

Chapter Nine

School Structure and Marketisation of Education

Introduction

This chapter aims to explore the relation between the purpose and philosophy of each educational system and the structure of the schools that participated in this study. In this way it may be possible to understand what the New Labour plea for 'Education, Education, Education', and Greek students' activism mean in their respective contexts, by formulating a narrative that ~~can accommodate~~ both 'change' and 'continuity', and in which inclusion/exclusion takes place.

In this chapter 'structure' refers mostly to the internal structure of the schools as distinct organisations. The school structure however, cannot be seen outside the overall structure of the educational system edifice. Diagrams 9.1 and 9.2 present the main levels of the English and Greek system respectively (for a detailed description of the two systems, see Eurybase, 2001a, 2001b; for a short description, see Eurydice, 2000, 2001). The schools are located at the left-hand side of the diagrams and the National level at the right-hand side. Between the

two ends, the other levels of education are represented. The diagrams in this chapter try to break away from the typical 'Pyramid' structure of presenting educational systems, at the base of which all the schools of an educational system are presented together. Thus, the different levels of the educational system occupy more or less the same 'space' and the school level –represented by one school- is positioned at the left side of the diagrams.

Finally, this discussion focuses on the structure of general compulsory Secondary Education and therefore bodies relating exclusively or mainly to other levels of education are not included.

