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Educating the Muslim Minority in Western Thrace

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ABSTRACT *A large-scale, interdisciplinary Project for Reform in the Education of Muslim Children (PEM) in Western Thrace, Greece, was implemented during the years 1977–2004. Although PEM was a specifically educational project entailing teaching Greek as a second language, development of educational materials, teacher training and academic outcome, it was bound to involve identity issues and directly or indirectly embrace the entire Thracian community. A historical and socio-political background is provided in order for the reader to understand the way power is negotiated between majority and minority and the controversies that characterize educational policy and instructional practices in such a context of ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity.*

Introduction

> Ironically, the Muslim children in Thrace have received a bilingual education for the past 70 years, illustrating the fact that the language of instruction itself is only surface-structure. Coercive power relations can be expressed as effectively through two languages as through one. (Cummins, 2004, p.10)

These were the words of Jim Cummins after an international conference in the Greek province of Western Thrace, in the context of the 1997–2004 Project for Reform in the Education of Muslim Children (PEM). To appreciate the meaning and importance of this major intervention requires some understanding of the history of the minority in question and its articulation with the Christian majority. What follows below is an attempt to throw light on the various power relations and social interaction between as well as within the minority and majority. A factor adding to the complexity of the situation is the 'principle of reciprocity' between the Greek and Turkish governments in the treatment of the Turkish minority in Western Thrace and the Greek minority in Istanbul respectively, which in a way has rendered each minority the hostage of the other.

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The Conflict in Western Thrace

Minorities Excluded from the 1922 Population Exchange

In January 1923, following the 1919–22 Greek–Turkish war, a protocol was signed at the Lausanne Peace Conference on the compulsory exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey. The two parties were to exchange the Greek Orthodox population living in Turkish territories with the Muslims on Greek soil. The same protocol also defined those to be excluded from the exchange: namely Orthodox Greeks (the Rums) who had settled in Istanbul prior to 1918, and Muslims established in the Greek province of Western Thrace. Leaving aside the reasons for these exceptions, which are discussed extensively elsewhere,[1] what matters here is that around 130,000 Muslims remained in Western Thrace, and about the same number of Rums in Istanbul.

The fate of both these minority groups, in Istanbul as well as in Thrace, was intricately linked with and affected by the relations between Greece and Turkey. Each group had to live under the pressure of a mutually antagonistic nationalism. The two governments accused each other not only of a desire to perpetuate their historical conflict in their respective territories, but also of having a political *arrière pensée*. The inability of both governments to resolve their differences exposed the two minorities to considerable stress and hardship.

The 83 years that have elapsed since the Lausanne Treaty are heavily marked with disputes and grievances on both sides. In the early years the major tension was over ownership of property (Alexandris, 1992, pp. 118–122); later controversies concerned the Muslim minority's reluctance to follow the Kemalist secular reform, and the Greek state's encouragement of religious conservatism among the members of the minority (Alexandris, 1992, p. 187; Nikolakopoulos, 1990–91). In the 1930s both minorities benefited from a more broad-minded attitude on the part of their respective governments, although this left a lot to be desired. The situation remained much the same until 1952, when both countries officially became members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. This *rapprochement* was not to last, since Greece and Turkey soon began to be embroiled in the conflict over Cyprus. As nationalist feelings escalated and the rift between the two countries deepened, repercussions on the two minorities were inevitable. Violent anti-Greek demonstrations in Istanbul and Izmir in September 1955 resulted in large-scale deportation of the Greeks of Istanbul. More restrictive measures followed, and the remaining Greeks were compelled to a gradual exodus which resulted in their being reduced to a currently dwindling community of a couple of thousands (Alexandris, 1992, pp. 252–287). The experiment in symbiosis in Istanbul that began in 1923 had failed.

'Muslim' versus 'Turkish' Minority

The composition of the minority group in Western Thrace has occupied Greek–Turkish relations from the beginning. A crucial element is that the Lausanne Treaty describes the exempted population in religious rather than ethnic terms (Articles 40, 41 & 42). This was the result of the *millet* system, dominant in the Ottoman Empire, whereby ethnicity or origin had little significance. In other words, the Lausanne Treaty lumped together diverse groups that had in common only their Muslim faith.[2]

The only minority officially recognized by the Greek state is that designated by the Lausanne Treaty.[3] Consequently it is accorded religious but not ethnic status, although

the Turkish language (not only the Muslim religion) is taught in minority schools both to Turkophones and to ethnically and linguistically Muslim Pomaks (Slavic-speaking Muslims). Interestingly there are no reliable official statistics for either the exact size of the minority or its ethnic composition. Different sources provide different estimates that vary widely from 90,000 to 130,000,[4] with Turks accounting for between 47% and 68%, Pomaks between 20% and 40% and Roma from 10% to 25% (Zenginis, 1994; Academy of Athens, 1995; Dalègre, 1997). More recently a Greek report to the United Nations (2001) gives the total minority population as 98,000, with 50% Turkish, 35% Pomak and 15% Roma.[5] Paradoxically, Greek politics employs a double standard: when the objective is to underemphasize the Turkish nationality of the minority, its religious status is invoked, but when the intention is to weaken its unity, then its multiple ethnic composition is cited.

With respect to Turkey's policy towards the ethnic composition of the minority, Turkish diplomatic reports in the mid-1950s were somewhat hesitant concerning its unity, but since 1965 the mounting conflict between Greece and Turkey arising from the Cyprus issue has led Ankara to maintain that the minority is wholly Turkish. The more Greece insists on a single Muslim minority, the more Turkey claims a single Turkish one (Akgönül, 1999).[6]

Concerning the Pomaks, there are several nationalist rhetorics attempting to appropriate their origin.[7] The Greek state has been very ambivalent towards this group, who have been simultaneously subject to appropriation and exclusion. The self- or group identification of the Pomaks has hardly been taken into consideration (Tsimbiridou, 1996; Trubeta, 2001; Demetriou, 2004). Whenever local agents, and to a lesser extent the central government, decided to embrace the Pomaks, the Turkish hegemonic position in the identity politics of the minority felt threatened.

A permanent grievance of the minority is the unwillingness of the Greek state to acknowledge its ethnic Turkish identity. In 1988 the Greek Supreme Court ordered the dissolution of several minority associations whose names contained the word 'Turkish'. About 10,000 minority members demonstrated against this simultaneously in many towns of Western Thrace, and the police intervened with force.[8] The 'Turkish Union of Xanthi' lodged a legal appeal and, after successive rejections, the case came before the Greek Supreme Court where, again after much delay, it was finally turned down in January 2005.

