however, stops him ("What do you think you're doing now? Being Mr Know-all?").

As Mac an Ghail (1989) suggests, after Hargreaves and Pollard, this 'disobedient' behaviour of the 'tough boys' could be understood as 'coping and survival strategies' against a suppressive schooling system which works towards their exclusion, both from 'proper' education and job opportunities (p. 273). Their exclusion is a result of their evaluation within the field of the classroom, the school, the educational system etc., which is done on particular criteria, the cultural capitals (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Their exclusion also means exclusion from the cultural capitals (competencies, skills, diplomas, further education) to be won in the classroom. It is clear that the 'tough boys' do not appear to possess those cultural capitals which Eleni (and the field) evaluates positively, but rather 'anti-capital[s]...a culture counter to the dominant one' (Grenfell, 2009, p. 25). Agreeing with Tyson (2003), the observed 'naughty' behaviours are racialised, but not racial. This means that such behaviour tends to be seen by teachers as an attribute of particular immigrant students, against the fact that it could be any student's behaviour. Having said that, I have indeed recorded those ethnic minority boys as 'naughtier' than their (minority or not) classmates. This leads me to suggest that there was a particular action/re-action situation between these particular male students and the school, a capital/anti-capital

relation and an exclusion/resistance situation. Therefore, this counter-culture (Grenfell, 2009) is underpinned by specific constructions about the ethnicity of the boys. The specificities of these anti-capitals (those cultural capitals which Eleni and the Greek school evaluate negatively) will be analysed further through the accounts of Eleni and the Literature teacher.

### *Act Two: Literature (Ancient Greek)*

Philitsa was a late-50s female literature teacher and I described her as a “typical old-fashioned” teacher, “warm, friendly [...] and approachable”. I noted that her teaching was “flat” with no excitement. The following scenes happened in the middle of a session, which had been often interrupted by her telling off the ‘tough boys’.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Scene

*Two girls, Aida and Eleni, sitting in front of the ‘tough boys’, don’t have their books open, nor do they pay attention to the lesson; same goes for Kostas. Philitsa is standing in front of the front desk, where the two best (female) students sit. Behind them sit the other pair of good (female) students. Philitsa delivers the lesson focusing on these four. I see her effort to ignore the noise coming from the back. Those girls speak with low voices. I’m having trouble hearing their answers. Philitsa sometimes repeats the answers in louder voice. The ‘tough boys’, Aida and Eleni joke with each other. The front of the classroom is quiet, while the back is noisy. Aida pokes Eleni and Alexis laughs.*

PHILITSA: [addressing Aida and Eleni] If you continue like this, I’ll send you to the Principal! [the girls get quiet]

ALEXIS: [misinterpreting the addressee] Me?! What did I do now?!

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Scene

*It’s 5’-10’ before the end of the lesson. Philitsa is reading a text out loud. Akis makes comments, mumbles words to himself and his peers and is noisy.*

- PHILITSA: My patience has reached its limits! I'll expel you from the lesson and you'll get an absence! [he will be recorded as missing from the lesson]
- AKIS: No Mrs another absence! I've already got my daily dose in the morning!
- PHILITSA: [addressing the (female, Greek) top student] From now on, give absences to anyone who makes noise and interrupts the lesson!

*The lesson is concluded with no further major interruptions.*

(mid-January 2008, 4<sup>th</sup> teaching session, 5<sup>th</sup> [final] classroom observation)

During the 1<sup>st</sup> Scene it is obvious to me that the classroom is constructed by two spatial divisions: the orderly and/or studious front and the disorderly and/or inattentive back desks. Philitsa has positioned her body in the former front space, demonstrating the locale of her teaching practice. While the front is being taught, the back is excluded from learning. It could also be self-excluded, considering the boys' abstinence to be a surviving strategy to defend themselves against 'institutional incorporation' (Mac An Ghail cited in Youdell, 2003, p. 4). Another interesting element is the use of the school principal threat as a disciplining technique. Philitsa has passed from remarks to rebuke, and gives a warning to the girls for the stricter sanction that might follow, which is the confrontation with the school principal. This 'invisible' presence of the principal in the classroom has an effect on the girls, who become quiet. Probably they have seen Philitsa sending other students to the principal's office before. I suggest that this shows the travelling of the practices from the principal's office into the classroom, a deployment of the principal's 'licensed authority' (Ball, 1987, p. 82) by Philitsa to fortify her pedagogic authority. Alexis, misinterpreting the addressees, responds almost instinctively and defends himself.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Scene shows Philitsa's furiousness with Akis. She now moves on to the threat of expulsion and absence. Student absences (for a whole school day or individual teaching sessions) are recorded in the 'Absence' book and the top student of the classroom is responsible for noting them down. S/he then passes the book to the teacher, who signs it. Depending on how many absences students have, their attendance might be considered

insufficient and they might risk redoing the grade. Students can be recorded with an absence if the teacher decides to expel a student from the classroom, but they can also be recorded with one as a penalty, without being sent out of the classroom. Akis protests against Philitsas' threats for an absence by noting that he has already got his "daily dose". This relates to my earlier suggestion that it is in the routine of the 'tough boys' to be expelled or taken to the principal, like an institutional 'addiction' that has to happen every day. This, similarly to the previous scene, suggests that sending the 'tough boys' to the principal's office is a regular occurrence. It is interesting how Philitsa places the (Greek) top student as the 'safeguard' of classroom control. The different (and/or contesting) positions between the back and front classroom seats become even more evident now, as Philitsa makes the former her 'right hand' in pedagogising the 'naughty' students. The girl, who is undoubtedly set by Philitsa as a student/learner model, is awarded with a position closer to the teacher's position of power. Even though the girl did not proceed with recording any absences (I doubt that she would make use of such power), yet she was subtly contrasted with the 'tough boys'. Considering their different ethnic backgrounds and genders, this contrast – and its implications – becomes greater, especially considering the pedagogic authority, which could now exclude them physically from its space of practice.

### *Mirror positions, mirror capitals*

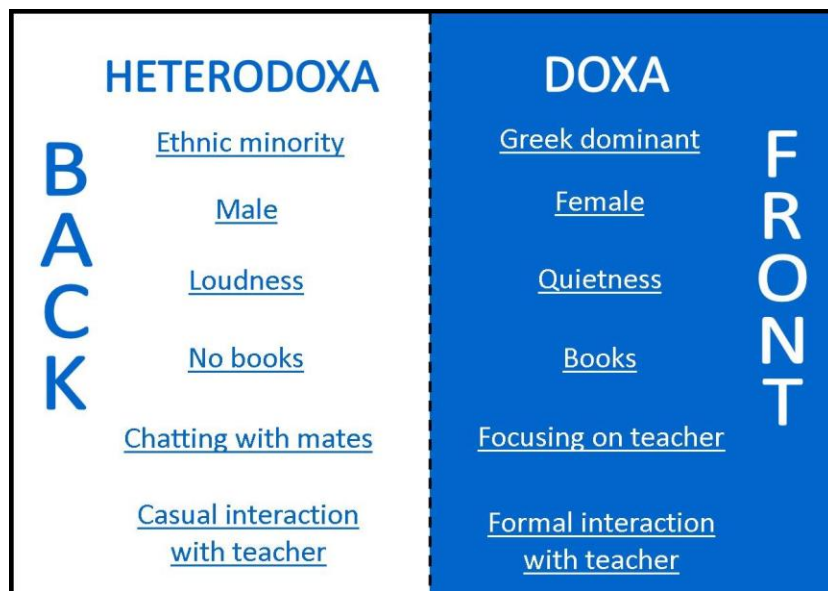
In his study of the Kabyle House, Bourdieu (1990, p. 275) suggested that

the house is organised in accordance with a set of homologous oppositions – high : low :: light : dark :: day : night [...]. But the same oppositions also exist between the house as a whole and the rest of the universe.

Similar homologous oppositions (Bourdieu, 1990) existed in the classrooms I have described earlier. Some oppositions regarded space (front/back) and others characteristics attributed to social actors and their behaviours (ethnic minority/Greek dominant; bad learners/good



learners). However, experiencing the classroom as an observer, I caught myself empathising at times with either contesting side. I could understand, for example, how those teachers saw them as trouble-makers (I have transferred uncritically this image in my notebook) and how those students were challenging an authority that did not 'suit' them – contrary, maybe, to Greek students who felt comfortable with and complied to this authority. I understood this dual viewpoint as workings of two opposing sub-fields (sub-divisions of the classroom field) and two opposing evaluations of student cultural capitals. The following outline gives schematically this understanding (Picture 2). The back and the front of the classroom are the two confronting spaces with the 'naughty', 'bad' male ethnic minority students and the 'studious', 'good' female Greek students. However, the student categorisation and evaluation into bad and good, naughty and studious is based on the doxic view – the dominant view, the one that has been agreed as legitimate by the school (Grenfell, 2009). Being on the doxic front side of the classroom, one construes quietness as the 'proper' behaviour; having books and focusing on what the teacher teaches as 'studiousness'; and talking formally and 'respectfully' to the teacher as 'good' behaviour. At the same time, opposite practices and behaviours – the ones happening at the back heterodox classroom - are evaluated negatively.



PICTURE 2: An outline of the two classrooms at the Aegean school

These qualities or skills could be understood as cultural capitals, acquiring the respective value each field attributes to them. That is, according to the criteria of the pedagogic authority.

Nevertheless, as Grenfell (2009, p. 23) suggests,

*Capital* itself (especially *cultural capital*) may only have value within the *field* in which it exists. If the *field* is not governed by the dominant, legitimated doxa, and thus has a heterodoxic *cultural capital*, then its medium of discourse is a kind of *anti-capital*, which itself will also be amplified by the *social capital*, networks, that mediates *field* processes.

Conceptualising the back of the classroom as a field of heterodoxa, the 'negative' behaviours and practices acquire a 'positive' value for the heterodoxic field members. Being loud, defying 'proper learning', addressing the teacher casually and having an immigrant background work as 'anti-capitals' (Grenfell, 2009, p. 23). Laureau and Weininger (2003) refer to the work of Carter as an example of research which has examined "'non-dominant" forms of cultural capital' as cultural practices and skills that credit in-group esteem to students of ethnic minority communities (p.586). At the same time, the 'dominant' practices and behaviours of the classroom front would be evaluated as 'negative' in the heterodoxic subfield, since they are doxic capitals. This could be also inferred by the fact that no 'good/excellent' students would ever belong in this heterodoxic space. The 'studiousness' of the front would be seen as 'docility' at the back, and vice versa the 'anti-conformism' of the back would be seen as 'inattentiveness' at the front; 'seriousness' becomes 'boredom' and 'fun' becomes 'indifference'. In other words, there is a 'mirroring' of positions and cultural capitals within the field of the classroom, and the evaluation of practices and behaviours depends on which reflection of the mirror one looks at. The above suggestions reflect Youdell's (2006b) findings that 'the sub-cultural identities that imbue these minority students with particular status and prestige within the student milieu are the very identities that are deployed within institutional discourse as "evidence" of their challenge to authority' (p. 119).

The outline presented above is only a rough depiction of a reality that is much more complicated. I should therefore note that it shows the two extreme positions, the 'good' and the 'bad' students. However, there are also the 'average' students, which this outline omits. Those students are positioned in the in-between space, both realistically and metaphorically, as they could be seen as 'half-good' or 'half-bad'. I understand that those students can be more easily accepted at both fields. For the students at the two extreme opposites, it would be almost impossible to be accepted as members of the other field and assessed as such. In other words, for the students of the one side would be unthinkable to become like the students of the other side – so automatically and subconsciously such effort is rejected. I speculate that it is no coincidence that in these 'in-between' students are usually included with the students who have been born in Greece or attended the Greek primary school. I would suggest that this shows exactly their 'in-between' institutional position: half Greek, half other, half 'trying' students and half 'failures'. Although I will not get into observational details in this instance, I would suggest that they embody 'invisible form[s] of resistance', as observed by Mac an Ghail (1988, p. 111). Most of the time their 'otherness' stays out of sight, but their resistance could be read through successive practices of rejection of the educational processes. They move from being 'naughty' (visible resistance) to being extremely quiet during the lessons, as if they are not even there (invisible resistance). Similar to Mac an Ghail's (1988) observations about Asian students, the 'naughty' practices of the 'in-between' students are rarely seen as an ethnic/racial attribute, but rather as an individual or isolated behaviour. This is maybe because their ethnicity/race is not as obvious to teachers. This I believe explains why they do not end up in the principal's office as often as the 'tough boys'. Nonetheless, the institutional/classroom position that each student receives is constituted through an intricate nexus of ethnicity, gender and class.

One final thought is that some of these 'mirror' practices and behaviours have interchangeable qualities in an allegorical sense. What sounded 'loud' in the back space, remained, in fact, 'quiet' at the front space. The 'loud' practices of the ethnic minority students in the heterodoxic back were 'unheard' at the doxic front, in the sense that they

were never understood by the dominant culture. Similarly, the low voices of the Greek students at the front were actually 'loud' as the dominant ones, since they set the rules and consequences of practice for the 'tough boys' at the back – which they were constantly breaking. I am also thinking that the back students were not 'serious' because they were not taken seriously; they were inattentive because they were not attended to. These lead me to the observations made by Mac an Ghail (1989) after Hargreaves and Pollard, that the practices attributed to the 'tough boys' were 'coping and survival strategies' (p. 273). Following this rationale, the existence of the heterodox subfield at the back is formulated as a space of survival for these students. It could therefore be concluded that the classroom has two 'mirror' logics of practice, one that develops according to the rules of the pedagogic authority and one that resists it.

The above have been suggested based on my field observations. It does appear that ethnic minority students in the Aegean school (mainstream, 60%) are excluded from classroom practices. The teacher interviews presented next confirm that this exclusion is indeed a matter of ethnocentric (mis)conceptualisations about the constitution of ethnic minority students as learners in the Greek education.

#### *Deficit views and sympathetic practices: teacher accounts*

One problem I encountered when coding the data from the teachers' interview was that their understandings on the academic performance and behaviour of ethnic minority students, as well as their parents' interest in education and their class, were all entangled in their accounts. This made it difficult to isolate and label them under one code. However, ethnicity was the striking common element underscoring their accounts. These issues link with the reasons for which (male) ethnic minority students ended up in Giorgos' office; or, with the factors which were to be blamed for their 'inadequate' studentship and upon which they were disciplined. I will come back to this matter. In this section I use teacher accounts to discuss practices of grading ethnic minority students, which relate to the

students' academic interest and behaviour; emerging dominant understandings about the teaching content and assessment criteria; and the involvement of immigrant parents in their children's education.

All (scheduled or ethnographically) interviewed teachers teaching in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade (13-14 years old) pointed this grade as one of low achievement. Eleni (Maths' teacher) stated for Class B (attended by the 'tough boys') that "the lesson is only delivered for 2-3 girls who show some interest". When talking about the 'indifferent' students, all teachers referred to the ethnicity of the students in the back seats. Most obviously, their 'indifference' was demonstrated by not bringing their books/notepads with them.

I will appreciate it greatly if they do the one fourth [of the total homework amount]. You see, when there is no book in front of the student, any exercise or reference to the book I want to make, I just can't do it. They don't even take notes from what I'm writing on the board [...]

(Philitsa, female, late 50s, Literature)

During an Arts' session in Despina's (female, early-mid 40s) class, students presented to her the artwork they produced during the trimester in order to be assessed. Some students did not have their drawing pads with them and Despina told them that their grade was below borderline. In our interview I asked her about this.

[At every lesson] you'll see the Albanians without their drawing pads. The Russians<sup>46</sup> just sit back and watch. So what grade could I have given them?

I see books or drawing pads – or any other learning/teaching material – as an objectified countenance of the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2004), which function as assessment criteria. Here, indifference for books shows indifference for academic knowledge, and is evaluated negatively by Despina. In the next extract, Eleni and another teacher (female, early 50s, physics) explain to me in the teachers' office how they assess 'weak' and 'naughty' students.

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<sup>46</sup> Although most students are from Georgia, they were often referred to as 'Russians' due to their former belonging to the USSR.

TEACHER: Haven't you ever graded someone more leniently if he showed some effort and engaged during lessons but failed in written tests?

ELENI: Yes, I did ignore once a written test in order to help a student with his grade.

TEACHER: [turning to me] You see, because the achievement level is low in this school, it goes that whoever is not the naughty one, is a good student.

ELENI: I do give better grades to those who show some effort but do not succeed, but I don't give lower grades if someone behaves naughtily in the classroom.

TEACHER: In this school you should give better grades, or else...

Achievement and behaviour appear to be interlocking and overlapping criteria. Behaviour is used as an auxiliary criterion for positive evaluation when student performance is low. Low achievement appears to be an often phenomenon, according to the teacher's disappointed insinuation "or else..."; I construe that she meant that otherwise very few would qualify for a 'pass'. Linking these statements with the data from classroom observations, I understand that behaviours such as those of the 'tough boys' would not qualify for lenient grading. Of course, being 'naughty' will not cost them grades, but will prohibit them from being assessed leniently. Even though 'naughtiness' does not result in lower grades per se, however such behaviour is construed by teachers as lack of academic interest, without problematising it as student practices of resistance or institutional survival. Later analysis suggests that parents and ethnicity are also to be blamed for 'improper' behaviour and 'lack of interest'.

The Greek language 'deficit' of ethnic minority students - in particular of those sitting at the back - was brought up as one of the factors affecting negatively both the achievement of these students, and also of the classroom as a whole.

Philitsa says:

The students who have difficulty with the [Greek] language are those who came from abroad, from Albania, Russia, Georgia and so on. They don't care, you don't see any effort...Very few of them try. Of course, you see those cases who are very good kids [she mentions a male top student from Albania]. He is exceptional. A very good child, but one of the few cases...

Philitsa teaches the subject of literature, which entails Modern Greek literature (textual analysis) and language (grammar, syntax, vocabulary); Ancient Greek literature (textual analysis) and language (grammar, syntax, vocabulary); and composition. The above are by definition assessed on the criterion of linguistic competence. She interprets lack of linguistic skills in Greek as 'indifference', since the ethnic minority students do not show any effort to compensate for these 'deficiencies'. Concurrently, Philitsa praises the excellence and exceptionality of the male immigrant top student, who succeeded despite his background 'deficit'. I read this as praise for the 'different' from the 'different', the one that has evaded his 'immigrant difference'. One of the qualities that contributed to him being assessed as a 'top-student' is of course his linguistic competences. Undoubtedly, these skills are equivalent to the skills a native Greek speaker possesses. In other words, he was judged upon the criteria set by the latter as a 'student model', and he was rewarded for his 'Greekness'. As I have already demonstrated, it is particularly the male students who are pin-pointed as 'failing', which puts the matter on the gender axis as well. Not only has the exceptional Albanian student escaped the 'indifference' that his 'co-ethnics' show, but he has also escaped the 'indifference' of his 'ethnic' male nature.