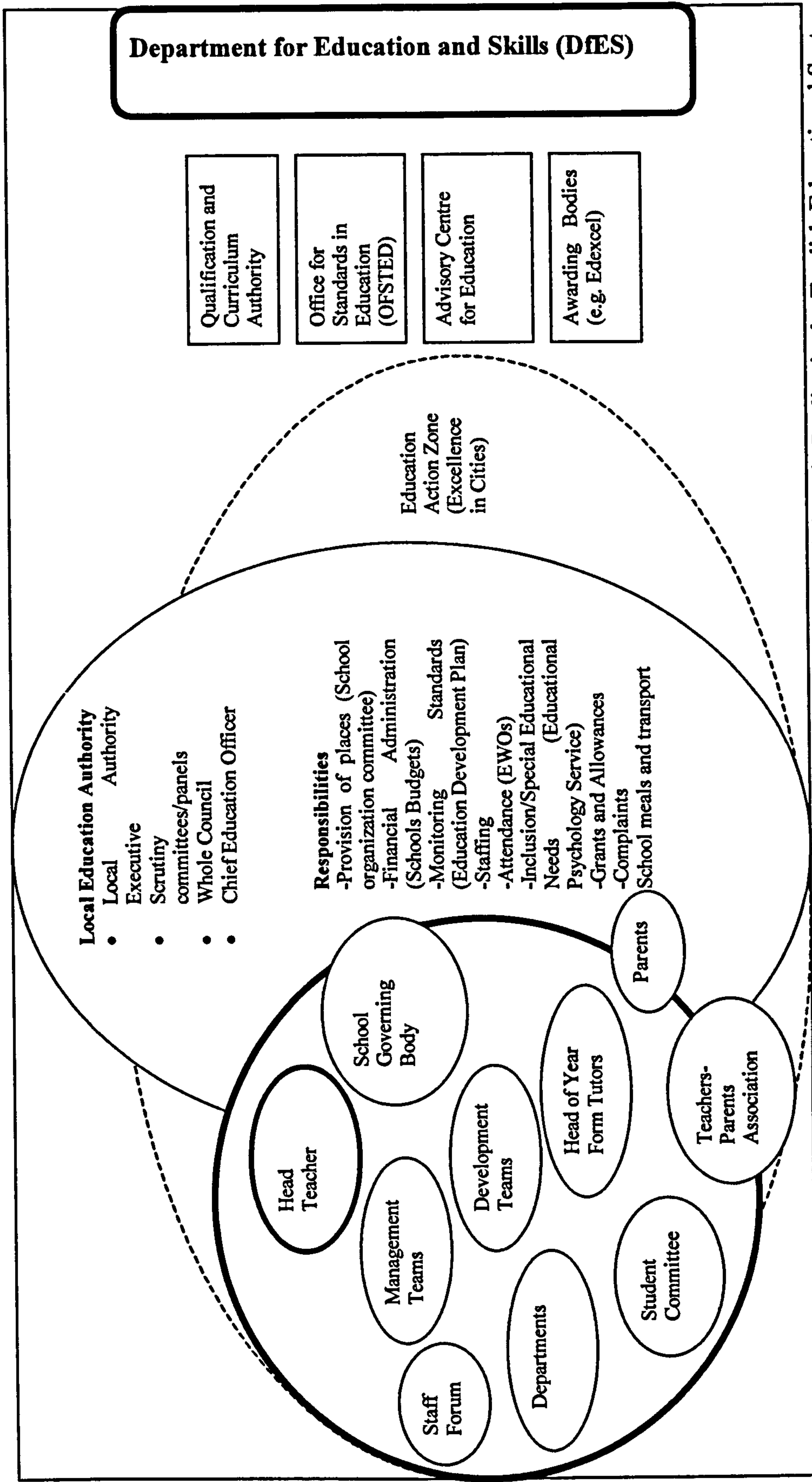


Diagram 9.1: Main Bodies in the English Educational System

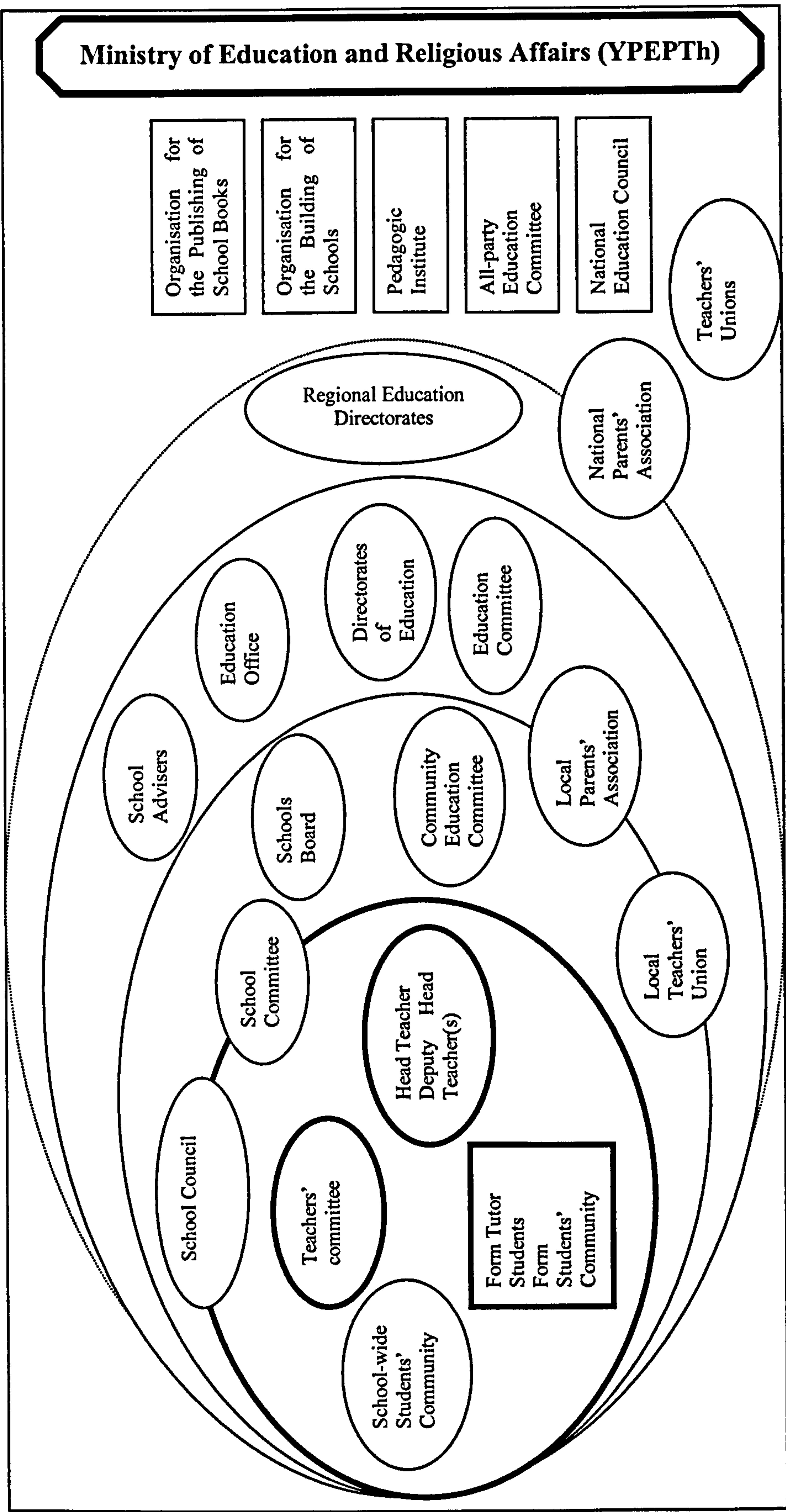


Diagram 9.2: Main Bodies in the Greek Education System

The blurring of centralisation and decentralisation

The English educational system (Diagram 9.1) has historically been described as a decentralised system in which Local Educational Authorities (LEAs) have had relative autonomy to develop educational policies and schools have had autonomy in defining the content and structure of learning.

In the last twenty years, a number of reforms initiated by Thatcher's and Major's Conservative Governments and continued by Blair's New Labour Government⁶⁶, affecting all aspects of education have changed the power relations amongst the different levels, increasing the centralised control of the Department for Education and Skills (previously Department for Education and Employment). This control is exerted either directly from the DfES, or indirectly from independent bodies such as OFSTED. Ainley (2001) argues that this type of 'quasi-autonomous governmental organisation' is a characteristic of the 'Contracting State' in which "responsibility for delivery is devolved to the periphery whilst power contracts to the centre" (p. 465).

New forms of 'diversity' in the structure of the system have been introduced which aim to devolve the responsibilities of the LEA⁶⁷, and increase 'choice' for educational institutions and parents/users. Some of these forms of 'diversity' are Government initiatives that allocate additional funding to specific areas or institutions. In Diagram 9.1 an example of this type of initiatives is represented by the Education Action Zones (although the specific school participating in this study is not part of an EAZ).

⁶⁶ For a discussion of the education reforms of the first term of the New Labour Government, see Brighouse (2001).

⁶⁷ Education is not the only sector of Local Government that has been reformed. The Local Government Act (1988) affected all aspects of Local Government (see Sanderson, 2001).