It will be sufficiently clear by now that identity issues have important ramifications, and how one chooses to address the minority, or what a minority member calls him- or herself, is fraught with implications. Depending on the ideological position of the speaker, the minority may be called 'Muslim', irrespective of whether its members are religious or not; '*Tourkogenis*' (of Turkish origin) meaning that it consists simply of Greek Muslims who at some point in their history came from Turkey; 'minoritarians' as opposed to the majority; 'speaking Turkish, Pomak or Rom', in order to shift the emphasis from ethnic to linguistic identity; or 'minority Turks', denoting their minority status in Greece while distinguishing them from Turkish citizens.

Restrictive and Discriminatory Policies

Not unlike the Greeks in Istanbul, whenever things took an ugly turn, the minority in Western Thrace has experienced deterioration in its relations with the majority group. It

was in the years of the Greek dictatorship (1967–74) that many of the discriminatory measures were introduced that would plague the minority for a long time. The invasion of Cyprus by the Turkish army in 1974 aggravated the situation further. The restrictive and discriminatory policies were aimed as much at the reduction of the minority's size (by inducing them to emigrate and depriving them of their citizenship under Article 19 of the Greek National Code of 1955),[9] as at loosening the minority's connection with Turkey, and its transformation into a less vocal and more 'obedient' group. Among these measures were denial of the minority's ethnic identity; strict limits on the use of the word 'Turkish' for self-identification; expropriations of large parts of minority-owned land; prevention of purchases or sales of land and property; refusing the right to set up businesses; Greek banks not giving credit or loans to minority members; restricting freedom of expression, information and movement; not permitting the repair of old mosques or the building of new ones; difficulties in obtaining a driver's licence; and government refusals to give minority members jobs in the civil service and the government sector (Anagnostou, 1999; Yagcioglu, 2004).

As a result, the minority in Western Thrace were not able to participate in the socio-economic changes of Greek society, which were particularly rapid in the 1970s and 1980s. They were excluded from the fruits of the developmental processes and they remained in a marginal position.

With respect to the social and professional profile of the minority there is again a lack of official statistics. According to a survey of the socio-economic background of the entire minority pupil population conducted in 1998 as part of PEM, the overwhelming majority belongs to the two lower social strata. The agricultural sector is especially large, comprising 47.2% of the total minority population compared with 19% of the national mean.[10] A further index of marginalization is the level of education. Almost 80% of minority members have completed only six years of primary school, although it was 30 years ago that compulsory education was extended to nine years. Only 2.6% of men and 0.2% of women hold a university degree (Askouni, forthcoming).[11]

After a period of increasing tension and deteriorating government–minority and minority–majority relations in Western Thrace between 1974 and 1990, and with conflict threatening to become violent, the situation began to calm down gradually but substantially. The new era that began in 1990 is characterized by improvements in the situation of the minority and its relations with the government as much as with the majority. The Greek government began to introduce policies for the economic revitalization of Thrace, including a more tolerant attitude toward the minority's access to the Turkish mass media, and opened up the 'restricted zone' along the Greek–Bulgarian border, almost entirely inhabited by Pomaks and minority Turks (Yagcioglu, 2004). The educational reform to be discussed in this paper is part of the new measures taken by the Greek government.

The Interplay between Four Actors

For an analysis of the conflict in Western Thrace, the dynamic interaction of all the actors at play must be spelled out (Yagcioglou, 2004).[12] The main protagonists are: (1) the Muslim minority and its elite; (2) the Greek government (central and local) and the local Greek majority; (3) the Turkish government; and (4) European and international intergovernmental institutions.

(1) *The Muslim minority and its elite.* Marginal social as well as economic and educational conditions, restrictive and discriminatory measures, forced migration and 'voluntary' migration by the upper classes and intellectuals have rendered the minority the weakest of all the actors involved in the interplay. The minority has not had sufficient political, cultural or economic strength to carry any discernible weight.

Turkey's direct or indirect interference in minority matters has always been an important factor guiding developments in Western Thrace. While most minority members agree with the basic set of demands made by its leaders and the elite, the group is by no means a single entity. Like any contemporary society, it consists of conflicting social interests, differing readings of modernity and secularization, and contrasting perceptions of the desirable degree of integration into Greek society, and of relations with the 'motherland', Turkey. Somewhat schematically there are those who take a pro-Turkish stand and others who aspire to a European future and see Greece as more attractive in terms of socio-economic opportunities and respect for human rights.

Antagonism between the two groups has not been merely an intra-minority matter. It has been stirred up by Greek politics that have supported one side or the other, depending on fluctuations in Greek–Turkish relations. However, the de-intensification in majority–minority relations in the early 1990s and the reforms instigated thereafter opened up novel challenges for the minority. These changes have contributed to the shaping of a new generation that aspires to a European future; can differentiate between the concepts of assimilation and integration and shows more willingness to become a part of Greek society; seems comfortable with the notion of multiple identities; and wishes for greater autonomy and increased active involvement of the minority in its own concerns.

(2) *The Greek government (central and local) and the local Greek majority.* A number of ministries are involved in the shaping and implementation of minority policies: Foreign Affairs; Defence and the Armed Forces; Education and Religious Affairs; Internal Affairs; and Public Order (the National Intelligence Service); as well as the recently established National Ombudsman. The local administration in Thrace also influences minority policy and provides its own input, often different from and contradictory to that of the centre. Until 1990, the attitude of all of the above (apart from the National Ombudsman) was that the minority is a potential threat and consists of people that can be manipulated by Turkey to destabilize Thrace.

A large section of the local Greek majority considers Thrace a region that is particularly vulnerable to Turkish attack, and consequently feels threatened by Turkey. Like the minority, the majority too is not a single actor. It comprises the nationalists, the Church and the liberals. The nationalists, who cut across all political parties, are quite powerful in Thrace and prejudiced against the minority. They would prefer it if the minority did not exist, or would leave for Turkey.[13] They influence local politics and believe that the recent reforms represent a national threat.

Resistance to the changes is not, however, only the product of nationalist positions and beliefs. The fear of losing certain benefits as a result of improvements in the minority's situation is disguised by invoking national interest. A pertinent example was the reaction against minority pharmacists in the early 1990s by majority pharmacists who did not want to lose their share of the market.