In the subject of maths the problem was located in the exercise instructions:

As far as pure math calculations are concerned, they [immigrant students] are competent, but when it comes to math rules and exercises with instructional text they can't solve them because they find them hard [to understand]. But they do understand perfectly well "plus" and "minus" signs and arithmetic notations.

(Eleni, female, late 40s, Maths)

When asked about how they deal with the language issue, both Eleni and Philitsa responded that they try to be lenient with their academic demands and grading. Philitsa says,

The teacher tries to exhaust all possible solutions. I told them this: if other students have to write three exercises for homework, I would be happy if you did just one [...] Some times... someone... may appreciate this and do some exercise [...] But others, not even that.

Philitsa appreciates the students' language difficulty and lowers her demands and expectations regarding homework. She mentions that she "exhaust[s] all possible solutions". However, one would ask whether either teacher followed the right pedagogical and educational methodologies. As I observed, they limited their teaching to the dominant monolingual methodology without acknowledging the students' bilingualism, which they saw as a problem or 'deficit'. Philitsa did show her intention to help them by requesting less homework, but she does this while her teaching ignores the immigrant students' linguistic needs. Even if homework is less in amount, it still serves to assess the language skills of a native Greek speaker. Therefore, immigrant students show 'indifference' to exercises which are not appropriate for their level of Greek language, and eventually 'fail'. The monolingual practices of the Aegean school are, at least to some extent, contrasted by the bilingual practices of the Cretan school, which will be presented later on.

Following the above analysis, one can speculate under a different light why "there is no book in front of the student", or why "[t]hey don't even take notes" from what Eleni instructs on the whiteboard. Stimulation of learning is also linked to behaviour. Drawing on various research, Giannoudis, Diggelidis and Papaioannou (2009) suggest that when classroom processes focus on the stimulation of learning, students are more likely to feel that they are treated on fair grounds, and so they become self-disciplined (Giannoudis, Diggelidis and Papaioannou, 2009). When classroom processes emphasise the students' 'ego' through social comparisons, antagonism and focus on achievement they tend to produce unequal treatment of students. This is when students appear to be disobedient and undisciplined (Giannoudis, Diggelidis and Papaioannou, 2009). The question, therefore, would be whether Eleni focused on stimulating learning, and more importantly what the learning context and the means for stimulating it were.

The involvement of ethnic minority parents in the academic performance and conduct of their children was emphatically blamed by the Aegean school teachers. Despina says,

I have taught at various schools, but this one is the toughest, not only in terms of student performance, but particularly of student behaviour. The



most troubling students are the Russians and the Albanians [...] There is no supervision by parents.

(Despina, female, early 40s, Arts)

It is often that schools and pedagogical discourse render parents as responsible for the academic performance and behaviour of their children at school (Braun, Vincent and Ball, 2008). Eleni discusses what advice a teacher can give to immigrant parents, in order to assist their children's learning at home:

I advise them to check their children's notebooks to see whether they've done their homework, because they can't really help them with it, they don't speak Greek and they can't read [...]. I have noticed though that parents from the [former] USSR are good at maths and can offer some help to their children.

(Eleni, female, late 40s, Maths)

There is a paradox in the responsibility placed on parents regarding the ethnic minority students' performance: on the one hand, they should supervise their children's homework; on the other, teachers know that, because of the language barrier, they cannot. Considering that Eleni sees particular maths skills in immigrant parents from the former USSR – contrasting their difficulties with textual understanding - the significance of bilingual education and communication between home-school is substantiated. I should also note that Greek teachers (participants in this research and from my general experience) often complain about the lack of – or disinterest in – participation of immigrant parents in school meetings, i.e. in order to be informed about their child's performance. Tomlinson (1984) argued that a crucial factor for the limited participation of minority parents in the UK schools was the insufficient knowledge of the educational system, which marginalised them from the benefits available to white middle-class parents in the school processes. Considering that the immigrant parents of the Aegean school have attended a very different educational system, one can understand that they would feel like the 'fish out of its water', as Bourdieu would put it (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The work of Reay, Ball and David (2005) also documents the relationship between the matching between familial and

institutional habitus. Having the above in mind, I suggest that it would be a very daunting task for any minority parent to have to confront Greek teachers who will tell them off for their 'irresponsibility' as parents and their 'failing' child. Tomlinson (1984) also argued that minority parents in Britain were disappointed by the marginalisation of their communities by the educational system, a fact which showed that they were interested in, rather than indifferent towards, education.

Finally, the following extract demonstrates how the lack of communication between school and family is attributed to parental 'indifference', but it is also linked to issues of class:

I have called the [immigrant] parents many times. But they never come. But even if you tell the child to tell them to come they say "Miss, they won't come even if we tell them" [...] Anyway, there's a number of students who come to school just because they have nothing to do at home, and they come here just to annoy other students and pass their time [...] This I believe is because there is indifference on the part of the parents. They are workers from dusk to dawn. The child doesn't see the parent at all inside the house [...] which results in the child not having self-discipline and coming to school as a tourist.

(Philitsa, female, Literature)

Even though Philitsa acknowledges that ethnic minority parents are hard workers who have to deal with everyday financial difficulties, she yet sees them as indifferent parents who prioritise work instead of their child's education. Material factors affecting educational processes cannot be overlooked; long working hours indeed mean the absence of the parent from home. However, as Gaine and George (1999) suggest, it does not equal lack of interest for the child's academic progress. Working-class parents are particularly seen as in need of additional education and support with their parental duties, especially regarding their child's behaviour (Braun, Vincent and Ball, 2008). There is an underlying construction of immigrant, working class parents as incapable of 'controlling' their children's academic performance and student conduct. I should note, however, that two (out of 7) interviewed teachers did mention that Greek, middle-class parents are in the position to offer academic

privileges to their children, such as private tuition<sup>47</sup>. This accentuates the gap between immigrant, working-class parents and Greek, middle-class parents, since the former cannot offer such support to their children nor can they help them with homework, due to the language barrier. The assumed deficit that immigrant families show is constructed by teachers as a 'community deficit' (Youdell, 2004, p. 418).

Most –if not all – of the interviewed teachers at the Aegean school expressed deficit views about the 'troubling' ethnic minority students in their classrooms. Having said that, they have also spoken sympathetically about these students, and talked about their willingness to lead them through compulsory education. However, the teachers' willingness did not escape a deficit viewing of ethnic 'otherness' and a concurrent ethnocentric standpoint in education.

### **The 'wildcat' of the Cretan School**

Tanya was a female student of Russian background, who has often occupied the teachers and the principal with her 'naughty' behaviour. She was 16 years old attending Class A of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade – normally attended by 14 year old students - as she had fallen down two grades; one due to her inadequate academic performance and the other due to her return to Russia for a year following her mother. Tanya sat at the back desk with her friend Chloe, a girl from Albania. She wore clothes which could be described as 'provocative' for the Greek secondary school: low-cut trousers and belly-revealing tops, black dyed hair and long painted nails. During my fieldwork I did not witness any disciplinary notice given to her about her clothes. As the next chapter shows, this contrasted the practices of the Aegean school, where such attire was punishable. The literature teacher, Fani (female, early 40s), who informed me that the Teacher Body named her "Tanya the wildcat", told me that she

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<sup>47</sup>Private tutoring is a very common practice in Greece, and many parents hire private tutors to support their children with their homework. Private tutoring is also seen as a resource for teachers, who are unemployed due to the centralisation of teacher allocation at schools and the poor funding of the Greek state to education.

was a “special student case” due to a challenging family situation. Daphne, the maths teacher (female, early 40s) described her as “aggressive”, “a little bit of a myth maniac” and “troubling”. Both teachers said her performance fluctuated, but mostly remained “average”.

### Act One: Literature (Syntax in Ancient Greek)

Fani, the Literature Teacher was a woman in her early 40s, and held a PhD in Pedagogy. I had described her in my notes as “lively” and “popular with students”, “approachable and friendly”. She brought handouts with vocabulary in community languages for immigrant students that needed help.

### Opening Scene

*I enter the classroom with Fani, and Tanya is exchanging pushes and pokes with Nikos (a male student from Georgian background, who was pointed out by teachers as ‘naughty’).*

FANI: What’s going on here?

NIKOS: Tasos [another ‘naughty’ boy] pushed me over Tanya and she thinks I pushed her! [Tasos is laughing at the background]

TANYA: You skunk! [towards Tasos]

FANI: [addressing me] We are a bit of a playground here! Everyone stay away from Tasos, he’s moody today! [jokingly]

TANYA: And everyone away from me!

FANI: That’s absolutely right, Tanya, innocent people should not get into trouble for something they are not responsible for.

[Tanya returns to her seat, saying something to Tasos which I can’t hear clearly, Tasos answers something back.]

FANI: OK, Tanya, at which page are we today? Let’s have you start today’s lesson.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Scene

*The lesson runs smoothly. Fani explains everything in detail and asks students if they understood. Tanya often interrupts to ask questions which Fani explains. One male student is drawing. The row furthest from the teacher doesn't participate. Fani walks around in the classroom and for some time she sits in one of the desks at the back. She asks a female student, who sat quietly without participating, to do an exercise on syntax. The girl is having trouble answering.*

FANI: [soft supportive voice] What is it that you don't have it clear in your mind? [the girl is silent] Maybe you need some time on your own to think about it. [Turning to me] You know, the books are not very helpful for teaching the logic behind the ancient [Greek] syntax, they use long and complicated sentences for examples. I'm having difficulty understanding them myself, let alone students! [To the students] Who shall do the next one?

TANYA: [without raising hand] I, Mrs, I!

FANI: OK, Tanya, go on.

[Tanya is trying to do the exercise, but she's making mistakes]

FANI: You better try it the other way around [gives directions. Tanya makes another failed attempt]. And the object of the sentence is... [Fani gives the answer].

TANYA: Now, Mrs, who did the exercise, me or you?! [exclaiming in disappointment and determination].

FANI: My Tanya, I just wanted to help.

TANYA: I know, that's why I forgive you! [Fani laughs]

(early April, fourth session and my 5<sup>th</sup> visit in Class A [out of 10])

In the Opening Scene Fani enters the classroom to see two 'naughty' students, Tanya and Nikos, fighting, while Tasos, who seems to be the main responsible of the episode, laughs at the background. Something that emerged through the teachers' accounts, and will be presented later on, was that the 'naughty' behaviour of immigrant students was understood as the effect of social and ethnic inequalities, and not as a racialised characteristic. This contrasts the teacher constructions at the Aegean school. It was only Daphne who saw 'naughtiness' as an attribute of ethnicity, yet she also appeared to sway between deficit and positive views of immigrant students. Coming back to the scene, pushing and poking are practices expected to occur in the outside space. In the school yard setting, for example,

they would be considered as ‘ordinary’<sup>48</sup> student interaction; the same would not be ‘ordinary’ in the classroom setting. The transfer of practices from outdoors to indoors should be stopped by the teacher (the pedagogic authority) as ‘improper’ classroom behaviour. Even though Fani is the one to stop it – otherwise she would not be doing her job properly – it is the way she intervenes that does not create confrontation between her and the students; in other words, the way she embodies pedagogic authority. She engages with their issue by joking, without rejecting their reasons or condemning the incident. She does not embody/verbalise an evident pedagogic authority (it is rather concealed) and does not confront the bodily/verbal practices of the students. She then makes the ‘switch’ between schoolyard and classroom by putting Tanya – the victim - in the ‘leading’ position to start the lesson. The scene ends with all three ‘troubling’ students being treated as learners worthy of being included in the classroom practices and attended by the teacher.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Scene, Fani attempts to encourage the female student by suggesting that the books are inappropriate for the learning needs of students who have particular linguistic and cultural requirements. This is interesting considering that the book is an objectified cultural capital of the education field (Bourdieu, 2004). In other words, the book objectifies the educational knowledge, values and their assessment criteria. By criticising the books Fani acts against the pedagogic authority bestowed on her, since her role is to legitimise this authority through her practices.

At the same time, I understand that she acts according to the logic of the field of intercultural education. Within the intercultural education discourse, books for ‘mainstream’ learning are criticised as inappropriate (see discussion in Chapter One). Regarding Tanya, Fani appears to be supportive and patient, leading her through the exercise. When she fails to complete the exercise within the time-limits Fani set, she complains for being deprived from a chance to show that she can succeed. However, Fani’s response “I just wanted to help” communicates to Tanya that the intention was to be

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<sup>48</sup> By this I mean that even though pushing and poking in the school yard would be stopped by supervising teachers if it got too intense, it would still be allowed to evolve at some level as a casual interaction between schoolmates. On the contrary, such behaviour should be immediately stopped in the classroom (according to its rules) and would be evaluated as ‘bad’ student behaviour.

supportive and not judgmental (at least not overtly). The informal and relaxed mode of conduct which Tanya embodies appears to be assessed positively – or at least received enjoyably - by Fani.

### *Act Two: Maths (Geometry)*

Daphne, the teacher, was a woman in her early 40s. She had completed a Masters degree in maths. In my fieldnotes I had described her as “friendly and smiley” and that she devotes time in explaining the lesson thoroughly; she too gives auxiliary vocabulary handouts. Daphne complained about Class A saying that “students from abroad are naughty and make noise during the lesson”.

#### *1<sup>st</sup> Scene*

*The lesson is about ‘π’. The class has been quiet so far. Two boys at the back [from immigrant backgrounds, aged 15-16] do not participate when Daphne asks for some answer. Tanya raises her hand to solve a homework exercise and Daphne chooses her. While at it on the whiteboard, she is having difficulties.*

DAHPNE: Did you practise the exercise at home?

TANYA: Yes Mrs! But I forgot how it goes on from here!

DAHPNE: OK Tanya, take your time to think about it.

[The two boys at the back tease Tanya, and she reciprocates with funny gestures behind Daphne’s back. Tanya, however, seems to try and listen to Daphne’s directions].

DAHPNE: Who can tell me what we should do next? [addressing the whole classroom]

TANYA: [intensely] Me, Mrs, me! It’s my exercise!

DAHPNE: Alright, alright, you.

*Daphne takes the classroom through the exercise. The four Greek ‘good’ students at the front give out the next steps to Daphne. Daphne repeats the steps to Tanya, who copies them on the whiteboard. When the exercise is finished, she returns to her seat both irritated and exchanging teases with the two boys.*

#### *2<sup>nd</sup> Scene*

*While Daphne teaches today's lesson, she asks questions which only the Greek 'good' female students at the front answer. Later on she asks for a volunteer to assist with the solving of an example. Tanya raises her hand intensely.*

DAPHNE: You have been up today and you participate a lot.

TANYA: Is this why I've got a 12 [out of 20] in my grades' record?

DAPHNE: But you've just started participating!

TANYA: [mumbles] Whatever...

*Daphne picks one of the 'good' female students at the front.*

(Fifth session and my 6th visit in Class A [out of 10])

In the 1<sup>st</sup> Scene I see Tanya attempting to show that she is a capable student, regardless of whether she has prepared well for her homework. While Tanya is at the whiteboard doing the exercise, she is in-between two opposing sub-fields, that of the 'heterodoxic' back – where I understand that she is mainly positioned – and that of the 'doxic' front. At that moment Tanya is concurrently evaluated by these two sub-fields under different and contesting criteria. She tries to be a 'good' student for the 'Greek' front and a 'cool' classmate for the 'other' back. When Daphne asks the classroom for the next steps of the exercise, she shows Tanya that she has (partly?) failed, once she seeks the answer elsewhere. Tanya claims back her chance for positive assessment, stating that this is her exercise, however Daphne resolves to get the answers from the Greek female students at the front. Tanya exits the 'doxic' front sub-field irritated and enters the 'heterodoxic' back sub-field joking with the boys. This scene summarises well the bipolarity within which Tanya is positioned, harking back to Mac an Ghail's (1988) notion of 'resistance within accommodation' (p.11). Tanya is split between practices of accommodation in the 'doxic' front and practices of resistance in the heterodoxic back.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Scene shows Tanya making a new attempt to show her eagerness to participate, but due to her earlier participation and failure in solving the exercise successfully, she is rejected – and excluded - by Daphne. Experiencing the scene, I have recalled similar cases when 'good' students perpetually raise their hand to participate, even



if they have just done an exercise on the whiteboard. Would have they been similarly rejected by Daphne in a following request to participate? I have observed Daphne delivering a class involving almost exclusively the four 'good' students (as did Philitsa and Eleni at the Aegean school) encouraging their continuous participation. Tanya - the 'other', 'heterodoxic' student - was excluded from the teaching and learning process, while the front Greek, 'doxic' girls were included.

Following Youdell's (2006b) analysis of 'excluded black femininity' (p. 119), Tanya's negative assessment (and consequent exclusion) can be viewed as a result of ethnicised and gendered assessment practices. Tanya's most often contact inside the classroom was, apart from Chloe her Albanian deskmate, with the boys at the back. I understand that the 'heterodoxic' back is the boys' territory, thus it is constituted by the practices of the boys' masculinities. Tanya, contrary to her Greek female 'good' classmates at the front, seems to be getting on well with them. Their interaction involves mostly teasing and mocking, and probably flirty and sexually provoking practices. Not to forget that Tanya is a 16 year old, with definitely more developed body in a classroom of 13-14 year old girls who still have 'childish' bodies and she hangs out with the 'bad' boys at the back, who are also older than the other boys in the classroom. Tanya's hyper-femininity and the boys' hyper-masculinities possibly constitute them 'unintelligible as [...] learner[s]' (Youdell, 2006b, p.115). Not only does her 'mature' figure make her stand out, but also her bodily practices and her performed sexuality, i.e. low-cut jeans and revealing tops, painted nails etc. Moreover, she is followed by the reputation of being the 'older' 'aggressive' girl. She came to the Cretan school following her expulsion from her previous school for punching a girl, which resulted in splitting the girl's lips.

Through the analysis, Tanya's 'wildcat' nickname emerges as a constellation of school anti-capitals. The 'exotic', 'wild' and 'sexy' are qualities that a student should not possess if s/he is to be evaluated positively. Having said this, her involvement in classroom practices implied different evaluations across space and time. I see that her 'wildcat' quality takes different value in the literature and maths sessions. For Fani, Tanya's anti-capitals are – at least to some extent – evaluated positively. Being 'other' and 'wild' does not appear to

cause her exclusion from the learning process in Fani's lesson. Nonetheless, triage procedures (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000) based on the ethnicised and classed structures of the Greek education field (as substantiated in the previous chapters) cost the unequal achievement of ethnic minority students. This means, for example, a ceiling grade that Tanya can achieve for not being a native speaker or because she cannot pay for private tuition like her classmates. However, for Fani these anti-capitals may also be serving as positive qualities, which she ought to reward with lenient achievement. On the other hand, Daphne appears to follow the mainstream assessment criteria, similar to those operating in the Aegean school, based on Tanya's achievement and behaviour 'deficit'. These differences in the pedagogic authority that each teacher embodies will become more obvious through their interview analyses.

What could be concluded from the examination of the two classrooms is that there is a shift between the assessment practices regarding ethnic minority students. I locate this shift in the agency of the two teachers and their delegation of a different pedagogic authority. Fani seems to delegate the pedagogic authority using the field of intercultural education, while Daphne that of the field of Greek education. The former is based on a more critical view of the situation of ethnic minority students, while the latter on a more conservative and ethnocentric conceptualisation of 'otherness'.

### *Unsettling positions, unsettling capitals*

Drawing comparisons between the two schools, the classroom processes of the Cretan school (intercultural, 40% of ethnic minority students) appeared to be more inclusive compared to those of the Aegean school (mainstream, 60% of ethnic minority students). Having said this, the classroom experiences for the students of the Cretan school shifted along with the shifts in the 'kind' and mode of pedagogic authority deployed by individual teachers. Tanya moved from being included in Fani's sessions to being excluded in Daphne's

sessions. Having this in mind, I see the practices of the Aegean school as constituted by a thicker nexus of ethnocentric structures which did not leave much space for non-deficit views to emerge. On the contrary, since the Cretan school's primary logic was interculturalism, deficit views of ethnic minority students appeared weaker. Nonetheless, exclusions still occurred to an extent here as well. I attribute this to the fact that Cretan school was also a 'state' school, and as such it was inevitably constituted by ethnocentric structures, as outlined in Chapter Four. This shows the interplay of ethnocentrism and interculturalism as two contesting logics of practice which were played out on classroom practices.

I will now go back to the analysis of the classroom as divided into doxic and heterodoxic spaces. In the case of the Cretan school, there seemed to be shifts in the location of ethnic minority student across these spaces. These shifts followed the shifts in the pedagogic authority that individual teachers brought in their sessions, during which cultural 'anti'-capitals became 'just'-capitals. This happened when ethnic minority students and their linguistic capitals were located at the centre of the teaching process (for example in the Language-Support classes); when loudness and casual interaction with the teachers was not damned but embraced, as in the case of Tanya and the boys; and monolingual books were supplemented or replaced by bilingual handouts. However, these appeared to be only minor shifts, which I would better describe as 'unsettlements' for the doxa. Tanya was in no way considered a 'good' student, but a 'trying' student at best. Immigrant students would still need to acquire a good amount of Greek linguistic capital (a doxic capital) to make their way through the Greek educational system and, later, the job market. Therefore, these shifts were only a momentarily 'unsettlement' for the doxic position that otherness occupies in the Greek education field.

I should note that both practices of settled exclusions and unsettling inclusions could appear across the delegation of pedagogic authority by the same teacher. Such an example was Philitsa (Greek language teacher) of the Aegean school, who appeared to sway between sympathetic understandings and exclusionary practices towards her immigrant students. Moreover, as in the case of Daphne who practised exclusions in a 'designated'

inclusive school, the Cretan, we could similarly find teachers practising inclusions in a normative/ethnocentric school, i.e. the Aegean school.

*Endeavouring inclusion: teacher accounts*

Teacher understandings at the Cretan - the intercultural - school about the academic performance of their ethnic minority students emerged together with conceptualisations about their familial background, ethnicity, class and gender. Special emphasis was put on their academic performance, and their linguistic competence. Similarly to the Aegean school, the teachers of the Cretan school stated that they graded ethnic minority students more leniently than Greek students. This was received by most interviewed teachers as a necessary compensation for the unequal conditions with which these students enter the Greek educational system.

Especially during the first year [of secondary school] we assess them very leniently, and we pass children that did not deserve to pass; in general we are more flexible compared to a child from Greece. [Another teacher intervenes and says that they are also lenient with Greek students]. Yes, yes, with Greek children too, but with these students a little bit more.

(Daphne, female, early 40s, Maths)

The need for this differentiated grading, however, was viewed by Daphne as having a negative effect on the overall school level. Daphne, as well as a female literature teacher at the Aegean school, complained that the school level was low because 'children these days' do not put effort in their studies. Neither attributed the low achievement to the presence of immigrant students in Greek schools, but saw it as a general phenomenon of contemporary times. Nonetheless, Daphne complained that grading immigrant students more leniently affected the grades she had to give to 'better' students.

Because, if you don't give 20 ['Excellent'] to this one [a very good, but not 'excellent' student] then the one that now gets a 10 [borderline], he'd

objectively get 7. There is no objective grading. You assess according to the level of each classroom.

(Daphne, female, mid 40s, Maths)

Daphne describes her effort to maintain a 'fair' distinction between 'bad' and 'good' students. In order to help a struggling immigrant student by giving her/him better grades than deserved, she must also give higher grades to the 'good' Greek students. While Daphne's motive is sympathetic towards minoritised students, she complains that this relational grading gives an unrealistic representation of the academic level for the good students. Even though neither Daphne nor the Literature teacher from the Aegean school blame immigrant students for worsening the overall level of performance, both appear to blame them for this artificial inflation of grades across the class.

While the above grading tactics seem to lead to compensatory classroom practices for the ethnic minority students, in effect they do the exact opposite. Ethnic minority students are not compensated for the educational inequalities they suffer once Greek 'good' students are also graded higher than deserved. It follows that lenient grading is not compensatory if grading is relational. In fact, this practice rewards Greek 'good' students with more capitals compared to immigrant students. The most obvious capital is the educational capital in the form of school grades which are then translated into other forms of capitals. For ethnic minority students on the borderline, lenient grading helps them to pass the school level, finish compulsory education and stay in education as long as possible. The compulsory education certificate translates into a 'basic' level of knowledge and skills (cultural capital), that probably leads to a vocational job (economic capital) and job-related networks (social capital). Greek 'good' students receive non-compensatory - and thus undeserved - 'excellent' grades, and so they create an 'excellent' school record. While grades give them the same forms of capital as immigrant students, the quality of those capitals is vastly different in value. To be more specific, having 'excellent' grades means they finish compulsory education with 'excellent' knowledge and skills, and this, in turn, can open up better chances to get a university degree as 'excellent' graduates, and a respectable job with good pay and professional networks. Consequently, these capitals

work as symbolic of a particular status for Greek 'good' students. Through relational grading the teachers award Greek 'good' students undeserved capitals and distinctions which they would have not received had borderline immigrant students not been present in the classroom. Far from amending social injustices, relational grading widens the gap in capital rewards between Greek and immigrant students.

Fani's account shows that academic interest and classroom behaviour were interconnected, particularly for ethnic minority students with language difficulties:

Can you imagine how it would feel to be in a lesson where you would not be able to connect to its content? What would you do? I mean, you would draw stuff, you wouldn't bring your books, since you wouldn't have a reason to bring them...You would try to end your boredom by having fun with your classmates [...] You[I] try. Nothing is perfect, I don't always succeed my goals.

(Fani, early 40s, Literature)

Contrary to the views expressed by teachers at the Aegean school, Fani does not see 'indifference' and 'naughtiness' as an ethnicised attribute of immigrant students. She rather problematises the educational system and its content. On the other hand, Daphne spoke about the indifferent immigrant students whose motive for schooling is just to avoid working.

E: Why don't they want to go to school?

DAPHNE: I don't know...

E: Haven't you had a discussion with them...

DAPHNE: Because, let's say, their mother wants [them to go to school]. The answer is 'so what would I do at home? If I sit at home and don't go to school they will make me work' for example. See?

E: Wouldn't they have to go to school if they were in their country of origin?

DAPHNE: Yes, they would go... but, I don't know, they have a... maybe because there is, at least this is what I see, a denial for life here in Greece, they don't want to be in Greece, and they probably show it this way.

It is interesting to note that Daphne does not mention immigrant parents as being interested in education. She refers to their wish to have their children 'controlled' while themselves are at work. She also does not question the content of education as a problem,

as Fani did earlier, but instead she identifies the problem in the students' emotional state. A deficit view of ethnic minority students emerges through the assumption that they carry a cultural capital in the Greek school that is anti-education and anti-Greek; or in other words it is an anti-capital (Grenfell, 2009).

During a classroom observation in an Arts session, Michalis (male, mid 30s, Arts teacher) had a moment of conflict with three male students of immigrant background because they were making noise. The session was devoted to assessing the students' artwork in order to receive their trimester grades. Michalis sent the noisy boys outside the classroom, while their classmates complained that if the boys got any more absences, they would fail the year. Michalis stated strongly that they should take responsibility for their actions and be prepared for the consequences. Finally, he did not charge them with absence [i.e. a note in the classroom's Attendance Book]. A little while later, he called the boys back in the classroom and asked to see their work. One of them, Panos, did not have his drawing pad with him. Michalis asked to see some sketches that Panos had made on his desk<sup>49</sup>. He then asked for any other sketches Panos had made; the boy showed some graffiti roughs he had drawn on his textbooks and some pieces of paper. Interviewing Michalis, he commented about the level of his classroom:

Eh, there are some [students], usually of the back desks, who are naughty; they like to become the centre of attention, but who can also present remarkable works. As you saw, I'm trying to assess any form of art at whatever moment that was produced. It's often that they produce better things than the quiet students. They try to find ways to express themselves.

(Michalis, male, mid 30s, Arts)

Classroom conflict was not absent from the Cretan school, neither was the targeting of boys as naughtier than the girls; however, it was not as strongly patterned in the Cretan school as it was in the Aegean school, and it was not exclusively directed at boys of immigrant background. Contrary to the practices of the Aegean school where the worse the behaviour,

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<sup>49</sup>Drawing or scribbling on desks is a popular student practice. It is not officially penalised, but often teachers tell off students and make them clean it. Some teachers may charge a student with an hourly absence in their record as a punishment.

the worse the assessment, Michalis sees an artistic ability in this 'anti-school' behaviour, which fares better than the 'pro-school' behaviour of the "quiet students". Had it been Despina's (Art teacher) class at the Aegean school, Panos would have probably been assessed below the borderline, since he did not have his drawing pad with him - the objectified cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2004) - that Despina used exclusively for her evaluations. Drawing on desks, textbooks and pieces of paper is not a legitimised (by the school) criterion for assessing academic performance. Especially drawing on desks and textbooks could be considered anti-school practice, since the former soils school property and the latter 'disrespects' the product of pedagogic authority. Michalis, however, uses these forms as objectified anti-capitals and legitimises them.

The Cretan school, as an intercultural school, offered supporting lessons and other teaching material to students who faced difficulties with the Greek language. Maria, who taught the 'beginners' at the Language Support class, discusses her teaching strategies:

I speak Russian and sometimes I talk to them in Russian...not just when I need to help them out with stuff they are hard to understand, but also to make them feel more familiar with the school...to feel, let's say, closer to me.

(Maria, female, 50s, Greek language)

Markos, the Physics teacher in the Language Support classes comes from the Greek diaspora of Georgia (former USSR). He came to Greece following the economic crisis in recent years and has not yet managed to obtain Greek citizenship. This is why he can only work as a substitute (temporary) teacher teaching at those classes. He reflects on being 'other' staff:

I think that my presence in the classroom...that I have learnt the [Greek] language and do this profession, I act as a positive example for them [immigrant students], as a man who is from elsewhere and has achieved something in this country.

(Markos, male, late 40s, Physics)



In both Maria's and Markos's cases it is obvious that, apart from the cognitive and learning aspects of using the language of the students, the representation of the students' mother tongue in school has additional emotional effects on their academic performance and well-being (Chatzidaki, 2000; Tsokalidou, 2005; 2012; Skourtou, 2011). Particularly the case of Markos leads me to suggest that he embodies a pedagogic authority that is heterodox to the mainstream one. Therefore, his presence in the school could be read as anti-capital for a doxic mainstream school; or, in terms of the school as an institution, he represents a heterodox institutional habitus.

Daphne talks about the 'studious' minority students with Greek as their second language:

Of course, I can't say that their level is more than "fairly good"; it's not above 16-17 [20 being 'excellent'], it's lower. Maybe [this is] because their parents are absent many hours from home; and because they speak their own language at home, for example Russian, Albanian etc.

(Daphne, early 40s, Maths)

The above quote shows once more that the immigrant family is held responsible for the children's academic achievement, this time home-language being the focus. Daphne's understandings reveal two views which both see ethnic minority students through a deficit prism. The first has to do with the family allegedly offering inadequate support to the immigrant child. The second relates to the (very popular) constructions of bilingualism as a problem and obstacle to the acquisition of the Greek language. Even though Daphne deploys bilingual material to support the students' learning, she sees mother tongue as a problem and not as a cultural capital to be positively assessed and used to scaffold new knowledge (Yosso, 2005; Tsokalidou, 2012). Both views are inevitably extended to the community, since she makes references to the hard-working, non-Greek-speaking immigrants, reflecting a 'community deficit' (Youdell, 2004).

The sensitised stance Cretan school teachers held for the challenging conditions faced by the immigrant family also emerged through their accounts on the minority students' behaviour and academic achievement.

All [immigrant] children are very nice children, and they do the best they can, given their living conditions. The thing is that here you get to see situations you would never be able to understand, if you didn't have direct contact with these children and their family stories. There are times when I wonder about the courage of some students to even come to school...But, I guess, maybe, the school works as a space for them to get their minds away...and build friendships...maybe even feel they belong somewhere.

(Fani, female, early 40s, Literature)

Having in mind her classroom practices, I suggest that Fani puts effort in compensating for the disadvantaging situation of ethnic minority students. There are underlying conceptualisations of positive qualities these students bring in the classroom, which usually go unrecognised by normative evaluation processes. Such qualities are the ability to adjust to new circumstances; their emotional strength and courage; adaptability and socialising skills. These qualities could also entail independence and feistiness, which Daphne, for example, seemed to ignore in her account of the non-disciplined immigrant family. These qualities and skills I would see matching the aspirational, navigational and social capitals, suggested by Yosso (2005, p.77). Markos' account adds to this view an additional aspect:

Even though they [immigrant students] face many problems back home with surviving, they do try. The children come to school carrying a lot of, er... psychological weight...yes...which other students at their age do not.

(Markos, male, late 40s, Physics)

Markos' note about the "psychological weight" burdening immigrant students reminds me of McIntosh's concept of 'weightless knapsack' (cited in Gillborn, 2008, p.35). McIntosh says about white privilege:

I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was "meant" to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks.

I see a connection between the invisible privileges Greek students have compared to the visible disadvantages immigrant students suffer and to which Markos refers. By referring to the psychological weight of the immigrant students in his classroom, Markos also infers the

psychological well-being of Greek students as an asset. Worry, insecurity and feelings of non-belongingness, that might make up the "psychological weight" accompanying the immigrant state, contrasts with the carefreeness, safety and feelings of belonging that Greek students enjoy as a property of their Greek state. The "psychological weight" of negative emotions that burdens Markos' immigrant students for being immigrant contrasts with the 'weightless knapsack' that is filled with positive emotions, which Greek students carry unconditionally for being Greek. Here, I should note the intersection of ethnicity and social class. By referring to the "surviving" immigrant students, Markos insinuates that ethnicity and class work together to produce their positioning in the school, mediated through their disadvantaging psychological state. By differentiating between immigrant and "other students at their age", I understand that he implies that non-immigrant Greek students have advantage regardless of their class. This does not mean that Greek students might not suffer emotional distress, anxiety and worries, and that class does not play a role in it. However, ethnicity will always be an additional factor burdening immigrant students and assisting Greek students, and Markos sees that this makes a difference in everyday school life between the two categories of student. The latter can 'cash in' their psychological well-being for a good learning state, while their immigrant classmates will have to work for it. However, Markos' account does not reproduce a victimised image of immigrant students; instead, he sees them as 'trying' to overcome their (undeserved) difficulties. Therefore, the emotional strength of immigrant students emerges as an important capital that he sees they possess.

Interviewing Daphne about how successful she believes the Cretan school was in supporting students to continue their education at non-compulsory level, she says:

About 60% [of the students] I believe they continue with high school [mainstream and vocational]. You see that the children who come to school having as their dream to enter university, they study REALLY [great emphasis] hard, and they stand out immediately. [Turns to another teacher sitting nearby] Do you remember, it was this summer, a girl from Bulgaria, she had private tuitions in ancient and modern Greek so that she can reach [in performance] her classmates the coming year. [The other teacher talks about a similar student case who had private tuitions]. Yes,

yes, and when the family supports them...and you see when parents are educated and cultivated, then they [students] stand out.

(Daphne, early 40s, maths)

From the above quote I understand that Daphne – and the other teacher - sees family as the primary factor affecting student performance, while the work of school comes in second. The family's cultural capital, suggested in the "educated and cultivated" quote as well as the orientation towards higher education, emerges as decisive for viewing a family as 'good' for school. At the same time, the workings of the family's economic capital become visible, in the form of private tuitions. Private tuitions are mentioned here as a proof of the family's cultural capital, since allegedly pro-education immigrant families offer their children this type of academic support. Therefore, economic capital emerges as responsible for the widening of the gaps between working-class ethnic minority students; middle-class ethnic minority students; working-class Greek students; and middle-class Greek students.

Ball, Reay and David (2003) researched the class and ethnic conditions upon which different students make their higher education 'choices', and proposed a distinction between the 'contingent' (minority, working-class) and 'embedded' (minority, middle-class) chooser (Ball, 2006, p.215). I see that the girl from Bulgaria could have been characterised as an 'embedded' chooser, where 'university attendance is a well-established and expected route beyond school' (Ball, 2006, p.222). The cultural and economic resources (capitals), which arguably are available to the girl from Bulgaria, are highlighted not only as important keys for school (and further) success, but also as essentially connected to studiousness and family support. Respectively, one would infer that ethnic minority (or Greek) low-class families unable to afford private tuitions do not support their children's education as they ought. As a consequence, and compared to students with tuition support, working-class students seem to not study 'enough'. When ethnicity is involved, which highlights the need for support with the school language and cultural content, social class amplifies these inequalities.

Contrary to the teachers of the Aegean school, most interviewed teachers at the Cretan school did not appear to express strong deficit views. However, there were certain exceptions. Having said this, even in those few cases, the teachers still appeared to engage in a struggle to understand the schooling conditions for their ethnic minority students, instead of delivering a condemning, ethnicised deliberation.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### **The rules and rulings of the principal's office: (re)constituting ethnic minority students as 'anti-students'**

In this chapter I return to the practices inside the principal offices, and in particular to the way ethnic minority students are monitored for their attendance and disciplined for their 'improper' behaviour. The title of this chapter plays with the dual meaning of 'rule': regulations and court decision. 'Rules', as the regulations on conduct, refer to the structures of the field according to Bourdieu's (1998) theory; that is the principal's office and the way the game is played. 'Ruling', as a court decision, refers to my conceptualisation that the game played in the principal's office becomes a minor court when disciplining students. In this sense, students are 'prosecuted' for their deeds and the principal delivers judgements and penalties, which are then monitored and filed up in 'student records'. My analysis, therefore, explicates how 'ruling' over the behaviour of ethnic minority students is one of the 'rules' of the principal's office, particularly for the case of the Aegean school (mainstream, 60%).