Generally speaking, the Church is allied with the nationalists. It has treated the minority with suspicion, has opposed most of the decisions for expanding minority rights and has

often expressed its fear that, due to its rapid population growth, the minority will gradually become a majority in Thrace, both numerically and politically.[14]

The liberal, non-nationalist circles meanwhile have advocated and supported improvements in the minority's condition and respect its rights and diversity. They have adopted a pro-European attitude and feel comfortable with the notion of multiple identities. They have grown strong enough in the last five years to influence public opinion as well as decision-makers in the political field. The Greek human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have also adopted an active role recently.

Moreover, since the 1990 turning point the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Internal Affairs and Education have softened their approach and have advocated pro-minority measures.

(3) *The Turkish government.* The Turkish government considers itself the protector of the Muslim minority in Thrace and wants to keep it under its tight control. It raises complaints against the treatment of the minority in Western Thrace in public fora and in Greek–Turkish diplomatic talks, and is unwilling to acknowledge any of the recent changes for the better.[15]

The Turkish government, like the Greek for that matter, is supporting a policy of homogenization with regard to ethnic differences within its borders, but wants to protect the ethnic distinctiveness of its minorities outside the country. The Turkish government's representative *in situ* is the Turkish Consulate, powerful among the minority elite and treated with great suspicion by the majority.

(4) *European and international intergovernmental organizations.* The European intergovernmental organizations, such as the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Court of Human Rights, have become powerful allies of the Western Thrace minority in its conflict with the Greek government. The international human rights NGOs have been taking note of the minority's problems since the 1990s, and have often embarrassed the Greek government into accelerating revision of its policies violating human rights.[16]

Education of the Minority

Education is a thorny issue of increasing importance for the minority. The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne (Articles 40 and 41) constitutes the basic charter of education and gives the minority in Western Thrace on the one hand, and the Greek Orthodox minority in Istanbul on the other, the right, at their own expense, to establish, manage and control schools where they may use their own language and freely practise their own religion.

The educational needs of Turkish speakers in Greece were acknowledged as early as 1882,[17] before the annexation of Western Thrace, while compulsory teaching of the Greek language to the Muslim minority was introduced as early as 1915. Yet until 1950, education of the minority was not a high priority (Alexandris, 1992, pp. 123–135). School facilities were rudimentary; the Greek administration did not apply any comprehensive policy; and the schools suffered from lack of a standardized education.

Education eventually became the preferred battlefield for the two countries.[18] The Kemalists and the conservatives and the vicissitudes between these two factions were to mark education for a very long time. The Greek authorities contributed to this conflict by supporting one side or the other as they found it most expedient. The official name of the

minority schools was changed several times over in response to the state of Greek–Turkish relations.[19]

In 1951, at a time when the respective minorities in Istanbul and Western Thrace were numerically balanced, a Greco-Turkish cultural agreement was signed. A number of concessions followed, such as allowing the schools to be called 'Turkish', permitting exchanges of teachers from Turkey, importing Turkish schoolbooks and providing funds for the building and repairing of schools.[20]

The authoritarian nature of post-civil war Greece, the mounting difficulties between Greece and Turkey and the Greek dictatorship that came to power in 1967 are all reflected in minority education developments. It is revealing that the confidential reports of the inspectors of minority education between 1955 and 1967 adopted a rhetoric on 'reciprocity', 'national security' and 'criminal indifference of the Greek state', and were full of recommendations pertaining to foreign policy rather than education, such as 'how to buy lands from the minority', 'how to reduce its size', 'how to eradicate Turkish consciousness and so create in the minority a feeling of gratitude towards the country of which they are citizens', etc. (Iliadis, 2004, pp. 33–34). This spirit continued to prevail more or less until the 1990s.

In 1968 a new agreement was signed, the Greco–Turkish Cultural Protocol. Always on the basis of reciprocity, the protocol regulated co-operation between the two states with regard to the technical assistance provided for each other's minority education. However, as Aarbakke mentions (2001, p. 143), political developments between Greece and Turkey, the decline of the Greek minority in Istanbul and the diplomatic inexperience of the colonels' junta cancelled out all the prospective benefits of the new protocol.

The Greek authorities were claiming all along that minority education was functioning smoothly and faultlessly, while the minority described it as 'a castrated, marginalized and downgraded mechanism for producing illiteracy' (Onsounoglou, 1997, p. 62). When a minority deputy asked a question in parliament on minority education, the then-Minister of Education replied that 'he could see no problem, since the Greek textbooks used by Muslim children were the same as those used by the Greek ones'.[21] Certain political and social groups were well aware of the severity of the problem but proved unable to intervene.

However, the 1991 overall policy change towards the minority, as well as the political developments between the two countries, gradually made themselves felt in the educational field too. This does not mean that the old attitudes, suspicions, and ideological blinkers on both sides have been removed and no longer influence educational policy. However, a Greek–Turkish Cultural Agreement signed in 2000 abolished the old one of 1951 and, although it is not as yet effective in practice, it points in the right direction.

The most significant innovation is positive discrimination (instituted in 1996), which allows a special 0.5% minority quota to attend Greek universities. This important measure met with scepticism from hard-liners on both sides: the minority elite feared a loosening of its ties with Turkey, and Greek nationalists were apprehensive of the opportunities this opened up for minority children. Some opposition notwithstanding, the measure set major developments in motion. Moreover, the 1997–2004 European-funded PEM (described further below) was to change the scene drastically.

A very important process bound to influence dynamically the education of minorities is the homogenization of the European national legal systems into a uniform legal order with common denominators, among them protection of minority cultural differences. In 1997

Greece signed the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of Minorities. This important landmark is the first legal text signed by Greece since the Lausanne Treaty that regulates minority groups (Skordas, 1997; Tsitselikis, 2003). Once it is ratified by the Greek parliament, new legislation on minority education will become possible.

The Educational System

The legal status of minority schools combines elements of both private and public schools, so creating a *sui generis* situation with state control overwhelming minority self-organizational structures.[22] Although minority schools follow national guidelines, they are in addition administered and inspected by a special Co-ordinating Bureau for Minority Schools.[23] Greek is the sole language used by the authorities for school administration, and the counsellors supervising minority education are not expected to know Turkish.

The Lausanne Treaty referred only to primary schools, so there are no provisions for pre-school education, which is provided at monolingual Greek mainstream schools. The academic year 2002–03 saw the enrolment of 6887 children in 221 minority primary schools. More than half of these schools operate with fewer than 20 pupils each. The standard kind of school with six separate classes is the exception. In almost 80% of the schools the pupils are grouped in two classes where different age-groups are taught together. Minority schools observe the religious holidays of both calendars, which shortens the school year.

Minority schools have a bilingual curriculum. Turkish language, mathematics, physics, chemistry, religion (the Qur'an), art and physical education are taught in Turkish; and Greek language, history, geography, environmental studies, and civic education are taught in Greek.[24]

For secondary education, minority children can choose between the two bilingual minority schools in the two big towns of Xanthi and Komotini,[25] the two religious schools (*medresse*), monolingual Greek schools, or schools in Turkey. No provision is made in the monolingual Greek secondary or primary school for first language instruction. There are no reliable statistics on enrolment in Turkish secondary schools. Turkish and minority sources mention 3000–4000 pupils in the first half of the 1990s (Onsounoglou, 1997; Akgönül, 1999, p. 183), but a survey taken as part of PEM gave much smaller numbers (Askouni, forthcoming).

Almost no minority students enrolled in a Greek university prior to the positive discrimination measure of 1996.

The Teachers

The Greek part of the curriculum is taught exclusively by Greek teachers trained like teachers elsewhere in the country, and with no special knowledge in matters of minority and bilingual education. Priority in appointments goes to men, and specifically men from Thrace (Baltsiotis & Tsitselikis, 2001).

The Greek administration has for most of the time been more concerned with supervising the minority teachers than those on the Greek side of the curriculum. In the difficult 1960s and the 1970s, the Greek teachers' presence was of 'national importance'; they were considered to have 'a delicate and high mission', and were expected to fulfil 'special duties' such as 'watching Turkish propaganda' (Baltsiotis, 1997, p. 344; Iliadis,

2004, pp. 62–65). Prior to the early 1990s there seemed very little interest in having minority children learn Greek.

The Turkish teachers charged with the Turkish part of the curriculum were few and far between until the 1950s and 1960s. They had and still have diverse educational backgrounds. Until 1968 they were graduates of either teacher-training colleges in Turkey or religious schools in Western Thrace; a small number came from Turkey under the 1951 agreement. Graduates from Turkish teacher-training colleges were considered carriers of a Kemalist ideology. They were regarded by the Greek school inspectors as representatives *par excellence* of anti-Greek propaganda, and became the object of harsh administrative measures (Iliadis, 2004, pp. 45–55). Traditionally, these teachers' salaries were paid by the pupils' parents.

An important landmark in the history of minority education is the 1968 establishment by the Greek authorities of the Special Pedagogical Academy of Thessaloniki (EPATH). The academy was intended gradually to replace minority teachers trained in Turkey and so eliminate any foreign ideological or other 'control'. The Turkish minority elite opposed EPATH from the start and even today the subject remains a bone of contention. The Greek administration has promised repeatedly to improve the quality of study at the academy and extend the two years' training to four, but has done very little about it in practice. At present, there is a demand from several actors in both the minority and majority to close down this academy completely, and transform it into a proper university department.

EPATH students were (and still are) mainly graduates of *medresse*, recruited from poor Pomak villages. They aspire to social mobility and to a guaranteed Greek public-servant status. A number of them have insufficient knowledge of Turkish.[26] There are permanent complaints from the minority elite and many parents that the EPATH graduates cannot teach their children properly because of their poor command of Turkish. The loyalty of the EPATH teachers who are Greek civil servants is divided between what they owe to the Greek authorities and to their own community. They are isolated both from their Christian colleagues and from the Turkish mainstream culture.[27]

Teaching Materials

The largest part of the 1951 agreement was devoted to teaching materials. Greek textbooks were to be produced by the Greek state and Turkish textbooks were to be imported from Turkey.[28] Textbooks were to be inspected by the respective ministries, who had the right to censor material that was considered ideologically charged and to suggest changes.[29] The Turkish books were distributed for only one year in 1955. Their circulation was then prohibited, and thereafter and until the year 2000 the same books continued to be used in photocopied form.[30] The minority schools are not permitted to have libraries with books or other educational material in Turkish.[31]

The 1997–2004 PEM

PEM Activities

Launched in 1997, PEM was a turning point in relations between the Muslim minority and the Greek government, and the long-established fixations of the past gave way to promising new openings. Although PEM was a specifically educational project, it was bound to

extend well beyond the schoolyard and directly or indirectly involved all the actors concerned.

The Ministry of Education initiated PEM as part of the European Union policy against social exclusion.[32] It was a major undertaking of an interdisciplinary nature. The PEM team numbered more than 100 specialists in the educational sciences, linguistics, sociology, psychology, anthropology, conflict resolution, the natural sciences and the arts. There was also very fertile collaboration between academics and school teachers with practical, everyday experience of the classroom. Over the seven years, a small but growing number of minority members also became part of the team.

One great difficulty in the work was the dearth of reliable information and basic education and population statistics. A number of surveys and qualitative studies conducted during the seven years concerned the pupil and teacher population, the educational and social background of parents (Askouni, forthcoming), language use, Greek language competence (Tzevelekou *et al.*, forthcoming), drop-out rates from the compulsory nine-year period of education (Askouni, forthcoming), attitudes towards education, and representations of ethnic identity (Bozatzis, forthcoming).

Drop-Out Rates and Massive Underachievement

The greatest challenge for PEM was dealing with considerable underachievement and the high drop-out rates from compulsory education. Research data showed that by 1997 all minority children were completing the six-year primary education. However, a very large number of them had a very poor command of the Greek language, and more than 50% in secondary schools (gymnasia) had difficulties in language classes.

At the start of the project the minority children's glaring underachievement was explained by the educational authorities concerned as well as by many majority teachers as lack of willingness and motivation on the part of the parents to have their children learn Greek, or as the result of intervention by the minority elite and the Turkish Consulate to keep the minority uneducated and so more readily controllable, or simply as the consequence of the backward nature of agricultural Oriental stock. However, qualitative research (Plexousaki, 2005) has indicated that parents are actually very keen to have their children well educated and consider education a matter of high priority. This is confirmed by the spectacular changes in parents' attitudes, rapid increases in gymnasium attendance, and the improvements in school performance described below.

In 1997, drop-out rates from compulsory education were obviously high, but there were no exact figures. Study of a student cohort (1996–2003) revealed that almost half of the children who finished primary school did not enrol in the gymnasium, and out of those who did, only one in three managed to complete the nine-year compulsory education. The drop-out rate was almost 65%, compared with the national mean of 7%. The problem was particularly acute in the case of girls, whose drop-out rate amounted to 80% compared with the boys' 54% (Askouni, forthcoming).