Foucault (1994), interviewed on penal sanctions, suggested that there is 'a tendency to bring penal judgement to bear much more on a qualitative ensemble characterising an existence, a way of being, than on a specific act' (p. 391). As I argue in this chapter, exclusions of ethnic minority students inside the classroom following their constitution as 'anti-students' are then carried inside the principal's office. Through observational data I show how principals are faced with judgements which have to do with how students are constituted learners by the educational institutions, and at the same time, how every judgement they deliver re-constitutes them 'anti-students' until they are led to their final exclusion from schooling. The dispositions of becoming and being a school principal - their principal habitus - and their workings with the dispositions of the schools - the institutional habitus - underlie the whole discussion. In other words, conditions that have been

necessary for someone to become and act as a principal work together with institutional conditions that have created the school's ethos to produce particular principal practices. The analysis of this chapter points towards the principal effect on studentship. Throughout the analysis I show how the practices of the principals may conform or not conform to the prominent logics of their schools, and how they participate in the exclusion of immigrant students from or inclusion in the educational processes.

### **Clashing fields: classroom, office and the assessment of ethnic minority students**

This section addresses cases where principals and teachers are at odds with the practice of each other's field- namely the office and the classroom – when it comes to matters concerning the education of ethnic minority students. The analysis highlights the limitations of straightforward conceptualisations of principalship and underscores the complexity of the range of available practices within the school for an inclusive principal practice.

Giorgos (Aegean, mainstream, 60%) expresses his concerns about the lack of assessment of the teachers' job in Greece and his opinion about the teachers' assessment of ethnic minority students.

Nothing is judged. Nothing is assessed. Whatever happens, it happens because of good will; from both sides [Principal-teachers]. I urge my colleagues to see the [ethnic minority] child more positively, to not fail it, to help it pass to the next grade, if possible ... to encourage it. Because, the more years a child stays next to you, the better it is; whereas if you fail it once, then twice...the third time the child will quit you. And then, if you don't have the child close to you, how are you supposed to help it? It's just that you become trouble-free. My colleagues would wish their classrooms didn't have a single child, so they could come [to teach] once a month. Of course this is an exaggeration, right? In everyday life it's not exactly like this, but in this exaggeration you can see that there are many truths.

The extract shows the clash of two fields, the classroom and the office. Giorgos raises concerns about the assessment of ethnic minority students, blaming at first the lack of teacher assessment in Greece overall. He feels that the matter of having the school running is up to the good will of all parts. The lesson content, didactics and pedagogy is supervised by the designated School Advisors, a particular body of experts; yet, the responsibility of school practice rests with the principals (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2002b). It is worth mentioning that, on different occasions, all three principals referred to state teachers as having the mentality of “public servants”. This is a common Greek phrase to criticise the risk-free employment (life appointment, but for criminal conviction) and ‘at ease’ work ethos of state employees. Giorgos doubts the quality of the teachers’ job concerning all students - and ethnic minority students in particular - on the grounds that they are public servants and not jeopardised by any assessment. This reveals the difficulty that principals face in acting upon their responsibilities due to the logics operating in the field of educational management. I have identified these logics as *pseudo-hierarchy*, to describe the fact that principals have the duty, but limited means to govern their staff; and *illusion of authority*, to describe the fact that they are defined as the decision-makers, but are restricted in practising decision-making. Both of these logics give the principal's post sufficient satisfaction, while maximising state control. Moreover, Giorgos is at odds with teachers who, according to his opinion, put their convenience above the challenges of their multiethnic classrooms. He often argued with a female colleague who opposed to the lenient grading of immigrant students as being unfair to Greek students.

The matter of lenient grading has also been raised by Yannis (Ionian, mainstream, 20%).

Unfortunately not all teachers are capable of providing support. It’s a necessary thing to love to educate. Not all of them [teachers] do and that’s bad. You [I] advise them “give them a higher score to help them out. You know that [if you don’t] eventually you are going to lose them, and it doesn’t cost anything!” I argue with some of them over the matter...You know, a few of them have issues with some of the [ethnic minority] kids; that is because of their behaviour... when they behave naughtily in the



classroom... So, some of them [the teachers] cannot distinguish between performance and behaviour; they don't want to be lenient and give them higher grades... And you know, the teacher is autonomous in the classroom.

Giorgos and Yannis are dissatisfied with the approach of their staff towards ethnic minority students when it comes to giving them grades<sup>50</sup>. This is understood by the principals as lack of caring for students. Manos (intercultural, 40%) also faced the teachers' objections when he suggested an alternative seating arrangement for students, which would both address the lack of space and help the integration and co-education of Greek and ethnic minority students. Here, one might discern the dispositions of the teaching profession; that is, a particular affection for attending to the students' educational and emotional needs through teaching.

The above sketch the struggle of principals practicing according to the logic of pedagogic (dis) engagement: they seek involvement in the immigrant students' education, but they are involved only to the point that this does not affect the teachers' pedagogical autonomy. Practising within the logic of pedagogic (dis) engagement, all three principals appeared to resist these dispositional limitations. Giorgos and Yannis appeared to confront teachers who graded ethnic minority students strictly and/or with bias. Manos too stated that he will "manage somehow to have [the seating arrangements his] way". In all cases, however, such resistance will be exercised within the possibilities for principal action. Therefore, Giorgos and Yannis advise, but cannot enforce other ways of assessing; and Manos will manoeuvre his way around field restriction within the 'limited range of practices' available for such a manoeuvre (Reay, 2004, p.433).

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<sup>50</sup> A short note about the practice of lenient grading: would the giving of higher than deserved grades to ethnic minority students suffice in providing them equal education? There is definitely good will behind leniency in assessment, since these students could receive the certificate for completing compulsory education. However, the question remains on whether they would stand equal chances for continuing with post-compulsory education as Greek students, if classroom practices do not change.

## Unpacking student attendance: three cases of absences

In this and the following section I analyse data collected inside Giorgos' and Manos' offices which portray their interactions with ethnic minority students. These interactions are presented in scenes and grouped into two categories: those that relate to attendance (absences) and those regarding behaviour (naughtiness, trouble-making etc.). The categorisation was based on the coding of office practices, shown in Tables 1 and 2 (Chapter Six). This section presents data from three principal interactions with ethnic minority students on issues of absenteeism. I remind the educational policy on student attendance and the difference between 'justified' and 'unjustified' absences. Absences are recorded in the Attendance Book and are regularly noted in the student's individual record. They are recorded when students miss out class sessions or are expelled from these. For example, if a student is absent or has been expelled for a full school day of 7 class sessions, then s/he is recorded as having 7 absences. Absences are divided into 'justified' and 'unjustified', depending on the reason of absence. The former are those excused by parents or a doctor, while the latter are those that either the parent does not want to excuse (i.e. truancy) or those committed for isolated sessions of the daily curriculum without previous note. Such cases include being expelled from one session by the teacher; being late for the first teaching session, leaving earlier etc. (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 1979). Unjustified absences can only be justified by the principal and only on serious reasons (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 1983). There is a maximum<sup>51</sup> of justified and unjustified absences a student is allowed, in order to be transferred to the next grade. Otherwise, the student fails and has to redo the same year. The 'Basic Guidelines for the Operation of Schools' (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2002a) notes the seriousness of absenteeism in the education of students and their work ethos.

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<sup>51</sup> A student with more than 64 unjustified absences fails. If, for the whole year, s/he has more than 64 and up to 114 absences, s/he does not suffer consequences given that the custodian justifies all the absences exceeding the 64 (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 1979).

I observed that the principals' job in relation to student absences mainly involved monitoring their attendance; warning students at risk and counselling/scolding them; giving directions to teachers regarding the official procedures for critical cases; informing parents and/or calling them in the office to justify their child's absences. Research on student truancy has established that the reasons behind absenteeism lie in various schooling factors, such as the inflexibility of the curriculum and peer pressure (Reid cited in Reid, 2003, p. 4); as well as institutional factors, for example rigid policies and authoritarian educational processes (Claes, Hooghe and Reeskens, 2009). Truanting students are most often found amongst those whose socio-economic and cultural background seem to not fit in the school and those who see themselves as not academically competent (Claes, Hooghe and Reeskens, 2009). The role of the school management has been reported to often see the problem as a student 'obnoxious habit' and a 'law and order problem', instead of relating it to educational processes and content (Claes, Hooghe and Reeskens, 2009, p. 138). Particularly for the case of ethnic minority students, it has often been observed that truancy rates are higher than their 'native' classmates (Reid, 2003; Fernández, 2002). Fernández's (2002) research on the resistances of Latina/Latino students suggested that truancy occurs when students do not feel the gains of the education offered. The consequence is bored students who find no meaning in schooling. Having these in mind, in the next sections I argue that even though absenteeism is rooted into much more complicated educational processes that are intersected by ethnicity and burden the school, the punishment of being recorded with absences is done assuming the immigrant students' 'problematic' educational ethos.

### *A paradoxical absence*

This passage comes from observations in Giorgos' office (Aegean, mainstream, 60%) and shows how being an ethnic minority student can affect school attendance.

The French teacher comes in the office accompanying a male student of Georgian [a former part of the USSR] background who was absent for two weeks. The boy had gone back to Georgia with his mother in order to get some legal paperwork done relating to his immigrant status, and wants to see if he can justify his absences in any way. Giorgos checks the stamps in his passport and says that he'll see what he can do with these situations. The boy leaves with the teacher. Giorgos comments on how difficult it is for immigrant students to be split between two countries.

Giorgos is involved in a seemingly trivial practice of justifying absences. Looking closely, I read the workings of wider political and economic fields via the mechanism of bureaucracy executed through principal practice (Bourdieu, 2004; Bourdieu, Wacquant and Farage, 1994). Immigration is a result of international/global politics driven by financial gains and underscored by power. Bureaucratic procedures for acquiring a legal migratory status are involved in the student's situation. Therefore, behind the student's absence, there lies a complicated nexus of structures, with which Giorgos has now to deal in order to resolve the situation.

Thinking about the symbolic value of this case of bureaucracy, Giorgos' mediation between school policy and the student is crucial. Documentation (i.e. permit, birth certificate, nationality etc.) could be understood as objectified cultural capitals; what is objectified here is nationality and ethnicity (Bourdieu, 2004). These documents become symbolic of divisions: 'being Greek' and 'not-being Greek' (Bourdieu, Wacquant and Farage, 1994). Students are divided according to the face-value of their documentation into those who have the right of unconditional access to state benefits (i.e. education) and those who do not. Bureaucracy, here, defines the terms of belonging and non-belonging of students in the Greek school.

It is clear that Giorgos is positioned as the middle-man between state and student and has to "see what he can do". However, he also has to resolve the paradox in the case of the student's absenteeism. According to Greek educational policy, immigrant students are allowed to register in Greek schools without having a legal permit and/or their documentation pending (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2001a). However, by the end of the school year, students should have sorted out their paperwork; otherwise, they are not

eligible to graduate officially. Their attendance can be only verified by a formal letter issued by the school (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2005). The paradox lies in the fact that the boys' absences<sup>52</sup> actually aimed at his unconditional presence in the school, for which he is charged with absences that put him on the risk of failing the grade. In other words, the student had to be absent from school in order not to be absent from schooling.

Giorgos has to resolve two paradoxical practices: one leading to the student's symbolic capital of belonging through official documentation; and one that leads to his registering with absences in order to gain this capital. I understand, however, that these two practices, even though mutually annulling, are underscored by the same institutional logic. Both have to do with controlling educational processes. Who gets to be a student (migration documenting) and how much of a student one is (absence recording) are practices of state control realised through bureaucracy (Bourdieu, Wacquant and Farage, 1994). This control, however, is – by definition - ingrained in the dispositions of principalship. Giorgos has to navigate through these and serve both the demands of the school and the student. Nonetheless, this navigation could also be construed as an act of resistance to serving school bureaucracy and institutional control. I understand that his willingness to find working ways for the student and his sympathy towards similar difficulties are manifestations of his familial dispositions as a refugee child and his pastoral disposition as a principal. However, the arrays of practices he can employ are, undoubtedly, within the available moves allowed by what 'being a principal' allows (Reay, 2004). It is within the illusion of authority that Giorgos practises, which is one of the logics of practice of the Greek educational management field. The field requires principals who are motivated towards authority over school processes, but the authority available is limited by state control. These limitations are such so that principals practise within the illusion of governing their school, while the post has still a meaning for them. Therefore, Giorgos is dispositioned to author a solution for the student, although he knows that the available solutions are not his to define.

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<sup>52</sup> I understand that for familial, bureaucratic and/or other practical reasons, the student and his mother had to be in Georgia at that time and not at any school break.

### *A 'justified' absence*

I observed a similar case in Manos' office (Cretan, intercultural, 40%), when he had to find a solution to cover for the absences of a male minority student.

A teacher comes in Manos' office to inform him that a male student [of immigrant background] in her class has many 'unjustified' absences in his record and he will fail the grade if they don't justify them somehow. Manos tells the teacher to inform the custodian and he will also justify as many as he can.

The student's custodians cannot justify these absences because they relate to isolated sessions of the daily curriculum. Similarly to Giorgos, Manos is also faced by school bureaucracy, which could result in the termination of schooling for the student. One might suggest that the student should have been more careful and that there is a price to be paid for particular behaviours. I understand, however, that Manos prefers the student to stay in education, rather than fail it; thus, he justifies the absences himself. Manos uses the policy arrangement that gives him the right to justify absences to keep the student in education, even if the reason for absenteeism could have been considered the student's responsibility. Nonetheless, research such as Fernández's (2002) and Reid's (2003) shows that absenteeism results from inadequate educational content that leaves students unengaged. There are a few reasons for why this could be the case of the Cretan school, which was established to be an 'inclusive' school. First, even though it is designated as an 'intercultural' institution, ethnocentric classroom practices were not absent. Second, as a subfield of the Greek education, it is subjected to similar mainstream ethnocentric processes which impair the education of ethnic minority students overall. For example, these could include their academic future beyond the Cretan school; their place in the job market; not to forget that, even though special arrangements apply for immigrant students, still educational content (i.e. books) is to a great extent similar to that applied in mainstream schools.

Within this framework, I read in Manos' practice to go on with justifying absences which could have remained 'unjustified' as resistance to the school's ethnocentric discriminatory processes. The discrimination here lies in the fact that absenteeism –which the particular policy monitors and regulates - is not a matter to be taken light-heartedly; nor to be attributed merely to indifference on the student's part. Considering Manos' understandings on the education of ethnic minority students, it is possible that he reads the boy's absenteeism as student challenge to disadvantaging processes. Manos has shown to appreciate the multifaceted educational and social challenges faced by these students both through his accounts and his continuous professional training on multiculturalism and educational inequalities. Moreover, the institutional habitus appeared to be embracing inclusion and most staff strives to offer immigrant students proper education. I understand principal practice as an amalgam of institutional and vocational dispositions, which are often hard to discern as 'pure' institutional or vocational. In the case of Manos, his dispositions of principalship are amalgamated with two institutional dispositions. He is both a state school principal (i.e. habitus informed by ethnocentric dispositions) and an intercultural school principal (i.e. habitus informed by con-ethnocentric dispositions). His overall practice is thus amalgamated by two different institutional logics, those of the state education (ethnocentrism) and those of the intercultural school (interculturalism). In this instance, he resists the former for the sake of the latter. The institutional policy on absenteeism might appear 'neutral' on the surface, but considering the implications underlying the studentship of ethnic minority students, it is particularly disadvantaging for them. In this sense, it is a case of institutional racism/ethnicism: it may not have such intentions, but its results have a very real discriminatory effect (Gillborn, 2008).

In resisting, Manos does not act against his principalship or outside institutional policy. He still abides by the institutional rules; and uses mainstream policy to support intercultural practice. Manos had the space within policy to practise as he did. Bureaucratic commitments are an inseparable part of principal practice. Making a hypothesis, Manos would not have opted to justify the student's absences, if he had to override bureaucracy – and thus risk his position (Thomson, 2010).

*An (un)justified absence*

This final case was recorded in Giorgos' office (Aegean, mainstream, 60%) and involves two of the 'tough boys', Akis, 15 years old and his deskmate Alexis, 16, both of Georgian origin. Both boys had to re-attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade; Alexis had also attended the 1<sup>st</sup> Grade twice.

*I enter Giorgos' office while he is scolding Akis and Alexis about their piled-up unjustified absences.*

ALEXIS: Mister, I don't like coming to school anyway, why justify them! I want to drop-out [affirmatively].

*Giorgos looks at him disappointingly, but I sense he was expecting this response. He then turns to the other student.*

GIORGOS: Do you also want to drop out?

AKIS: Er... [voice fading].

GIORGOS: [in a strict but pastoral manner] It's important, you know, to finish compulsory education and get the certificate. Everywhere you look for a job, you'll be asked to show this certificate. You won't even be able to work as a builder.

AKIS: [low voice] No... it's not that...[interrupted by Giorgos]

GIORGOS: If you want to continue in education, you have to be very careful and pay attention. OK? Now, you both may leave.

As analysed in the previous chapter, these boys – members of the 'tough boys' group of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade B – have been constituted through classroom practices as 'badly behaved' and 'unintelligible as [...] learner[s]' (Youdell, 2006b, p. 115). I have argued that they embodied anti-capitals, i.e. cultural/ethnic characteristics and behaviours that are 'counter' to the values assessed by the school (Grenfell, 2009, p.25). Therefore, their conduct, skills and knowledge could not be read as constituting 'student material', which resulted in their exclusion from classroom processes. Moreover, I have showed how these students posed



ongoing challenges to the pedagogic authority of their teachers as an effort to resist 'institutional incorporation' (Mac an Ghaill cited in Youdell, 2003, p. 4). In the above extract Giorgos scolds them because they have piled up unjustified absences and are about to fail the grade. The question, therefore, is whether these absences are actually 'unjustified' grounded on the boys' recklessness, or if a justification is to be found elsewhere. Having in mind the discussion about the reasons behind truancy, i.e. inflexibility of the curriculum and peer pressure (Reid in Reid, 2003); authoritarian education (Claes, Hooghe and Reeskens, 2009); and inadequate educational content and methods Fernández's (2002), the answer is to be found in classroom practices and institutional processes. In other words, if an ethnocentric education ignores the 'tough boys', they will in turn ignore education too.