The minority's marginal social position and isolation is partially responsible for this underachievement, but the most important causes are the stigma of being the 'enemy' that most of the children carry because of their Turkish identity; the age-old policy of appointing majority teachers with the understanding that they have 'a delicate national mission' to perform; the mistrust and lack of co-operation among majority and minority teachers; and the overall inadequacy of the minority schools.

These minority schools may be bilingual in that they follow a dual-literacy programme, but the makers of educational policy, on either side, seem uninterested in any of the issues of the current *problématique* of bilingual education, such as the two-way process of bilingual development, interdependence with equal status and respect for both languages, the negotiation of identities in the classroom, the bilingual skills of the teaching staff and so on.

Educational Materials

Developing new educational materials was, despite the size of the task, a relatively easier job than teacher training or working with the community.

For primary schools (6 to 12 years of age) 38 textbooks were put together for Greek as a second language (Iordanidou, 2003), history (De Castro, forthcoming), geography, the environment, and civic education. Supplementary material, such as an electronic method for teaching Greek as a second language,[33] songs, and teaching games, were also produced. All the material is inter-thematic, playful, colourful, and 'user-friendly', respecting the pupils' ethnic identity.

On the secondary level, new materials were developed to be used in connection with existing ones for Greek as a second language, literature, history, mathematics, physics, and geography.[34]

Extended Teaching Programme

In nineteen secondary schools in the prefectures of Xanthi and Komotini, more teaching hours were added to the regular schedules. Nearly 1000 students have attended the extended programme with very good results. The programme was also useful for testing out the new materials and employing feedback provided by the teachers.

Teacher Training

No teaching material, however good, can bear fruit without teacher training. Accordingly, a lot of resources have gone into the training of teachers, in the first three years of PEM, all of it to primary school teachers. For the very first time in the history of minority education, teachers from both the majority and the minority were trained side by side for an average of 100 hours per year. Later the training was extended to secondary school teachers. Training focused on didactic and pedagogic skills, and how to use the new materials, on classroom dynamics, identity issues and the negotiation of differences (Androussou, 2004; Lampidi *et al.*, forthcoming; Sfyroera, forthcoming). The teachers not only had no prior knowledge of instructing bilingual children, but very many of them had been appointed years ago, when their duties were spelled out very differently on nationalistic rather than academic lines, as described above.

Teacher training proved to be the most difficult and also least successful of all PEM activities. The teachers' frustration is understandable given the way minority education has developed. The re-orientation of the Greek government's policy towards the minority is very recent, and the contentious attitude of the past will need more time to fade. Also, teachers are disheartened when their pupils fail in great numbers, and feel they have no future. Both the majority and minority teachers are angry, blame each other, and cannot see the others' point of view. The dominant feeling on both sides is fear and

ambivalence—fears that are realistic but also fears on the level of fantasy. Such groups are very difficult to work with. Before the teachers can apply new didactic skills they will have to work on their feelings and representations of the alien 'other' they are made to teach. In systematic work with small groups, based on group-dynamic techniques progress was often very slow and insubstantial. Teachers were also systematically visited on the school premises during teaching hours (Dragonas, 2004b; Androussou, 2005).

All the new textbooks have guides for the teacher. New teacher-training materials have been developed, and salient themes pertaining to minority education have been broken down into 34 different booklets. This material features on the internet to encourage dialogue among teachers (Androussou, 2005).[35]

A documentary video was prepared which thoroughly examines the dialectics of identity in Western Thrace. It was used as a teacher-training tool, offering trainees a way to break the silence and tackle the conflictual issues they avoided during the training, and to express their feelings openly (Androussou, 2005).

Work with the Community

A great effort was made during the PEM project to involve the entire community. Two community centres have been set up in each of the two large towns, staffed equally by minority and majority personnel. They provide a paradigm of the work environment through the alternate use of language, and most importantly, no power hierarchies. The centres operate a lending library, offer afternoon classes, the use of computers, summer courses, educational and psychological counselling for parents and teachers (Tsiantis *et al.*, forthcoming), and Greek classes for parents and unemployed young women. They have proved to be the best way for offering an alternative learning context to that of the minority school, and their educational results are very promising. They are also an excellent way to approach parents, who seem to be freer and more relaxed there than on the school premises. One of the most important functions of the centres is to provide space (physical, social, and psychological) for adolescents to run their own creative projects. The facilitators come from both the minority and the majority and, in the Xanthi centre, for the very first time in the history of the minority, joint groups of adolescents are creatively designing a meaningful present and a promising future (Vassiliou, 2004; Vassiliou & Ligdopoulou, forthcoming).[36]

To keep the dialogue open, meetings were held regularly with the leaders of the minority, the Members of Parliament (MPs) of the area, local authorities, and various majority and minority teacher associations. Also, press releases about PEM were sent out to the community.

Open children's workshops were held to mark the end of each school year and joined by parents, teachers, and representatives of the community as a whole.

Two international conferences were organized to bring together experts from bilingual, multicultural, and conflict situations. Members of both the majority and the minority had the opportunity to realize that their situation, no matter how difficult, is not unique in the world and that changes may be difficult but are possible.[37]

Steps Forward

There have been big changes in school attendance since 1997, when PEM was first launched. They reflect the overall improvement in the lives of the minority as a result

of political measures and the gradual process of delayed modernization, as well as the implementation of PEM. The positive discrimination measure mentioned earlier, concerning access to tertiary institutions, has strengthened the minority's motivation to attend Greek secondary education. The use of the new educational materials, the impressive success of afternoon and summer classes, sustained efforts by a small number of dedicated trained teachers, assistance provided in the first years of secondary education, and last but not least, the interest shown for the first time by the Greek polity in the educational future of minority children—all these have contributed to the changes observed.

The completion of secondary education, with a view to tertiary education, presupposes a good command of the Greek language. The minority primary school having proved inadequate for properly preparing minority children for a prospective career in the Greek educational system, their parents have begun to send them to pre-school, even though it uses only the Greek language. They have also started to show a growing preference for mainstream Greek secondary education.

Pre-schooling is a very recent development which until ten years ago was not provided in ethnically uniform settlements, and the minority expressed no wish for it. Even today only a few minority children attend pre-school. Yet in the past not quite ten years the number has increased 5.5 times.[38]

There is also a slow trend among the minority towards preferring the mainstream Greek primary school instead of their own. So in 2002–03, out of a total of 6887 minority children only 12% attended mainstream Greek primary schools; in 1996–97 the percentage had been 5% and, prior to that, practically zero (Askouni, forthcoming).

There is a very strong change in gymnasium attendance, which has quadrupled over less than fifteen years.[39] While drop-out rates from compulsory education are still very high and the problems facing education serious, the trends are promising. Although the girls' drop-out rate is 80%, the increase in gymnasium attendance over ten years is 76.9% (compared with 19.6% for boys). In 2002–03 the ratio of Greeks to the minority was 75 to 25, and as more children enrol in the Greek secondary school, the number leaving for Turkey to pursue secondary school studies is declining (*ibid*).

Since 1997 when the positive discrimination measure for university entrance examinations was introduced, 70 to 110 minority students entered tertiary education every year. This number is still very low, given the allotted quota of 410 places,[40] and reflects the inefficiency of the secondary school as well as the difficulties students face when they find themselves at university.

The choice of the Greek mainstream school over the minority one is hard for parents. Minority education, especially at primary school level, is identified with the protection of the Turkish ethnic identity and the preservation of their language, religion, and culture. Parents who opt out of the minority school fear they may jeopardize their children's identity, although they recognize that the minority school is a ghetto school that leads to academic failure.

The parents' expectations for their children's social mobility on the one hand, and the preservation of their identity on the other, create strong intra- and interpersonal conflicts that are a huge burden for the minority. Solutions, such as the introduction of Turkish language and religious education in the Greek mainstream schools, would alleviate some of these pressures. However, neither the Greek government nor the Turkish elite has so far been bold enough to look at alternative approaches tested in bilingual environments elsewhere in the world.

As regards pre-schooling, the Greek government is not prepared to extend the minority status to this level. Bringing a Turkish speaker into the classroom has been discussed, but no decision has been taken and the issue of teaching children in their mother tongue continues to be ignored. The minority has, however, been asking for bilingual pre-schooling on the model of the minority primary school and has silenced the right to mother-tongue education for those who are not Turkish speakers. As regards primary education, the minority elite vehemently defends the minority school that stands for its 'Turkishness' and represents its special position in Greek society, while simultaneously safeguarding Turkey's right to intervene in educational matters affecting the minority. The Greek majority for its part has interpreted any move towards the mainstream school as proof of successful assimilation.[41]

Finally, many of the minority elite tend to close their eyes to the clearly growing preference for Greek mainstream secondary schools. They insist on the minority status of education, and reject any kind of bilingual education that would interfere with Turkey's right to intervene, and they keep asking for new minority gymnasia, although the number of children choosing this type of school is decreasing. Equally rigidly, the Greek government refuses any alternative scheme to the monolingual Greek school. This polarization has negatively affected the work of PEM.

Opposition and Controversy

PEM was a very difficult project in every respect, both politically and pedagogically. The presence of its team in the field stirred up a lot of emotions: suspicion from the local educational authorities; ambivalence at best, anger and hostility more often, on the part of the nationalists of the majority; hesitation and timid hope in the minority; caution among its elite.

For the first three years of the project the members of the minority proved hard to approach. Contacts had to be made either through the minority teachers who came to training sessions or through their official teachers' associations and elected elite representatives. Parents were reserved, unwilling to open up and talk even to Turcophone PEM staff, and mothers tended to simply turn away when approached. Often one member of the community set out the official line on behalf of the others. Biased information coming in from all directions was the norm, and all the parties involved had their own reasons for providing a different narrative of what was going on in the educational sphere.

Efforts to collect research data met with strong resistance. Many of the local community leaders and educational administrators insisted on the pointless nature of such an endeavour, since all the information was known and could be provided by them personally. Many representatives of the minority were just as negative, and used the same argument. Both sides were suspicious of the intentions of the PEM researchers, and their reluctance to accept the proffered version of the truth at face value. They also expressed much doubt that reliable and valid information could be collected at all. This negative attitude to the assembling of research data is behind the existing lack of statistics mentioned earlier, and permits each side to present its own version in accordance with its own political interests.

The local educational authorities were disinclined to help in the collection of data and argued that the PEM team's visits disturbed the running of the schools. The minority's resistance to data collection led to 'information via lack of information', as claimed by Askouni (2004). One question in the survey conducted in 1998 investigated 'the language

used by the child at home'. It plainly revealed the magnitude of the conflict over identity, and the disinclination by all sides to permit self-identification. It proved to be the first serious resistance to the project by the minority. Its leaders considered that recording the children's linguistic heterogeneity was an effort to break up the minority. The majority teachers, on the other hand, saw it as an opportunity to highlight the Pomak language, and to disparage the supposedly uniform nature of the minority. When the questionnaires were returned the answer was either left blank or changed from 'Turkish' to 'Pomak' or vice versa.

In the first two years the local Greek press for the most part was very hostile and published accusations by anonymous sources. The PEM researchers were described as anti-national propagandists, pawns of Turkey, politically naïve academics and alien intruders into local affairs. Just as unfriendly were the Church and its local bigoted bishops. Despite the fact that PEM represented official policy and was being implemented by the Ministry of Education, the local educational authorities were unwilling to accept any change of policy. For a long time some of them were convinced that one day the project would come to a halt and everything would revert to what it had always been.

On the minority side, the resistance at the beginning was caused by doubts concerning the use of research data, and intense opposition to questioning the minority's ethnic composition. This opposition was echoed again later, in April 2003, when there were furious protests by the minority MPs to the Minister of Education about the use of 'three Slavic and two Roma words' in a fairy tale contained in one of the 38 new textbooks developed by PEM. In the end the fairy tale had to be revised and the offending five words removed. Generally speaking, the minority teachers were initially positive, appreciative of being respected for the first time, and even some members of the elite, who were suspicious of a hidden assimilationist agenda, were willing to sit back and see. When the majority became more accepting, the balance changed and most of the minority elite as well as minority teachers' associations withdrew their support.

A very important point must be raised here. PEM's greatest inherent limitation was that, although it concerned a dual-literacy situation, the intervention addressed itself to only the Greek curriculum. All financial and human resources were poured into that. Basing itself on the legal framework and on the desire to improve teaching and learning of the Greek language and avoid the mistakes of the past (such as bringing out Turkish textbooks without the consent of the minority), the Greek government had drawn up a one-sided programme. What may have appeared 'natural' at the beginning, gradually turned out to be unnatural.