At the same time, we should look into Giorgos' involvement in the students' absenteeism. Being the school principal, Giorgos is at the receiving end of the practices inside the classroom. I have discussed earlier his frustration in trying to negotiate with teachers on the matter of grading ethnic minority students. In one of our interviews he criticised the education delivered in Greek schools, and showed his sympathy for students who find its content uninspiring and unattractive. Having this in mind, I would suggest that Giorgos, acknowledging the field rules of pedagogic (dis) engagement, sees limited –if any at all– space for changing the work behind classroom doors. This could explain, according to my understanding, his rhetoric towards the two boys, which is not focusing on the educational content as a gain, but on completing schooling and gaining the certificate. Principal dispositions compel Giorgos to be in charge of the situation and discipline the boys as the 'licensed authority' (Ball, 1987, p. 82), since he has to make sure that they conform to the school's logic; even if he would have wanted to practice differently. His inability to change classroom practices – or the school's logic overall – leaves him with the only option to advise the boys to get the obvious institutional gain, i.e. the certificate. Concurrently, Giorgos formalises the exclusionary practices of the classroom and makes explicit the rules of the field to the two students. He officially informs them about their remaining options and the fact that if they do not conclude compulsory education, their chances in the labour market are scarce. Giorgos' practice regarding the options available to students is

restricted. In this way, Giorgos participates in the exclusion of the students by enacting (illusion of) authority: he does what has been rendered possible within the limits of principalship, which is to articulate the educational impossibilities to the immigrant students.

Two final notes, the first of which concerns Giorgos' different treatment of the two boys. His advice is directed towards Akis, while Alexis stays at the back of the 'stage'. This leads me to suggest that Giorgos sees the case of the former as a viable one, unlike the latter, which is incurable. I understand that a 'triage' procedure is performed in the office (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000), where Giorgos tries to 'save' the student who is most likely to be saved. The second note raises questions about the students' self - positioning towards this practice of triage. Classroom observations have shown that both of them knew their standing in the classroom field and they challenged it. However, the two boys have now different reactions to their imminent exclusion. Alexis appears certain about his decision - and the institutional decision for that matter - to terminate his studentship. Akis, on the other hand, does not seem ready to end his schooling experience. Having their own accounts of this incident would have illuminated this different self and institutional positioning. My hunch, though, is that Alexis is not saved because he does not want to be saved. It would have only been a superficial saving, since he would still be excluded from educational and social rights. Nonetheless, for both 'tough boys' it is the behaviour that remains 'unjustified' and not the discriminatory educational processes.

*Principal practice, absenteeism and the mechanism of (re)constituting ethnic minority students as 'problematic'*

In this section I have shown that through their business-as-usual appearance, routine, bureaucratic and seemingly trivial administrative chores actually conceal significant implications for the educational inclusions and/or exclusions of immigrant students. As

Delgado and Stefancic (2001) suggest, ordinariness is what makes discriminatory practices hard to understand and handle. At the same time, my analysis has advocated that principal action when dealing with issues of ethnic minority (or any) student is not adequately 'explained by reference to the triggering stimulus' (Bourdieu, 1993, p.46). In other words, in explaining why Giorgos and Manos acted as they did in the presented cases of absenteeism, one should look beyond the surface. Principal practice is bound by principal and institutional dispositions. What appears to be a spontaneous respond to someone else's action, is in fact rooted in a complicated – and often not completely traceable – nexus of dispositions, internalised by principals through their becoming and being principals in particular institutions as particular individuals (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003; Reay, Ball and David, 2005). The principals appeared to resist and, at the same time, accommodate their school's logic of practice, as well as the logic of the field of Greek educational management. Their practices were trying to balance the authority which they had to embody, field pressures and personal understandings.

I understand that the recording of absences and the compilation of a student file has an underlying function, that of controlling the 'qualitative ensemble' (Foucault, 1994, p.391) that constitutes ethnic minority students as non-fitting anti-students. As argued, absences do not happen on straightforward reasons; other processes – institutional, educational, social, financial, political etc., — explain 'boredom', 'disinterest' and truancy. However, the reason of absences is attributed by the field of Greek education to 'anti – capitals' (Grenfell, 2009), and are linked with the students' familial backgrounds as essential qualities characterising ethnic minority students. Absences are noted in the student records and files and is an obligatory practice serving school bureaucracy. These objects (notebooks and files) are inscribed with a trail of each student's attendance, in order to monitor and control the educational 'gap' created due to their absence (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2002a). Effectively, a big 'gap' leads to failure. In other words, one could say that these serve as objectified institutional capitals accounting for a student's eligibility to graduate (Reay, Ball and David, 2005).

In the case of ethnic minority students, every absence is (mis)recognised as indifference on the part of the students. As absences pile up in the records, the student 'qualities' which are to be blamed are augmented as 'problematic'. Meanwhile, and between absences, no blame is placed on the part of the school; therefore, a change is expected on the part of the student. The result is that at every case of recorded absence these qualities – which are considered essential of the student's ethnic background – are reconfirmed as essential. When absences have past the allowed limit, they are judged as untreatable (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000) and students are dismissed. Records and files work as evidence of ethnic minority students being 'anti-students' and as symbolic of their entitlement to studentship.

I construe this process as a mechanism of ongoing (re)constitutions of ethnic minority students as 'failures', which operates unnoticed as such a mechanism. Its concealed nature – and force – lies in its seeming irrelevance to discriminatory processes and concurrent relevance to the operation of the school. The principal is responsible for keeping the mechanism running and is accountable for who is allowed to stay in education and who is not. However, the initial judgements on studentship mostly remain a matter of the classroom and teacher practice. The principals participate in this little, if at all, due to their (dis)engaged positioning in relation to pedagogic procedures. The way the three principals acted upon their accountability was demonstrated in this chapter through difference circumstances of absenteeism.

### **Disciplining anti-capitals: ethnicity, class, gender and Giorgos' office practice**

This section presents three cases of ethnic minority students being sent into Giorgos' office to be told off for being late for class; dressing inappropriately; and causing too much 'trouble'. One of the cases involves a female student. In all cases, the parents have been cast as responsible and accountable for their children's deeds. Concomitantly, these

disciplinary practices sketch the 'ideal' student/learner type (Gillborn, 1990; Youdell, 2006b; Bradbury, 2013), who is shown to be white, middle-class, Greek-ethnic, asexual, hypo – feminine/hypo- masculine, and docile. Consequently, any other or opposing qualities are considered school 'anti-capitals' (Grenfell, 2009) and the students possessing them are characterised 'anti-students'. The relation between office and classroom practices is significant, since the exclusionary processes of the latter appear to be transferred into the former.

Sanctions occur when students deviate from 'proper' student behaviour and from the regulations and ethics of the school (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 1979). Disciplinary practice ranges from remark and expulsion from single sessions to change of school environment. Teachers record such incidents in the 'Sanction Book'. Depending on the student's overall behaviour, the graduation certificate characterises student conduct as 'exemplary', 'decent' or 'objectionable' (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 1969) . My analysis of principalship and its pedagogical implications showed that discipline was one of the dispositions of principalship embodied by all three men; this, however, happened through differentiated practices. Yannis and Giorgos acted as disciplinarians inside their offices, when students were sent by teachers. Manos would spontaneously scold students while he wandered around the school; discipline was not in his daily routine as was for Giorgos. These different modes of disciplinary practice were also constructed through teacher understandings of the principal as a pedagogue. At the Aegean school (Giorgos, mainstream, 60%) teachers clearly defined the principal as a disciplinarian. Contrarily, teachers of the Cretan school (Manos, intercultural, 40%) linked the principal's pedagogical role more with the content and method of the curriculum and less with regulating student behaviour. Chapter Seven showed that the teachers of the Aegean school portrayed deficit views of ethnic minority students, which were translated into their practices. In turn, the students appeared to resist and challenge the teachers' pedagogic authority and fought back for their inclusion in the classroom processes. Eventually, they were branded as 'failing', 'unintelligible as [...] learner[s]' (Youdell, 2006b, p. 115) and as 'misbehaving'.

The analysis suggests that the principalship of the Aegean school (mainstream, 60%) receives and re-enacts classroom practices imbued with ethnic/racial, classed and gendered discriminatory structures. Giorgos embodies disciplining dispositions, as he is called to scold, warn and/or punish minority students. My argument is that every scene in Giorgos' office is a minor 'trial' with particular rules and judgements on whether the student fits the 'ideal' student type. Giorgos offers what seem to be finalities in instantaneous trials of particular student 'misbehaviours' with the purpose of rehabilitation. However, these are neither instantaneous nor finalities. They are rather build-ups of ongoing assessments of the (anti-) 'qualities' of ethnic minority students as they occur inside the classroom; and re-constitutions of students as 'failing' and 'punished' when returning to their classrooms. In this sense, the punishment of these students is not only to be found in the actual disciplinary actions taken by Giorgos (i.e. scolding, calling parents, suspension etc.), but in the mere fact of being sent in the principal's office. I argue that through the office practices students are cast as responsible for their behaviour, while institutional structures of ethnocentrism and class and gender misconstructions are mostly left unchallenged. Nonetheless, it is also shown that principal resistance does emerge, but in more subtle ways that do not pose a threat to Giorgos' position in the school.

### *Late for class*

The following scene took place in Giorgos' office during the break following the first session of the day.

A student from 1<sup>st</sup> Grade with an Albanian name and another boy of darker skin colour (he is one of the 'mousoulmanakia'<sup>53</sup>) are sent in the office by

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<sup>53</sup> 'Mousoulmanos' is the Greek word for 'Muslim'; 'mousoulmanaki'/'mousoulmanakia' is the diminutive form (singular/plural) for 'Muslim kids'. This group of Muslim students of the 1<sup>st</sup> grade has been named as such by the teachers, and were often reported to cause trouble. Most of them had failed to be promoted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade; in the observed classes I did not see any 'mousoulmanaki'. I have kept their naming in Greek, so that their presence as a distinct student group is clear to the reader.

their teacher, as they were late for class. They were already been recorded with an 'absence'. The 'mousoulmanaki' has visited the office again, on reasons of 'misbehaviour'. Giorgos is standing behind his desk furious and asks them why they turned in late. The 'mousoulmanaki' answers that he doesn't like school and doesn't want to come anymore. The 'mousoulmanaki' all this time has been standing near the office's door, while the other boy has moved further inside. Giorgos then asks the boy from Albania. He says that he thought classes wouldn't take place today. Giorgos doesn't believe him and asks whether his mother knows about it. The boy says that his mother is a cleaner and leaves home before he wakes up. Giorgos browses through the boy's record and finds the phone number of his father and calls him. Their communication is difficult, as I understand that the father is not fluent in Greek. All this time the 'mousoulmanaki' (now standing outside the open office door) makes funny faces to the Albanian boy. The father appears to say to Giorgos that the mother has the boy's custody. The boy gets really nervous hearing this. After they hang up, the boy begs Giorgos not to call his mother, as he will get into trouble. Meanwhile, the 'mousoulmanaki' seems bored. Finally, Giorgos doesn't call the mother; he scolds the boy, gives him a warning and lets him go. The Albanian boy leaves together with the 'mousoulmanaki', who is giggling.

The office has turned from the administrative/bureaucratic headquarters of the school into a court-like room with standardised processes and roles: Giorgos is the 'judge', teachers are the 'plaintiffs' and ethnic minority students are the 'defendants'. The judge sets the case of the offence and the students apologise; then a penalty is set. The rules of this 'court', however, are different than an actual one in two significant ways. First, in this case, the 'judge' and the 'plaintiffs' share the same interest, which is to enact and maintain their pedagogic authority as the institutional agents (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Therefore, there is no 'independence' of this court's ruling. Second, when the defendant makes a case against the plaintiff in an actual court, the judge is obliged to examine the defendant's side as well, before delivering a decision. In this scene, the 'mousoulmanaki' explains that he doesn't "like school", as an explanation for why he tried to skip classes. Even though a case is made against the plaintiffs/pedagogic agents, there is no examination whatsoever of the boy's claim – or any further implications for their 'disliked' educational practice.

It is interesting how the bodies are positioned in the space. Giorgos is behind the office desk, standing, which I construe as a manifestation of his furiousness and emotional

involvement in the scene. The two boys occupy different places in the office; the Albanian boy is closer to Giorgos' desk, while the 'mousoulmanaki' stands closer to the office's door. Between the boys and Giorgos is the desk, in a way that the former stand some distance from it being 'exposed', while Giorgos is half-covered by his desk. These details show how the office is not, in any way, the field of student practice. It retains its unfamiliarity – and thus its symbolic value as the higher rank of authority within the school. It is in this symbolism that the 'principal's office' has the ability to work as the locus of treating the more serious cases of disciplinary offences. This is why being in the principal's office is a punishment in itself.

The arrangement of the bodies in the office also reveals the dispositions of Giorgos and the 'mousoulmanaki' towards the latter's education. On the one hand, having received a negative answer regarding his future with schooling, Giorgos ignores the 'mousoulmanaki' for the whole duration of the scene, which is probably grounded on previous incidents with this particular student. My understanding is that Giorgos sees that there is no hope with him, so he does not lose time in disciplining him; what could be construed as a 'triage' process of rejecting the hopeless case (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). Having in mind that the boy has a darker skin colour, and the constitution of the 'mousoulmanakia' group as a distinct categorisation of Muslim students, I suggest that this triage involves conceptualisations of an 'ideal' student type who is white, Orthodox Christian and not of a low social class. Concurrently, the mousoulmanaki's position next to the entrance/exit of the office shows his resistance to being disciplined. His statement of wanting to stop school is actually an a priori annulment of any punishment the principal could have issued. As research suggests (Grant, 1997; Youdell 2011), any student knows where s/he stands within the field and how s/he is evaluated. In this case, the 'mousoulmanaki' uses his knowledge of his 'unintelligib[ility] as a learner' (Youdell, 2006b, p.115) in order to also remain unintelligible as an 'offender'.

Giorgos addresses the Albanian boy exactly because he believes there is still hope for rehabilitation. After his excuse that fails to convince Giorgos, he decides to call the boy's father. I have argued earlier that the principal legitimises and formalises the judgements



done earlier by the teachers. In various cases the formalisation of the students' exclusion involved the use of objects (i.e. objectified cultural capitals) which symbolically represented the pedagogic authority exercised by the school. A written note is given to students who have committed many absences to pass on to their parents. Similarly, the telephone device is used to inform parents about their child's misbehaviour. These could be understood as technologies of disciplinary practice (Foucault, 1991), which constitute institutional means of inflicting punishment to students - here, the fear of the parent finding out. It seems that calling the boy's mother was a harsh punishment, judging from the boy's reaction. Recollecting on my days as a student, I remember that there was not so much fear for getting the actual penalty, as it was for informing my parents and knowing that other teachers (and classmates) also knew. In a similar way, I see that the actual punishment for the Albanian boy is being in the principal's office.

Two final notes to be made here concern the decision of Giorgos to not go ahead with calling the boy's mother, and the involvement of parents in the disciplinary school practices. Regarding the former, could we construe this as an act of principal resistance? Giorgos has already made the call to the non-custodian parent; however, there was no informing of the boy's actual custodian about his truancy. According to educational policy (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 1983), custodians should be informed on any absence their child makes. I understand that Giorgos should have gone forward with making the call to the boy's mother, but he resisted, seeing that the consequences could have been harsh for the boy. In an earlier account, Giorgos sympathised with the difficulties faced by immigrant students and their families. Regarding the second note, immigrant parents are seen by the Aegean school as largely responsible for their children's performance and behaviour. In teacher accounts they were seen as failing in their parenting role and/or uninterested for their children's education. This scene shows the exact opposite. There is a mother who is very much interested in her boy's studentship and who will be furious if she finds out about her child skipping classes. I turn back to the matter of immigrant families and their constitution as 'indifferent' and 'ineffective' later on.

### *Low-cut jeans and short top*

This scene follows the complaint some teacher has made to Giorgos about the ‘provocative’ way in which a female student of Georgian background was dressed. This is one of the few student cases involving female students. Giorgos responds to the teacher’s judgment on ‘improper’ attire by calling the girl in his office.

Giorgos has called in his office a girl (Georgian background) because she came to school wearing ‘provocative’ clothes. The girl is wearing low-cut jeans (I’m guessing her undies must be showing when she bends) and a short top that reveals her belly-button. Giorgos tells her that this is inappropriate and that he will call her father to discipline her. The phone-call is a brief one; Giorgos speaks to the girl’s father in singular [grammatical] form. When they hang up, Giorgos tells her in a strict manner to leave and not to come to school again looking like this.

Both gendered and ethnicised student capitals are entailed in this assessment process that judges the girl as ‘improperly’ dressed. I understand that attire has made the girl an ‘unintelligible’ student (Youdell, 2006b, p. 115). I also understand that classroom judgements on attire, behaviour and achievement have been working together with ethnicised, classed and gendered structures, such as those described in the previous chapter, in making the girl an anti-student. The student’s femininity and/or sexuality portrayed in clothing (i.e. revealing flesh) are construed as ‘heterodoxic cultural capital[s]’ (Grenfell, 2009, p. 23); particularly for these student ages of 12-15.

Giorgos’ way of handling the situation suggests that ethnicity and class are also involved in the disciplining practices directed to the girl. Calling the girl’s father implies the attribution of her ‘improperness’ to her familial background. The father does not have a good command of Greek. For the sake of communication, Giorgos speaks to him in singular form, whereas official communication in Greek requires the use of plural for politeness. I have observed that he modified his register in other similar cases, while he maintained

plural for politeness when talking to Greek interlocutors. I understand that the reason was to facilitate communication with those who were challenged by the Greek language. However, this resulted in a more informal, instructional mode of communication while Giorgos exerted authority on the immigrant father. The uneven positioning of the two men was formed upon pairs of opposites on the axes of authority, ethnicity and class: principal (institutional)/parent (non-institutional); indigenous/immigrant; Greek/non-Greek; middle-class/working-class. I should note that, in this case, the unequal positioning caused by the first pair (principal/parent) results from the cumulative effects of the other pairs. Gkaintartzi, Markou and Tsokalidou (2012) argue that, during the communication between Greek schools and immigrant parents, specific linguistic and cultural capitals are being negotiated, and upon these the terms and degree of parent participation are judged. Blackledge (2001) talks about school and immigrant families as being two contesting fields, whose interaction creates or retains wider power relations. Auerbach (1993) argues that the linguistic and cultural difference of immigrant parents is usually construed by the school as a deficit that needs to be counteracted. Braun, Vincent and Ball (2008) note that working-class parents are seen by teachers as needing more support and guidance in parenthood than their middle-class counterparts. The above issues are also portrayed in the next extract.