For all that, PEM set in motion processes that had been stifled for years. It contributed to the necessary procedures for the dispatch from Turkey of new language textbooks for Turkish language, religious education, mathematics and physics, all specially developed for the minority and approved by the Greek Ministry of Education. So in the year 2000, after almost half a century, minority schools acquired new textbooks in place of the photocopies used since 1955. The minority greeted this change with a lot of enthusiasm.

The question remained, however: how could a dual-literacy programme move forward if changes were only made on one side? Most of the minority elite began to think that by supporting only the Greek curriculum, PEM was aiming at assimilation. They reacted awkwardly. They demanded that professionals from Turkey should train the EPATH teachers; they began boycotting the community centres; and they blatantly asserted that they had no interest in their children learning Greek if this jeopardized their Turkish identity.

These reactions by the minority were not solely the product of national convictions, loyalty to the motherland, fear of assimilation, and mistrust of the Greek government. The overall changes mentioned, the application of democratic principles, the positive discrimination measure, and the PEM initiatives for the first time in the history of the minority caused cracks in the elite's party-line.

The nationalist faction in the majority has not welcomed the changes either. It has produced a uniform rhetoric associating Turkey with threat and danger, and demanded a policy of 'negative reciprocity', whereby the rights of the minority in Thrace should be denied in retaliation for Turkey's mistreatment of its Greek minority.

Conclusion: 'Addition not Subtraction, Multiplication not Division'[42]

What are the results after seven years of hard work?[43] The question is difficult to answer. If the more than 100 people who worked on the PEM project were to be asked, the answer would be a mixture of great satisfaction and frustration, a sense of success and a Sisyphean struggle. Yet no one will forget the letters sent by parents after the first year, and the notes from children, asking that the project be continued and conveying their proposals for the future.

Several of the teachers concerned have started to see things differently, some have even changed their working style, and a very small number have performed miracles (Magos, 2004; Androussou, 2005). The silent, withdrawn children have slowly opened up and many have become lively and creative. The young people in the centres have experimented living inventively together in a new era. The rate of secondary school attendance has quadrupled; the enrolment of girls is rapidly growing. Parents are increasingly less reserved. They come to the centres and ask for Greek classes for their children, more books, transportation of the children from their villages to the centres, and even Greek classes for themselves. In the past seven years many things have changed and most important of all, the 'patriotic' discourse has weakened. If one were to state in a nutshell which were the most and least successful interventions, it would be easy to select the centres and primary minority school teachers' training respectively. The centres, being outside the school structure and equally staffed by majority and minority workers, are somewhat free from inter-ethnic antagonism and power structures, whereas change within the school system represents a longer and more arduous process. Thus policy-makers interested in educational change should seek quick impact through setting up new institutions that draw upon the strengths of a changing community.

The changes achieved are not the result of PEM alone. They reflect the overall transformation of society from tradition to modernity. A lot remains to be desired, however. While PEM has certainly disturbed still waters, it has not changed the deep structure. That change, says Cummins (2004, p. 11), 'will come only when educators walk in their classrooms burdened, not by the anger of the past and the disdain of the present, but with their own identities focused on transforming the social futures towards which their students are travelling'.

Notes

1. See for example Oran (2003), Alexandris (1992), Koufa & Svolopoulos (1991).
2. According to the 1919–20 census, the population in Western Thrace consisted of (in decreasing order of size of the groups) Muslim Turks, Bulgarians, Greeks, Muslim Pomaks, Jews, Armenians, and Muslim Roma (Alexandris, 1992, p. 124).

3. Turkish in Thrace is also the only legally recognized minority language in Greece. For historical and socio-political reasons, modern Greek society was till the early 1990s an ethnically, culturally, linguistically and religiously homogeneous society. By the end of the civil war, the nationalist myth had it that Greece is a homogeneous society, disregarding the historical construction of this homogeneity and silencing the exchange of populations that expelled the majority of members of Slavic- and Turkish-speaking groups, the extermination of almost the entire Jewish population in Northern Greece by the Nazis, the exodus that followed the civil war and the migration of minority Turks to Turkey in the 1960s. The rapid international political changes of the 1990s had an important effect on Greek demography. Migrants from Albania, the former Soviet Union and Asia currently compose one-tenth of the Greek population, challenging migration policies and personal strategies. Yet the representation of homogeneity remains dominant in the overall society and in the educational system in particular.

4. On the overt and covert interests regarding population statistics in Thrace see Dragonas (2004a).

5. According to Article 9 of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, CERD/C/363/Add.4/Rev.1, May 16, 2001, p. 7.

6. Similarly Baskin Oran claims that 'in Western Thrace the Pomaks are known for being more Turkish than the Turks, and the Romani for being more Turkish than the Pomaks' (2003, p. 114).

7. Bulgarian authors claim that the Pomaks are Bulgarians who were either forcefully Islamized between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, or who converted voluntarily for economic reasons (Krasteva-Blagoeva, 2001); Turkish authors maintain that they are the descendants of a Turkish tribe that moved to the Balkan area in the fifth and sixth centuries; and Greek authors say that they are indigenous Thracians, Christians who were assimilated by the Turkish population due to their proximity (Brunnbauer, 2001; Trubeta, 2001).

8. This was actually the largest protest action by the minority since Thrace was incorporated into the Greek state (Whitman, 1990, p. 17).

9. This article provided for the denationalization of citizens of 'different descent' (*allogenis*), as opposed to those 'of the same descent' (*omogenis*). Its application for 43 years led to the denationalization of 60,004 '*allogenis*' Greeks, a considerable percentage of whom were members of the minority in Thrace (Sitaropoulos, 2004, pp. 205–206). Article 19 was abolished in 1998.

10. Of the minority children's fathers, 47% are in agriculture, 42% are manual workers, 5.3% are self-employed merchants, 1.2% are clerks, and a very small number are professionals with university degrees (1.8% teachers and 0.7% are doctors, lawyers or engineers).

11. A further 3% of parents are illiterate, and 15% have not completed primary school (12% of fathers and 17% of mothers), while few fathers have a secondary school qualification.

12. Yagcioglou, in his political system analysis of the decision-making process for minority policies, has identified a nexus of six actors in the intra-societal, and seven in the extra-societal environment whose inputs have had a significant influence. Our own analysis will focus on the interplay of four actors that appear meaningfully to define the conflict.