Before I close this discussion, I should draw a comparison between this Georgian girl and Tanya 'the wildcat' from the Cretan school. Similar negative conceptualisations about Tanya's femininity/sexuality and ethnicity emerged through the accounts of her Physics teacher, Daphne. In contrast, her Literature teacher, Fani, appeared to assess her more positively; therefore, what counted as anti-capital in Daphne's lesson, it counted as capital in Fani's. However, Tanya never ended up in Manos' office because of her 'provocative' attire. The different assessment of Tanya and the Georgian girl could be understood as workings of the different institutional dispositions of the Cretan and the Aegean school. The different policies, classroom practices (including/excluding), staff qualifications (post-graduate/graduate), understandings and behaviours (progressive/traditional), all contribute to different views of two similar cases of female students. Within these, the two principals

practise accordingly and exercise their disciplinary actions towards ethnic minority students in distinct ways.

### *Too much disturbance*

In this final scene I return to the three of the 'tough boys', Alexis (Georgian background, 16), Akis (Georgian background, 15) and Konstandin (Albanian background, 15). Earlier, I have presented the case of Alexis and Akis being sent into Giorgos' office to be warned about their absences. While Akis appeared to worry about the risk of interrupting his education, Alexis was assertive that he wanted to stop schooling. In this scene, the boys are sent to Giorgos' office to be disciplined for their behaviour during classes.

Alexis, Akis and Konstandin are sent in the office because they disturbed the lesson. Just before they enter the office, Giorgos tells me in a low voice 'now, watch what happens'. He is very angry with them and talks to them standing up. The boys are standing cool and unaffected by his yelling. He goes through classroom files [where teachers record what has happened during the lesson] and counts how many times they have caused disturbance. He then goes through the students' files and sees how many absences they have. Giorgos tells them off and suspends them for one day. The boys receive their punishment without complaint (as if they knew it was coming). In three consecutive phone calls he contacts their homes and tells their parents to come to his office to be informed about their children's conduct.

This scene does not suggest a trial as was the case in the previous scenes. A decision has already been taken, on the basis of classroom assessments that were recorded in the students' files; now the 'culprits' are called to receive their punishment. A first thing to comment on is Giorgos' anticipation that it would be an intense episode with the boys. He knows that they were 'trouble-makers' and probably has seen them often in his office. As I noted earlier, the office is a field which students do not own as a space. Therefore, the game is played by the rules of the office. However, the extract reveals that, actually, the

'tough boys' have managed to resist – at least momentarily – its rules. While Giorgos is agitated, the boys remain calm and apathetic at his yelling. Even when the punishment is announced, they do not protest. I see this as student resistance to the rules of the office field. Giorgos' authority and disciplinary practice fails to shake or rehabilitate the boys, as it ought to. At that moment, the symbolic authority of the principal and his office is shaken; yet, it still exists, since it yields effects on the boys, who get suspended.

The boys' resistance could be understood as a contestation of the field of the office and the authority of the principal. Haynes (2005) and Grant (2007) talk about how educational institutions employ mechanisms, such as suspensions/detentions and other practices, for subtly communicating to students that they want them docile subjects. Following Foucault, Haynes (2005) suggests that practices of suspension are rationalised by the institutional logic of retaining its order and improving its operation. Similarly, Grant's (2007) research on the disciplinary technologies of tertiary educational institutions establishes that 'students are disciplined both by the institution and by themselves to become more like the norm of the 'good' student' (p. 101), but at the same time 'norm is a particular cultural construction of studenthood which for some students is almost impossible to become' (p. 102). For the 'tough boys', as I analysed in Chapter Seven, it would be impossible to embody the doxic cultural capitals required by classroom practices. To have done so would be like being 'fish out of its bowl[s]' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The cited scene elucidates exactly how the boys resist becoming docile and succumbing to the institutional disciplinary practices. They reject the pedagogic authority communicated through Giorgos, and in this way they keep their 'anti-student' dispositions in a field that excludes them.

In this scene Giorgos clearly appears to embody the disciplinarian's role. The way he stands; commands his voice; uses the 'evidence' for the boys' misbehaviour (classroom files); announces the penalty and informs their parents; all these suggest that Giorgos acts as the disciplinarian principal he should be. There is no resistance on his part against exerting authority, arguably because the 'tough boys' have exhausted all of the school's 'tolerance'. Of course, the school tolerates those who embody the 'right' qualities at least to

some level; non-fitting students are not tolerated. Therefore, as the analysis so far has shown, non-docile, non-Greek and non-middle class students are tolerated only to the extent that their presence does not challenge the structures of the Aegean School. Giorgos has to preserve these structures; resistance comes only to the point that the institution, and consequently his position within it, are not at risk (Thomson, 2010). A final note concerns the parents. When students have exhausted the 'chances' the school has given them to become 'good' students, the responsibility (and blame) is put on parents. Nonetheless, these chances were exhausted from the very beginning, by the clash between doxic school and heterodoxic student/familial cultural capitals. Therefore, in effect, the school has never given 'chances' to the 'tough boys'. Instead, the school let it seem as the 'tough boys' could not take the chances offered to them, and it casts their parents responsible for what is to happen to them.

#### *The rules of routine and principal rulings on ethnic minority students*

In all the examples presented here, as in the cases of absences, the Aegean school (as every other school) uses a system of bureaucratic routines to monitor and control the disruption of the learning process; the disrespect towards others (i.e. misbehaviour); and the educational 'gap' (i.e. absenteeism) (Hellenic Ministry of Education, 2002a). A set of institutional objectified cultural capitals are utilised in the effort to control school processes: the 'Attendance Book', the classroom records, the 'Sanction Book', and the students' records and files. All these account for the students' eligibility to graduate and the characterisation of their studentship as 'exemplary' or other. These objectified capitals are routinely kept and mundanely visited when needed. In the case of non-conforming 'anti-students', they record an additive story of their 'anti-school' behaviour and gradually lead the principal to give advice, warnings and/or punishment when the lines of 'tolerance' are crossed. In other words, I would say that these technologies of discipline (Foucault, 1991)

make the principal an 'unseen watcher', which gives her/him the possibility for 'continuous surveillance' (Grant, 2007, p. 109). To these technologies are added the telephone and note-giving to parents. Phone-calls and notes to parents are only issued by the principal's office and after the principal's approval. These add to the symbolic power of the principal and the office as the locus of the ultimate pedagogic authority inside the school. It is also the technologies through which the principal is involved in the pedagogic work happening inside the classrooms.

Through this daily routine and trivial bureaucracy an ongoing surveillance takes place that aim to discipline students. As Grant (2007) suggests, even if disciplinary practices are rationalised as autonomous and addressing particular student behaviours, in reality they are interwoven with institutional structures. In addition, as analysed earlier, the disciplinary action of the principal does not target isolated incidents of 'anti-school' behaviour. It rather addresses a build-up of such behaviours, which are attributed to a 'qualitative ensemble' constituting the 'anti-students' (Foucault, 1994, p. 391). The rulings of the principal, thus, follow the rules of the school and the construed conceptualisations of ethnic minority students and their distance from the 'ideal' student/learner (Gillborn, 1990; Youdell, 2006b; Bradbury, 2013). This 'ideal' learner was shown to be white, middle-class, Greek-ethnic, asexual, hypo-feminine female, hypo-masculine male and docile. Nonetheless, Giorgos' practices revealed minor resistance, which was conditioned by vocational, institutional and familial dispositions.

A last issue to raise here is the re-constitution of 'anti-students' through every disciplinary practice. As the principal is the 'licensed authority' (Ball, 1987, p. 82) of the school, the disciplinary practices that he performs have a particular weight, which is based on this (illusion of) authority. At the same time, any disciplinary action taken against 'misbehaving' students gives legitimisation to the 'ideal' student type, which is (re)produced inside the classroom. After their 'trial' has finished, they return to the classroom as the disciplined ones. Upon their return in the classroom, all such cases are confirmed as 'anti-students' who deserve punishment. Simultaneously, their anti-capitals are also confirmed as such. Accordingly, the students probably strengthen their resistance to the institutional

discriminatory processes. I recite a part of an incident with Akis, from the 'tough boys', and Philitsa, the literature teacher:

PHILITSA: [...] I'll expel you from the lesson and you'll get an absence!  
AKIS: No Mrs another absence! I've already got my daily dose in the morning!

Akis' earlier expulsion did not deter him from challenging Philitsa's pedagogic authority. As I argued, Akis' metaphorical use of the phrase "daily dose" gives the sense that being disciplined is a routine, almost an institutional 'addiction' that has to happen every day.

Atkins *et al* (2002) suggest that suspending a frequently disruptive student as a way to deal with this behaviour does not resolve the problem. Instead, it is probable that s/he will keep acting like this in order to escape unrewarding work and non-interesting lessons by drawing the attention of her/his classmates. The researchers also suggest that when school does not put forward reward programmes but insists in disciplinary practice, then it 'may have allowed these students to escape and replace a nonrewarding environment (i.e., school) with a more rewarding one (i.e., home or neighborhood)' (Atkins *et al*, 2002 p. 368). Therefore, as classroom practices do not value the heterodox cultural capitals of the students, they resolve to challenge school authority, while trying to make themselves included in the educational processes.



## CHAPTER NINE

### The (im)possibilities of principal practice for an education-for-all

My thesis presented three principals, Yannis, Giorgos and Manos, as they practised principalship in three different multiethnic secondary schools in Greece. Through these school ethnographies I sought to understand how principal practice happens in multiethnic schools and how it affects educational processes for ethnic minority students. Suturing literature on racial/ethnic inequalities in schools (Gillborn, 1995, 2008; Reay, 1995b; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Youdell, 2006b; 2011;) with contextualised approaches to school principalship (Ball, 1987; Thrupp, 1999; Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie; 2003; Thomson, 2010), my initial hypothesis was that doing principalship in ways that are non-discriminatory towards ethnic minority students might be restricted by vocational, institutional and individual/familial dispositions. In other words, I wanted to suggest that principal understandings of ethnic minority students - and so their ideas about the students' education and future - are shaped within particular settings and vocational ethos, and may (intentionally or unintentionally) produce exclusionary practices. In addition, I wished to unearth the possibilities for inclusive pedagogies that lie in the apparent impossibilities of existing school structure and practices.

This thesis is concluded at a time when Greece is faced by a severe socioeconomic crisis, one effect of which is the rise of extreme-right groups. The school is placed at the front-line, burdened with the responsibility to turn things around, but also blamed for not having forestalled racism. Moreover, migration continues to be a major issue affecting school processes. Despite talks about multiethnicity in Greece, the Greek educational system is still highly ethnocentric. The establishment of special 'intercultural' schools failed to address ethnocentrism, since deeper structural forms of racial/ethnic discrimination remained untackled (Troyna and Williams, 1986; Gillborn, 1995; 2002; Delgado and Stefancic, 2001). With this backdrop, the role of school principals is essential: they have to

cater effectively for their ethnic minority students and stimulate learning environments where ethnic, racial and cultural domination is challenged. While much research has engaged with the implications of multiethnicity for teacher practice, little attention has been paid to principalship. This is not surprising, since educational work is first and foremost delivered by teachers. Nonetheless, what this thesis argues is that principal practice have important implications on the education of ethnic minority students, which go mostly unnoticed due to their main role as ‘managers’ and less as pedagogues.

My research contributes substantially to the examination of principalship and diversity in the Greek context, since little attention has been paid on the matter. Moreover, it contributes to international literature on school management through the theoretical stance it takes: it unpacks the seemingly mundane practices of day-to-day administration, showing that not only principals do affect classroom processes in indirect ways, but they are also implicated in the direct constitution of ethnic minority students as ‘good’ or ‘failing’ through the minutiae of school management. My study also speaks of issues above and beyond principalship. It unearths the ethnocentrism of the Greek educational system, and talks about the wider structures of discrimination (ethnicised, classed and gendered) that build school practices, including principalship. In other words, I speak of contextualised principalship, with this situatedness and complexity becoming the analytical tool for approaching the work of principals with ethnic minority students. I propose Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, capitals, fields and logic of practice, as well as the concept of institutional habitus (Reay, Ball and David, 2005) and principal habitus (Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie, 2003) as the ‘conceptual toolbox’ for handling these questions (Ball, 2006b, p. 3).

In this chapter I bring together the arguments developed throughout my thesis. I start by highlighting the main findings of this research concerning the vocational and institutional conditions that produce inclusive principal practices in the schools. I then go on to discuss the possibilities and impossibilities of principal practice for an education-for-all, arguing that principalship happens as a constellation of institutional, principal and familial dispositions. Here I raise the issue of agency, trying to identify the room for a ‘free’ principal

practice that could cut through structures of ethnocentrism. Finally, I turn to the quintessential question of my work: what does the thesis do for the real principals of real multiethnic schools?

### **Principalship for inclusive schools: contextual and vocational conditions**

The thesis told the stories of principals working with ethnic minority students, at three levels: the institutional, the vocational and the classroom. These levels interacted with each other forming complicated and often indiscernible patterns of principal practice regarding minority students, within which possibilities and impossibilities for inclusive education are born.

#### *Institutional dispositions and the logic(s) of the classroom*

Since context played an important role in conceptualising principal practice, I started by telling the stories of the three schools. I utilised the concept of institutional habitus (Reay, Ball and David, 2005) to explore those elements that contribute towards the school ethos: educational contents and methods, policies, staff, location, and student composition.

School demographics of the centre of the City, supported by additional ethnographic data, show that, even though schooling in Greece is free, there is a local quasi-school market (Ball, 2006a) operating on the basis of ethnicity. The status of schools as 'good' or 'bad' was being construed by educators and parents upon the ethnic profile of its student population. 'Intercultural' schools, understood to be 'schools for immigrants', were also positioned as less desirable than mainstream schools. This school stratification was also contributed to by the limited attention paid by the state to the education of immigrant students (e.g. lack of educational and pedagogic provisions, teaching resources and

methods, teacher support etc.). Given this, the 'mainstream' and 'intercultural' divisions of education in Greece can be conceptualised as fields of social struggle, and their policies as carrying within them a particular '*production of "truth" and "knowledge"*' (Ball, 2006a; p.48). I argue that these 'truths' and 'knowledges' were constructed as and by ethnocentricity, which 'normalised' the mainstream schools and 'abnormalised' the intercultural schools as a 'particular' sort of education aiming at 'particular' types of students.

This thinking about mainstream and intercultural schools and policies was evident in the way principals positioned themselves within them. Yannis (Ionian, mainstream, 20%) understood intercultural education to celebrate difference which, for him, meant 'inferiority'; thus, he did not see this educational scheme as of concern for his ethnic minority students. He wanted them to be treated as "same", "equals", "almost Greek" in a "normal" mainstream school. Since intercultural education was assigned to particular 'intercultural' schools for particular audiences, Yannis saw that his (mostly) Greek students did not need education for 'otherness'. Yannis practised within a Greek ethnocentric institutional habitus that informed his educational strategies towards ethnic minority students.

Giorgos (Aegean, mainstream, 60%) rejected educational theories of equality and doubted the application of pluralism in schools as a pedagogical method, fearing that opposing views among students would create upheaval in classrooms. This view was rooted in the 'street realities' of his principalship (Ball, 1987, p.80). With 60% of minority students making up the school's population, the lack of appropriate educational support for multiethnicity and the ethnocentrism of the local quasi-school market, Giorgos knew that he managed a 'failing' school. He thus saw no possible application of 'everyone is equal' and other progressive theories (such as interculturalism), since reality would fail his immigrant students. The tough socioeconomic conditions faced by the immigrant students of his inner-city school necessitated practical instead of theoretical approaches to education. The social inequalities reproduced through schooling were insurmountable, and so educational strategies should fit rather than fight the 'conservative' educational system. Giorgos' account alluded to the notion of institutional 'normality', where 'normality' means

compliance to pragmatism. These 'normal', 'pragmatic' institutional dispositions constituted the ethos of the Aegean school as mediated through Giorgos' understandings.

For Manos (Cretan school, intercultural 40%), the very condition of his principalship inclined him to adopt interculturalism, since he was a principal appointed to an intercultural school. By definition, the educational and pedagogic aims of the Cretan school were the integration of ethnic minority students. The allocation policy for teachers at intercultural schools meant that the school had teachers holding post-graduate qualifications and with further training on intercultural education. Manos found that continuous education and training for his teachers was important; as well as cultural and educational projects for the integration of his immigrant students. Such practices, also adopted by his teachers, were constituted through institutional dispositions conditioned by an inclusive rhetoric. However, the ethnocentricity of the Greek state resulted in the uneven financial support received by mainstream and intercultural schools, and so the Cretan school faced infrastructural and educational (i.e. resources) shortcomings.

It is important to note here that the practices of the principals were not just constituted by the institutional habituses; the principals also re-constituted those habituses. Yannis and Giorgos contributed to the maintenance of the ethnocentric mainstream habitus of the Ionian and Aegean schools, and so reproduced the educational inequalities of the minoritised students (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Manos worked towards the reconstitution of the Cretan school both as a place for intercultural pedagogies and a place restricted by ethnocentric processes. These reconstitutions were performed within the men's institutional membership (Reay, Ball and David, 2005) and their principal vocation (Thomson, 2010). However, apart from accommodating school structures, they also resisted them; I come back to this matter in a separate section.

A quintessential element conditioning principal practice in multiethnic schools is practice inside classrooms, since learning and assessment happen first and foremost there. I conceptualised the classroom as a (micro) sub-field within the school, with its own struggles and distinctive rules. Ethnicised conceptualisations of the schools' ethos were reflected in teacher preferences of work environment: sometimes multiethnicity was seen invigorating

(particularly at the Cretan school), and others a challenging situation to be avoided (mostly at the Aegean school).

Teacher conceptualisation at the Aegean school of their ethnic minority students as learners, how they positioned them in classroom processes and how they assessed them was ethnicised. The assessment criteria for immigrant students were constituted upon academic and linguistic competences, which were latently underscored by judgements about their behaviour and familial background. Immigrant students were evaluated negatively as learners based on particular dispositions and skills which, within the classroom sub-field, counted as 'good student' qualities (i.e. good command of Greek language, 'studious' bodily behaviours, supportive families etc.). These qualities were constituted such based on ethnicised, gendered and classed assumptions that worked as capitals, which male ethnic minority students were understood not to possess. On the contrary, the capitals they embodied were construed as 'anti-capitals'; that is capitals counter to the dominant ones (Grenfell, 2009, p. 25). These anti-capitals constituted students, such as the 'tough boys', as 'unintelligible as [...] learner[s]' (Youdell, 2006b, p.115), and so they were excluded from the teaching/learning process. Nonetheless the Aegean school teachers were disposed sympathetically towards them and developed strategies for helping them throughout education. Yet these strategies were based on deficit views of their ethnicity.

Classroom practices at the Cretan school appeared overall to be more inclusive for ethnic minority students. 'Deficit' understandings of them appeared weaker, and student evaluations included more positive assessment of their 'other' capital. I argue, therefore, that student 'anti-capitals' were often seen as 'just' capitals. Nonetheless, these inclusionary practices were understood to be minor 'unsettlements' to the ethnocentric structures of the Greek educational system, since ethnic minority students would still be faced with restrictions in their schooling future.

*Ethnic minority students as 'white' racialised bodies: the contingency of whiteness*

I started this thesis stating my reasoning for naming the students of my research 'ethnic minority', and consequently for using the terms ethnicised, ethnicism etc., instead of using derivatives of 'race'. I substantiated my choice with the specificity of ethnicity in the constitution of Greek identity through historical and political representations. Most importantly, ethnicity has been discursively used to mobilise practices of 'ethnicism', an allegedly less dangerous assault than 'racism'; it is done in the name of patriotism and 'righteousness', and this is widely accepted. I evidenced this in the Golden Dawn's (the neo-Nazi Greek party) statement that their practices were not to be condemned as racism, but excused as ethnicism. At the same time, I sided with long-standing arguments that race is intricately weaved with ethnicity, and that ethnic and cultural signifiers acquire a racialised nature (Gillborn, 1995; Gilroy, 1987). Therefore, my aim was to unearth the dangers of ethnicism, which parallels racism, by presenting school ethnographies which evidence its detrimental effects on the learning experiences of immigrant students. Here I want to reinstate the relationship between ethnicism and racism by talking about how the 'white' ethnicised minority learners were racialised. While my analysis has been subtly informed by Critical Race Theory (CRT), in this section I draw particular attention to it and contemporary conceptualisations of whiteness, as a way forward in (re)thinking ethnic minority students in Greek schools.

One of CRT's basic positions is that racism is endemic and normalised through every day practice (Gillborn, 2006). White privilege, as an unquestionable set of advantages accompanying whiteness, is rooted in white supremacy, a conviction which works to materialise and legitimise white privilege (Gillborn, 2006). However, as Nayak (2006) suggests, history has shown that not all whiteness(es) are similarly privileged, as in the case of the Irish, the Jews, the Polish etc. The question relates to my fieldwork as well, since the minoritised students in my research were of Albanian and Georgian origins, that is, of white ethnicities and phenotypically 'white'. The white bodies of the 'tough boys' of the Aegean school encapsulated all those qualities that constituted them 'anti-students'; the white body

of Tanya, the 'wildcat' of the Cretan school, was also constituted as a 'troubled' Georgian body. Offering a critical account of approaches to whiteness built on the white/black binary, Nayak (2006) asserts that 'race comes "with no guarantees"' (p. 423). Racism does not happen in simplistic terms; whiteness is contingent, and the departing point for understanding it as such is to approach white bodies as racialised bodies (Hylton and Lawrence, 2015). Understanding racialisation to include more than skin colour, the Albanian and Georgian students embodied anti-capitals that made them 'racialised' bodies. Their whiteness was 'othered', and so it was not *as* 'white' as that of their Greek classmates. As contingent, whiteness (and blackness) should be read intersectionally in order to understand its heterogeneity (Leonardo 2009). The whiteness of the ethnic minority students was intersected by particular non-Greek ethnicities, cultures, languages, sexualities ('too' masculine/feminine) and class positions (lower than the middle). These structural crossings create particular spaces for white unintelligibility and 'failed' whiteness(es) (Youdell, 2006b; Hylton and Lawrence, 2015).

Bradbury (2013) argued how 'model minorities' actually work to 'maintain a White idealised norm' (p. 558). The student cases I presented were definitely not perceived as model students, nonetheless their off-whiteness indicates what the white idealised norm looks like. They show how ethnic, cultural, gender and class attributes ascribe a particular reading on the student bodies, and so shade their whiteness. Of course, certain students at the Aegean school, attending the 1st grade, were pinpointed by teachers for 'looking like traffic-light kids' (i.e. 'gypsy') and being 'mousoulmanakia' ('little Muslims'). Their characterisations revealed how skin colour and bodily characteristics invoked particular readings of the students' ethnicity, culture, gender and class. While it is arguably easier to identify these practices as racist against darker-skinned students, contingent whiteness allows us to do the same for 'white' 'othered' students, by escaping their deracialisation (Hylton and Lawrence, 2015; Mac an Ghail, 2000). Seeing all students as racialised we understand how the technologies of whiteness are built differently for different students and how impossibly 'white' these racialised student bodies are.



### *Principal dispositions and the logic(s) of the principal's office*

Examining the work of principals with ethnic minority students presupposes that we first understand who those principals were, what they were expected to do and how they learned what to be and do within the post. I worked with the concept of principal habitus (Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie, 2003) and vocational habitus (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003) to suggest a normative vocational culture towards which Greek principals were expected to orient themselves. I used these orientations – the ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ of the job – to understand the ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ of principalship in relation to multiethnicity. I discussed how principals brought into their post dispositions of caring and love for teaching, learned while becoming and being teachers. They also possessed dispositions such as a sense of responsibility, contributing to the learning community and administering. These were understood as an aptitude for authority, hierarchy and pedagogic involvement, which both preconditioned their post candidateship and were further developed once in the post.

My principals were all Greek, men and former maths teachers which was unintentional on my part, but proved to be not coincidental. I argue that a normative principal type in Greece is a Greek man ‘of science’. I focused on the three primary dispositions of principalship: authority over school processes, hierarchy over other school members and pedagogic involvement. These appeared as both realised and idealised dispositions (Colley, James, Tedder and Diment, 2003) since principals balanced between what they actually are and do, and what they want to do and be but could not. I articulated this interplay of possibilities and impossibilities as three logics of practice: illusion of authority, pseudo-hierarchy and pedagogic (dis)engagement. The first described how principals had only a limited amount of authority, as they were kept accountable for their schools by the Greek state, but not authors of school processes. The second regarded their unclear hierarchical position in relation to their staff, which allowed principals minimal control over the teachers’ work. The third logic described the principals’ limited involvement in the pedagogic and educational work of the school, and their position mainly as school administrators and regulators of student behaviour. These limitations did not

come without resistances on the principals' part; yet they were acknowledged before entering the profession, and endured once in it. My argument was that these logics serve in different ways the centralised logics of the educational management field in Greece. On the one hand, the state keeps its authority over school processes by limiting that of the principals. On the other, it gives to principals as many allowances as to reassure they act as the policy gatekeepers and make those limitations tolerable and thus perpetual.

Having these in mind, I examined the conceptualisations of the three principals about their ethnic minority students, their expectations and hopes for their future, which consequently defined their practices towards that future. Yannis (Ionian school, 20%) interchangeably identified his ethnic minority students as 'other' and 'same'. I used the term (in)visibility (McDonald and Wingfield, 2009) to describe this state of the students' ethnicity becoming obvious and hidden at convenient moments: to highlight the multiethnicity and 'openness' of his school (visible); its effectiveness as a learning environment (visible); to explain the lack of educational interest of the 'failing' minority students' (visible); and justify his view that an intercultural educational content is unnecessary (invisible). Through these processes, Yannis took responsibility for the work he and his school did for the successful cases of ethnic minority learners, but not for the 'impossible' ones. The above reflect principal and institutional dispositions working together: Yannis' principal habitus mobilised these strategic shifts between visibility and invisibility to retain his authority as a 'good' principal and the ethnocentricity of the institutional habitus.

Out of the three principals Giorgos (Aegean school, mainstream, 60%) talked more pessimistically (or realistically) about the students and their future. He saw them trapped in low-paid jobs since they had to leave school as fast as possible to earn their family's living. Pragmatism inclined Giorgos to set achievable aims for their education with the best results possible; that is to complete basic education and enter vocational training for semi-skilled jobs. Even though as the school principal he strived to affect the students' future in a positive way, he was aware of the restrictions posed by the discriminatory educational system. Serving a school that (eventually) gives advantage to the middle and 'elite' classes,

contested the 'kind' of students he had, and possibly his own familial working-class and refugee background. He was concerned that his school could not do much for the real problems of immigration, which often led his students to prioritise survival over education. This echoed his stance towards the unrealisable 'theories' for equality in education in the conservative Greek educational system. The above suggested that Giorgos' principal practices were restricted by the socioeconomic social structures that discriminate against immigrant students, and which form the ethnocentric institutional ethos of his inner-city, mainstream school.

Manos made a conscious choice to become the principal of a school for the inclusion of ethnic minority students, and in this sense the future of ethnic minority students was undoubtedly his main responsibility. However, my analysis highlighted the 'naive multiculturalism' that is adopted in inclusive education in Greece (Gillborn, 2001, p.22) and the way this affected the habitus of the Cretan school. Consequently, Manos' practices were formed within an institutional ethos which resisted the ethnocentric educational system through its aims for inclusion, but to the point that this resistance did not unsettle the dominant culture. It was an ethos of resistance-within-accommodation (Mac an Ghail, 1988). Manos appeared to work towards a 'culture of improvement' (Chapman and Harris, 2004, p 224), avoiding 'deficit' views of ethnic minority students. His work, though, was restricted by the state's negligence towards intercultural schools, which I attributed to its ethnocentric rhetoric. I questioned the possibility for Manos to override the dominant cultural norms that permeated his school and post, asking whether it would feel 'natural' to him – and his staff– to introduce practices from other religions (i.e. morning prayer). I understood Manos' principal habitus to be amalgamated by two contesting 'kinds' of dispositions: those dispositions that stem from the intercultural logic of practice, and those from the ethnocentric, which were internalised while learning and becoming a teacher and a principal at the intercultural Cretan school; and while learning and becoming a teacher and a principal serving Greek education.

I also interrogated the practices of the principals when interacting with minority students about various issues of studentship. First, I attributed the conflict between teacher

and principal understandings of the education of immigrant students to the logic of pedagogic (dis)engagement of principalship. This logic dissociates principals from educational content and method in favour of managerial chores (Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie, 2003), allegedly giving autonomy to the teachers. Even though principals resisted teacher autonomy and claimed their share in pedagogy, they had a 'limited range of practices' available for manoeuvring around their disengagement (Reay, 2004, p.433). Exploring their practices in relation to student attendance and behaviour, my analysis showed that the principals embodied different types of a 'disciplinarian', which was co-constructed with their teachers' expectations of the principals' job. This explains some of the difference in the mode and frequency of disciplinary action exercised by Giorgos and Manos, with the former embodying a traditional type of 'disciplinarian', while the latter was more distant from taking on such a role.

Giorgos enacted disciplinary action aimed at the absenteeism and 'improper' behaviour of (mostly) male, ethnic minority students. Both of these disciplinary issues were a result of the educational exclusions minoritised students suffered inside the classrooms of the Aegean school, and their consequent resistance to such exclusions. Every absence and challenge to the pedagogic authority, seen as 'unruly' behaviours (Youdell, 2011), was (mis)recognised by teachers and Giorgos as indifference on the part of minority students, and was attributed to their anti-capitals. Every time 'unruly' male immigrant students were called in Giorgos' office following their constitution as 'anti-students' in the classroom, they were re-constituted such, since Giorgos' disciplinary practice legitimised the type of student they should embody and they could (or would) not. Giorgos, as the school's 'licensed authority' (Ball, 1987, p. 82) controlled school processes through various disciplinary technologies (Foucault, 1991), such as the Sanction Book, the Attendance Book, etc., which were routinely kept and visited when needed. This seemingly trivial bureaucracy in effect built up the 'qualitative ensemble' (Foucault, 1994, p.391) of 'anti-students' which worked as symbolic of their entitlement to studentship. Understanding this to be a product of principal dispositions to authority and control, I termed the logic of Giorgos' office a 'ruling' logic - both in the sense of judging and controlling the behaviour of ethnic minority

students. Nonetheless, Giorgos (as well as Manos) was willing to manipulate school policies in order to support particular cases of immigrant students.

### **The (im)possibilities for inclusive education: synergies of structure and agency**

My analysis unearthed the dispositions embedded in the principal's job and the school ethos that relate to the education of ethnic minority students. I showed how becoming and being a school principal (the principal habitus) worked together with institutional elements that suggested a particular way of doing things in the school (the institutional habitus). These dispositions formed various constellations upon which the principals oriented their practices of inclusions and exclusions towards ethnic minority students. The mainstream or intercultural model of the schools; their ethnic composition; staff qualifications; their understandings of the learning processes in multiethnic classrooms; the level of concord and conflict between teachers and principals on such matters; all these contributed to the formulation of particular conceptualisations about the immigrant students as learners in the schools. Consequently, these framed the actions a principal could or could not take, which worked together with the vocational principal dispositions and the institutional logics of practice regarding their post: illusion of authority; pseudo-hierarchy; and pedagogic (dis) engagement. Within this complicated nexus of structures, agency synergised to create possibilities and impossibilities of practice.

Overall, the context of the Aegean school posed more impossibilities on a principalship for inclusive education than that of the Cretan school. Institutional elements synthesised a school ethos, where immigrant students were constituted as 'impossible' learners. Consequently impossibilities emerged for Giorgos through the logics of principal practice, which oriented him towards the reproduction of the discriminatory ethnocentric structures that excluded ethnic minority students. Similarly, Yannis' case focused on the impossibilities for inclusive education posed by mainstream school policy, which constituted

the Ionian school as a monocultural, ethnocentric school for “normal” “Greek” students. In contrast, the intercultural Cretan school operated on a policy for inclusive education, which was reflected in various elements of the institutional habitus. These conditions, which mostly placed immigrant students as ‘possible’ learners, framed Manos' work, where the logics of principal practice fostered inclusivity.

Nonetheless, possibilities and impossibilities were interchangeably evidenced in all principalships and schools. Even though immigrant students were seen as ‘failing’ at the Aegean school, teachers and Giorgos cared about them and – in their own way – tried to help them through schooling. Giorgos, in particular, was the most emotionally involved out of all principals when discussing the matter. Moreover, and unlike (most of) his interviewed staff, Giorgos did not victimise ethnic minority students; he saw them as proud individuals with particular affective qualities which were gained through their socioeconomic conditioning. The logics of practice of principalship contributed to these possibilities: authority (or the illusion of it) prompted Giorgos to aspire to affect the educational future of ethnic minority students (even if this was basic skills); working within a pseudo-hierarchy he urged staff towards more lenient approaches; and in the context of pedagogic disengagement he acted as a pastor/parent towards immigrant students. Yannis’ practice was also marked by possibilities within the impossibilities of principalship and context. He was positively disposed towards his ethnic minority students, wanted them to be seen as equals in the school, and gave value to the ‘openness’ of the Ionian school to multiculturalism. On the other hand, impossibilities for inclusive practice were evidenced in the possibilities of Manos’ principalship at the Cretan school. The inferior positioning of intercultural schools within the Greek education posed restrictions on his inclusive strategies (i.e. appropriate learning infrastructures, mother-tongue teaching etc.). Moreover, his educational aims evaded deeper critical thinking and action, reflecting the ‘naive’ approach to interculturalism applied in Greece. His (illusion of) authority, manifested in his plans to improve the school, was limited by ethnocentric processes outside the school (i.e. building malfunctions due to overpopulation or immigrant legal documentation matters).

These findings show that the possibilities and impossibilities for each school principal to act for inclusive education were formed through the synergies of the principal habitus with the institutional habitus, and the overall ethnocentric structures. I endeavoured to be cautious not to depict principals as asphyxiated in structures. However, structures (ethnocentric or intercultural) were more apparent in my research than agency, due to their obviousness in building collective patterns of practices. One issue, therefore, with which my analysis is latently concerned, is where the agency of the principals was located in acting for or against their ethnic minority students and what kind of agency that was. In other words, I wanted to also illuminate the moments when principals broke from those structures and whether this resistance was a result of the men's 'free' agency reacting in spontaneous and unpredictable ways.

Reay (2004) suggests that the habitus has the possibility of 'myriad adaptations, responses, reactions and resistances to "the way the world is", but also of individuals struggling to make the world a different place' (p. 437). In this sense, agency manifests itself when the habitus comes into disagreement with the field of which it is the product. At various points, my principals had conflicted with their fields of practice because they preferred another way of practising for multiethnicity. All principals objected to the discriminatory social processes that put ethnic minority students in disadvantage. Understanding the habitus of the Ionian school to be monocultural and ethnocentric, Yannis' objected to the negative assessment of immigrant students by his staff; he viewed them as 'equals' to Greek students and his school as 'open' to multiculturalism. Similarly, Giorgos strongly criticised the unfair educational and job opportunities of immigrant, working-class students in the middle-class (or "for the elites") Greek education, of which the Aegean school was part. Considering the inferior positioning of inclusive education in the ethnocentric field of Greek education, I understood Manos' principalship at the intercultural Cretan school as resistance in itself. All these could be seen as (minor) resistances to the discriminatory patterns of the school and the ethnocentric mainstream educational agenda. If, according to Thomson (2010), principalship is 'the set of moves that heads take in order to ensure that actors *within* the school also conform to the logic of the field' (p. 14), then

the above objections to the way schooling happens for immigrant students are moments of resistance to the logic of Greek education – and consequently to the principal habitus.

How do such moments of resistance happen, and what impact do they have on structures? Resistance, as an instance of agency, results from the contestation of different field logics engaged by principals and embodied as contradictory dispositions. Each principal, in their own way showed care for (ethnic minority) students, as a result of embodying teacher dispositions learnt earlier in their career (Braun, 2009). These oriented them towards practices and feelings of sympathy and/or empathy and compassion for the educational and social hardships faced by their minoritised students. Moreover, individual factors came in play. Yannis connected his ‘openness’ to multiculturalism to his own multicultural family; Giorgos’ refugee working-class family also emerged as a reason behind his empathetic stance towards the immigrant students of the Aegean school. Manos acknowledged his sensitisation to issues of multiculturalism but could not relate them to any particular familial or other condition. Concurrently, these dispositions brought them to clash with vocational and institutional dispositions. The agency of the principals to act for their ethnic minority students contradicted the very constitution of the principal habitus through ethnicised structures. A normative principal habitus is, according to state policy, of Greek nationality, and is expected to serve the dominant Greek culture. Actions against Greek ethnocentricity, then, are principal resistances to principal orientations. Therefore, these inner tensions resulted from learning to become principals in particular vocational structures and within particular schools.

Principal practices regarding multiethnicity were constituted within conflict and resulted through ‘dialogues with oneself’ (Crossley cited in Reay, 2004, p. 438). The principal habitus was a constellation of vocational, institutional and familial (or other) dispositions upon which principals were oriented in similar, but also different, ways towards the education of ethnic minority students. These multiple dispositional configurations drew the map of tensions that principals underwent as they conformed or moved away from the norm. Reay (cited in Braun, 2009, p. 77) proposes that ‘mov[ing] away and becom[ing] different to the natal family can evoke powerful feelings of anxiety, loss, guilt and fear



alongside the more accepted emotional responses of hopeful anticipation, excitement and pride'; she terms this an 'emotional tightrope'. I understand this moving further from the ethnicised principal habitus as a culmination of minor moves that happened on a day-to-day basis, and invested with emotions, rather than some radical, ground-breaking departure. For example, care, compassion, contentment, sympathy, empathy and pride for ethnic minority students were evidenced throughout the principals' accounts, which I conceptualised as resistances to their ethnocentric principal habitus. At other moments this resistance appeared to be weighed down by despair, anger, disappointment and cancellation at differing degrees and occasions for each principal.