13. They constantly operate on the basis of the Kleinian psychological mechanism of splitting, whereby everything that it is good and noble is associated with the Greeks, and everything that is bad and devious is associated with Turkey (Dragonas, 2004b).

14. This fear is actually not realistic, since urbanization and modernization processes have caused the average minority family to have fewer children, so that it is now gradually approaching Greek national standards (Dalègre, 1997, p. 71; Askouni, forthcoming).

15. The Turkish government is not a single, homogeneous actor either. On the one hand, it is pressured from nationalistic circles to sharpen its nationalistic rhetoric and on the other, wishing to maintain a positive image in its effort to enter the European politico-economic system, it keeps a low profile. Indicative of this low profile was the visit of Prime Minister Erdogan to Thrace in May 2004 where he was very careful not to stir up nationalistic passions.

16. Finally, the human rights reports of the US Congress, and the Helsinki Watch reports also exert considerable pressure on the Greek governments.

17. Act of 16–23 June 1882, concerning Turkish and Jewish schools in Thessaly and Crete, in accordance with the Treaty of Constantinople of 1881.

18. We shall not discuss here the minority education of Greek children in Istanbul. For a detailed account see Sarioglou (2004).

19. Legal regulations in 1882 and 1954 defined the schools as Turkish; in 1915 as Ottoman; in 1919, 1922 and 1962 as Muslim; and in 1971 and 1972 they received their current name, i.e. Minority schools (Tsitselikis, 2003, p. 14).

20. These measures did not, however, reflect an overall plan for the integration of the minority in Western Thrace, but the hope (or rather the illusion) that recompense would be secured for the Greek Orthodox minority in Istanbul. So the Greek efforts did not necessarily please Turkey, which remained suspicious of the true Greek motives (Aarbakke, 2001, pp. 134–137; Nikolakopoulos, 2002, p. 141).

21. *Eleftherotypia*, 13(1), 1990.

22. This loose and convoluted legal framework for minority education was obviously intended to leave room for direct or indirect manoeuvres whenever needed (Baltsiotis, 1997, p. 330).

23. Moreover, minority education in Thrace officially involves the Ministry of Education and indirectly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, because it is regarded as the product of an international treaty regulating reciprocity between Greece and Turkey. There can be no major reform initiated by the Education Ministry without approval by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Tsitselikis & Mavrommatis, 2003, pp. 9–11).

24. The allotment of teaching hours to one or other curriculum is a constant bone of contention.

25. These two secondary schools are the result of the 1951 Greek–Turkish Cultural Agreement and the 1968 protocol that partly extended the minority system to secondary education.

26. Besides their Pomak origin, most courses at the academy are taught in Greek and those delivered in Turkish are given by Turkish-speaking Greeks.

27. EPATH teachers are not accepted as members of either the majority teachers' associations or the association of teachers educated in Turkey or the Association of Turkish Scientists.

28. The reverse procedure was to be followed for the Greek minority schools in Istanbul.

29. Examples of 'suspect' pages removed from the textbooks were maps of Turkey, distances between Turkish cities, a picture of a factory, the comment that Turkey is a modern country, pictures of Kemal Ataturk, the Turkish flag and the national anthem, and so on (Stathi, 1997, p. 65; Iliadis, 2004, p. 68).

30. It is not clear whether new Turkish books were sent during that period, whether the Greek administration suggested changes that were turned down, or whether there was some hard-to-explain inertia due to fears in the implementation of reciprocity (Baltsiotis, 1997, p. 324).

31. In 1992 the Greek Ministry of Education prepared Turkish textbooks without consulting with the minority or the administration in Turkey, and distributed them to all minority schools. This transgression of the agreement met with violent reactions. The minority leaders asked parents not to send their children to school unless these books were recalled. Almost all minority parents and schoolchildren joined the boycott. Minority teachers also protested, and in many cases textbooks were burnt. Arrests and trials followed the protests. The EPATH teachers, as Greek civil servants, found themselves in a very difficult situation, caught between the reactions of their community and pressure from the Greek administration. After a few months, the Ministry of Education declared that it would no longer require but only recommend minority teachers to use the books. The whole affair remained an open wound for many years.

32. Greek Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, Operational Program in Education and Initial Vocational Training I (1997–2000) and II (2000–04), 'Education of Muslim Children', financed 25% by the Greek Ministry and 75% by the European Social Fund. PEM lasted for seven years but for bureaucratic reasons the team were not in the field for almost two years (between 2000 and 2004). However, it is a unified whole and will be treated as such in this text. Greek speakers may look up the web page www.ecd.uoa.gr/museduc. Along with PEM three more large-scale programmes were funded under the same funding line catering for educational reforms of groups which are threatened by social exclusion. The other two are (1) migrant children, the number of whom has risen over a period of fifteen years to 15% of the total primary school population, and (2) the Roma. It must be noted that there is no provision of mother-tongue instruction. Interestingly the education of Greek children abroad is incorporated under the same heading.

33. Tzevelekou (2001). For Greek and Turkish speakers see www.ilsp.muslimgr.html and www.ilsp.muslim_eng.html.

34. For Greek as a second language, see Moschonas (2003), Iordanidou (forthcoming); for literature, Apostolidou & Hodolidou (forthcoming); for history, Konortas (2003); for mathematics, Sakonidis (2004, forthcoming); for physics, Tselfes (2003); for geography, Lambrinos & Kiskini (forthcoming).

35. Greek speakers see www. Kleidiakaiantikleidia.net

36. New plans for the future involve the extension of the community centre idea by setting up 'itinerant' centres that will circulate among smaller towns and remote villages.
37. Participants came from Israel, Palestine, Serbia, Turkey, Belgium, the UK, Canada and the USA.
38. In 1994–95, only 144 children attended pre-school. In 2002–03 the number had risen to 784 (Askouni, forthcoming).
39. In 2002–03, minority students attending the Greek gymnasium numbered 2089, those at the minority equivalent 659. In 1995–96, the respective figures were 980 and 314; in 1989–90 they were 390 and 228 (Askouni, forthcoming).
40. European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia (2004, p. 171).
41. One of the many unofficial regulations was that after 1978 children could move from the minority school to the mainstream school but not vice versa. This measure was rescinded in 1999 (Baltsiotis & Tsitselikis, 2001, p. 322).
42. This is part of the PEM logo.
43. This paper is currently being prepared for publication. An independent assessor has given the Greek Ministry of Education his evaluation which they commissioned. It is overall a very positive account stressing the long-term nature of the endeavour and the importance of continuing in the same direction.

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