The dispositional configurations of principals' practice came with emotional rewards and costs, and these emotional rewards and costs were defined by and also defining those configurations. Yannis' disappointment for the 'dropping out' immigrant students came as an emotional cost of caring for them. At the same time the pride he took in his 'successful' immigrant students was an emotional gain of managing an ethnocentric (and not 'intercultural') mainstream school. This, in turn, minimised the emotional loss for those 'dropping out', and so the strength of resistance. Giorgos' feelings of compassion and empathy for his socially tormented students may have brought at moments strong opposition to the ethnocentric structures; but the feelings of cancellation following their constitution as impossible learners cost him the determination to oppose. Manos felt content working towards inclusive pedagogies, but overriding deeper ethnocentric structures may have induced feelings of timidity or the fear of instability. Acknowledging that I have possibly underplayed the matter of the principals' affective labour, but also that it is a central aspect of their work particularly with regards to the emotionally loaded practice of educating minorities (Arnot, Pinson and Candappa, 2009), I see this aspect as welcoming further research.

Is the agency of the principals a 'free' agency to manage multiethnic schools? The three principals have shown both very different and very similar principalships regarding the positioning of ethnic minority students as learners in the Greek educational system. Even though similarities may have been stronger between the practices of Yannis (Ionian,

mainstream, 20%) and Giorgos (Aegean, mainstream, 60%) due to the mainstream and thus ethnocentric character of their post, at various moments they simulated the practices of Manos (Cretan, intercultural, 40%). And Manos' practices also appeared at moments to not question ethnocentrism and mainstream-ness as he ought. School cultures at various points produced similarly inclusive or exclusive learning spaces for immigrant students. This suggests that the underlying commonalities across schools make choices available for inclusionary practice, but also that such choices are constrained by the common ethnocentric context. Paraphrasing Wacquant (1989) 'we can always say that [principals] make choices [regarding their ethnic minority students], as long as we do not forget that they do not choose the principle of these choices' (p. 45). Each principal made various daily choices about their immigrant students, yet these choices were manipulated by the ethnocentric structures that were entangled in vocational, institutional and individual dispositions. Concomitantly, the principals responded differently to this manipulation, drawing (intentionally or unintentionally) from the pool of available dispositions that framed the possibilities and impossibilities for inclusive practices. Nonetheless, they did not choose how that pool of dispositions was constituted.

The principals appeared to sway between idealised and realised dispositions concerning the education of ethnic minority students through everyday practice. On the one hand they idealised their school as a space of equality, inclusion and fairness. On the other, they realised the ethnocentric aspects of their principal habitus, and so of the Greek educational system. Were the principals able to make the idealised realised? They practised disruptions to the exclusion of ethnic minority students, but these disruptions occurred in the constraints that the dispositional configurations allowed. In other words, what the principals understood to be 'intercultural', 'fair' and 'inclusive' depended on particular vocational, institutional and individual conditions, which again were marked by ethnocentricity. Eventually, dispositions for egalitarianism still remained idealised. While this idealised egalitarian possibility preserved the professional and emotional content of their principalship, its realised impossibility substantiated a vocational 'catharsis': unthought-of meanings of 'equality' and 'inclusion'; the misrecognition of the mundanity of

discriminatory practices in everyday practice; and their conviction for their incapability to act inclusively due to factors outside personal will, relieved the three men (in different degrees and ways) from the professional and emotional burden of excluding immigrant students.

### **So, what does this thesis do for the real principals of real multiethnic schools?**

I come back to the two issues I identified in the introduction as being problematic. First, that the matter of principalship and multiethnicity is an understudied area; and second, that because of its deeply complicated nature, it calls for a contextualised understanding. The presence of immigrant students does make a difference, not only with regards to the principals' administrative duties, but also to their educational and pedagogical work. The principals' visions for the school's role related to their understandings about multiethnicity, and so to their educational strategies. The way teachers understood multiethnicity affected the principals' daily job of running the school. Most visibly in Giorgos' case, multiethnicity engaged the principal in resolving (implicating her/himself in this resolution) the contradictions of ethnocentricity and multiethnicity expressed in policies and schooling. Concomitantly, the principals' administrative and pedagogical work had an impact on the future of ethnic minority students. Even though my thesis is not a school effectiveness study per se, it does make some claims about the effectiveness (or lack of it) of these three secondary schools to include or exclude immigrant students from learning. Having said that, and agreeing with Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003) and Hallinger and Heck (in Lingard and Christie, 2003), the influence of principals is less than that of the teachers, and it is mostly mediated through the latter's work. Nonetheless, I have also shown how the handling of administrative and pedagogical issues by the principals had a direct effect on the constitution and reconstitution of such students as 'good' or 'anti-' students.

Principalship is a contextualised practice, implicating different levels of analysis that ensure a constant movement from the macro to the micro and vice-versa. My thesis unearthed that the negotiation of meanings and approaches as to what inclusive/intercultural education and 'good learner' is; the resolution of conflicts stemming from ethnocentricity; and the contestation of the principal's role in relation to these were processes working through and across three levels: the school, the principal and the classroom. These levels were also underlined by wider processes (concerning i.e. the Greek state and the educational system, the local school markets etc.) and particularised processes (i.e. concerning individuals). All the above synthesised the practices of real principals in real schools. Therefore what this thesis does to other real principals in real schools is insist on acknowledging that multiethnicity matters in principalship in ways that go beyond the actual daily practice. In fact, it is the mundanity and regularity of principalship that principals need to unpack in order to understand its effects on ethnic minority students.

Studying the three principals, Yannis, Giorgos and Manos, in detail I have sought to understand the impossibilities and possibilities of their practices in the hope that acknowledging the former will condition the latter. Locating the structures of impossibilities gives a map of the paths through which we can potentially intersect them with structures of possibilities. I acknowledge that the above findings are based on only three cases of principalships. Even though this was an important strategy for going deeper in the minutiae of everyday discrimination, it is important that wider-scale research investigates the issue. Nonetheless, the matter of principals overseeing multiethnicity and the need for appropriate educational provisions has been also observed at international level (Zembylas and Iasonos, 2010). As this thesis draws to an end, I want to focus on the main areas that I have identified as presently fostering impossibilities for ethnic minority students and which should be tackled: institutional ethos and policies; vocational culture; and learning processes. These questions primarily burden the principals as being accountable for their schools.

To start with, schooling policies and educational models need to pay attention to discriminatory processes that result from the deeply embedded structures of ethnocentrism and often going unnoticed. I have raised critical questions on a number of institutional issues: What is the effect of having separate 'intercultural' and 'mainstream' school policies and schools? How does the local school market operate for minorities? What holds us back from making curricula and school organisation inclusive for the communities? How do organisational and disciplinary practices affect particular students? The examination of institutional racism/ethnicism through these (and more) questions is imperative in understanding how racial/ethnic discrimination may not be intended, but yet it happens (Gillborn, 2002). Similar questions were raised regarding the role of teachers in the impossibilities of inclusive education: How are teachers implicated in the exclusions of ethnic minority students from the learning processes? How do these processes define the 'good student' in terms of ethnicity, class and gender? What particular understandings about these do teachers hold regarding their teaching? Where does their teaching miss particular students? How do their practices constitute students anti-students? And how can this be reversed? How can teachers become equipped with appropriate knowledge for reaching out to their multiethnic classrooms and their communities? And how do teachers' practices affect student lives outside the classroom?

My data has clearly shown that the particular focus of policies and schools on inclusion (despite criticism of their approach to 'inclusion') makes its learning agenda directly visible to the school members (and beyond). Recently a debate has started on whether intercultural schools in Greece should be abolished as particularising 'otherness' and thus creating 'ghettoised' spaces, suggesting a more general intercultural agenda for all 'mainstream' schools. This I see as a complicated matter. On the one hand, intercultural schools might work as a 'contradiction-closing cas[e]': appearing as a critical change in order to halt further, more radical, implementations of educational justice (Bell in Gillborn, 2008, p. 17). On the other hand, by moving straight from intercultural schools to more generic forms of inclusion, without addressing first the embeddedness of ethnocentricity in the educational system, we might end up losing sight of the aim. Gillborn (1995) claimed that

apart from an anti-racist agenda for individual school subjects in the classroom, it is important that a separate explicit antiracist programme is implemented. Therefore, I do not suggest that interculturalism is not to be adopted by a generic school curriculum; quite the contrary. Nonetheless, what I am arguing for is that this is done in a way that it is not lost in ethnocentricity. As Zembylas and Iasonos (2010) explore, it is worth examining the relationship between the centralised organisation of the educational system and forms of conservative principalship, as this may be linked also to particular conservative views on multiethnicity.

I now turn to those questions that, if asked, might change impossible principalships for immigrant students into possible ones. I identify two main areas for targeting: the processes of becoming a principal and those of being a principal. Regarding the former, how should principals be prepared to grasp the needs of their multiethnic schools? What kind of knowledge will lead them to a deeper understanding of the way the school works for immigrant students? The matter of principal preparation and training should also be a part of the ongoing learning-as-becoming process. Official preparation or training programmes for principals do not currently exist in Greece. A survey with Greek principals showed that 'intercultural education' was one of the least desired themes for principal training (Anastasiadis, 2010). Therefore, it is crucial that the role of the principal is explicitly linked to social justice, both through the vocational ethos and educational management policies. First and foremost, we should ask what those tools are that school principals need in order 'to create a new language capable of asking new questions and generating more critical practices' (Zembylas and Iasonos after Giroux, 2010, p. 180). As my work has argued, discrimination happens as business-as-usual, going unnoticed in the minutiae of day-to-day administration. Principals, therefore, should constantly question how their practices might affect the learning of minorities. Nonetheless, this questioning should run through policies, institutional, vocational and learning ethos, and bring together all school members; most importantly the students of immigrant families and their communities. Admittedly, this thesis has only focused on the side of the official representatives of schooling, and not

students, families and communities. Their side of these principalship stories would have brought up more questioning, conflict, ambiguities, and thus enriched understandings.

I close this thesis with the question of reflexivity: how reflexive can principals become? And has the concept of principal habitus addressed this question? Obviously, reflexive thinking is at the heart of any change and critical interrogation, this concerning principals as well. Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003) suggest the encouragement of a new reflexive type of principals. Similarly, Zembylas and Iasonos (2010) propose a new 'practice of critique' for school leaders (p. 181). My research supported the idea that thinking with dispositions can be useful in unpacking patterns of everyday domination (Cicourel, 1993). Nonetheless, the reflexive abilities of the habitus have been heavily criticised, on the basis that the unconscious, automated and spontaneous nature of the habitus leaves no space for self-questioning (Jenkins, 1992; Adams, 2006; Kim, 2010). In other words, thinking with dispositions happens *within* dispositions. However, as Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) suggest, the habitus can be reflexive by questioning what has not been thought of before, and this can happen when 'the routine adjustment of subjective and objective structures is brutally disrupted' (Bourdieu, cited in Wacquant, 1989, p. 45). My principals performed some reflexive thinking at various points regarding their role as heads of multiethnic schools, resisting the accommodation of structures; I explained this resistance as a result of embodying conflicting dispositions. Nonetheless, my data could not elucidate whether a deeper level of self-questioning of dispositions would be possible – and, consequently, any hope for change. Unlike Gillborn's (1995) work, mine did not engage into a discussion of changing the impossibilities for inclusive education into possibilities, but rather it offered an analysis of things as they are for real principals in real multiethnic schools. Concurrently, the question is not only if principals can change, but whether they want to change. Can there be processes through which principals not only think the unthought-of, but also accept it and act on it?

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**APPENDIX A: Research outline**

<b>IONIAN SCHOOL</b> <i>Mainstream, 20% ethnic minority students</i>	
<b>Period:</b> April 2006	
<b>Duration of field work:</b> 2 weeks	
<b>Visits:</b> 4 (4-5h each)	
<b>Observations</b>	
<b>Principal office</b>	14* hours
<b>Corridors</b> (during breaks)	6* breaks (5'-10' each)
<b>Scheduled interviews</b>	
<b>Principal</b>	1.5* hours
	<b>Interviewee:</b> Yannis (male, Greek, mid 50s, Maths)
* <i>Approximately estimated</i>	

<b>AEGEAN SCHOOL</b> <i>Mainstream, 60% ethnic minority students</i>		
<b>Period:</b> mid September 2007 – mid January 2008		
<b>Duration of field work:</b> 14 weeks (excl. Christmas break)		
<b>Visits:</b> 37 (2-3 visits/week of 3-4hrs each)		
<b>Observations</b>		
<b>Principal office</b>	65* hours	
<b>Classroom sessions</b> (Class A & Class B of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade)	10 sessions (45' each)	
	<b>Class A</b>	<b>Class B</b>
	Literature: 2 Maths: 1 Sports: 1 Arts: 1	Literature: 2 Maths: 1 Sports: 1 Arts: 1
<b>Staffroom</b>	10* hours	
<b>Corridors</b> (during breaks)	16 breaks (5'-10' each)	
<b>Scheduled interviews</b>		
<b>Principal</b>	4* hours	
	<b>Interviewee:</b> Giorgos (male, Greek, early 60s, Maths)	
<b>Teachers</b> (teaching at 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade)	7 interviews (45'-50' each)	
	<b>Interviewees:</b> Eleni (female, Greek, late 40s, Maths) Philitsa (female, Greek, late 50s, Literature) Thalia (female, Greek, mid 40s, Literature) Despina (female, Greek, early 40s, Arts) Dina (female, Greek, early 50s, ICT) Voula (female, Greek, mid 50s, Literature) Kimonas (male, Greek, late 40s, Physics)	
<i>* Approximately estimated</i>		

<b>CRETAN SCHOOL</b> <i>Intercultural, 40% ethnic minority students</i>		
<b>Period:</b> early February– mid May 2008		
<b>Duration of field work:</b> 12 weeks (excl. Easter break)		
<b>Visits:</b> 32 (2-3 visits/week of 3-4hrs each)		
<b>Observations</b>		
<b>Principal office</b>	50* hours	
<b>Classroom sessions</b> (Class A & Class B of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade)	20 sessions (45' each)	
	<b>Class A</b>	<b>Class B</b>
	Literature: 2 Maths: 2 Sports: 2 Arts: 1 Greek language: 2 Religion: 1	Literature: 2 Maths: 2 Sports: 2 Arts:1 Greek language: 2 Religion: 1
<b>Staffroom</b>	3* hours	
<b>Corridors</b> (during breaks)	23 breaks (5'-10' each)	
<b>Scheduled interviews</b>		
<b>Principal</b>	2.5* hours	
	<b>Interviewee:</b> Manos (male, Greek, early 40s Maths)	
<b>Teachers</b> (teaching at 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade)	6 interviews (45'-50' each)	
	<b>Interviewees:</b> Daphne (female, Greek, early 40s, Maths) Fani (female, Greek, early 40s, Literature) Nikos (male, Greek, late 30s, Maths) Sotiris (male, Greek, early 30s, Literature) Sofia (female, Greek, early 30s, Religion) Michalis (male, Greek, mid 30s, Arts)	
* <i>Approximately estimated</i>		

## APPENDIX B: Interview guide

<b>PRINCIPALS</b> (Semi-structured interviews)	
<b>Themes</b>	<b>Key-questions</b>
Vocational level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject, years in service</li> <li>• Initial studies, post-graduate education &amp; training, usefulness of studies &amp; training for their career; plans for career development? - any training in multiethnicity, intercultural education?</li> <li>• Why teacher? Why principal? Family opinions about chosen career?</li> <li>• What is the principal's job about; main duties thoughts, feelings, likes, dislikes</li> <li>• Managerial aspect vs pedagogical aspect of job</li> <li>• Managing staff: relationship, strategies, challenges and rewards</li> <li>• Managing (ethnic minority) students: relationships, strategies, challenges and rewards</li> <li>• School administration: vision, personal aspirations, initiating changes</li> <li>• Pedagogical work: vision, personal aspirations, initiating changes; particularly for ethnic minority students?</li> </ul>
Institutional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previously serviced schools; why this school?</li> <li>• Description of school, good, bad, fair?</li> <li>• School collective purpose/aim; process of setting goals</li> <li>• Staff appointed at school: qualifications, skills?</li> <li>• Percentage of ethnic minority students in school: discuss</li> <li>• Enrolment, issues with ethnic minority studentship status</li> <li>• School type: mainstream, intercultural and why?</li> <li>• Institutional provisions for ethnic minority students?</li> <li>• Relation with local authorities and community?</li> </ul>
Classroom level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe students of school: who are they, families, backgrounds etc.</li> <li>• Communication with staff on educational/pedagogical matters; discussing student issues</li> <li>• Setting educational aims; deciding and running extra-curricular activities; place of ethnic minority students in such planning?</li> <li>• Space for affecting (ethnic minority) students' educational future?</li> <li>• Thoughts on students' achievement, behaviour, attendance; any</li> </ul>

	<p>issues?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handling 'difficult' students: who are they and what's the role of the principal;</li> <li>• Communication with parents about (ethnic minority) student issues</li> </ul>
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<b>TEACHERS</b> (Semi-structured interviews)	
<b>Themes</b>	<b>Key-questions</b>
Vocational level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject, years in service</li> <li>• Initial studies, post-graduate education &amp; training, usefulness of studies &amp; training for their career; plans for career development? - any training in multiethnicity, intercultural education?</li> <li>• Teaching career: visions, personal aspirations, initiating changes</li> <li>• Pedagogical work: vision, personal aspirations, initiating changes; particularly for ethnic minority students?</li> <li>• Other duties within the post</li> </ul>
Institutional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previously serviced schools; why this school?</li> <li>• Description of school; good, bad, fair?</li> <li>• Percentage of ethnic minority students in school: discuss</li> <li>• Institutional provisions for ethnic minority students?</li> <li>• Cooperation and interpersonal relationships with staff</li> <li>• Cooperation and interpersonal relationships with principal</li> </ul>
Classroom level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication with staff on educational/pedagogical matters; discussing student issues</li> <li>• Describe students of school: who are they, families, backgrounds etc.</li> <li>• Describe multiethnic classroom: relationships, challenges and rewards</li> <li>• Setting educational aims; deciding and running extra-curricular activities</li> <li>• Place of ethnic minority students in educational planning; teaching materials/methodology, challenges and rewards</li> <li>• Thoughts on students' achievement, behaviour, attendance; any issues?</li> <li>• Space for affecting (ethnic minority) students' educational future?</li> <li>• Handling 'difficult' students: who are they and what's the role of</li> </ul>

	<p>the teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communication with parents on (ethnic minority) student issues</li><li>• School principal and their work regarding (ethnic minority) students; space for principal participation; principals affecting achievement/behaviour;</li></ul>
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