At the school level, there is a tendency for diversification of schools with schools being funded in different ways and having different degrees of control from LEAs; specialists schools are seen as the way forward (e.g. Technology colleges, schools focusing on a specific aspect of the curriculum such as Arts or Sports schools), and schools 'gaining' different status depending on their success or failure (e.g. special measures schools, beacon schools).

The diversification of schools -both in terms of control and financing, and specialisation- takes place however, in the context of the standardised requirements of the National Curriculum and national performance targets, exemplified by OFSTED inspections and the publication of league tables.

The Greek educational system historically has been described as a centralised one in which the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs has overall control of every aspect of the educational system. Diagram 9.2 presents a number of levels of 'decentralisation': national (Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs and independent public organisations), regional, prefecture, municipal/community, and school level. With the exception of the regional level (Law 2986/2002), the current structure of education was introduced with Law 1566/1985. This multi-levelled structure contradicts the 'centralised' perception of the system. However, the more recent OECD report on the Greek educational system includes a chapter on the urgent need for decentralisation (OECD, 1996). The contradiction between the already decentralised structure and the need for more decentralisation is explored in this chapter.

The Greek educational system has been characterised by a relative stability between the middle 1980s when the Socialist Government of PASOK reformed all levels of education and 1997 (the main New Democracy Conservative Party attempt for a partial reform in 1991 was not successful). In 1997 the Socialist Government of PASOK introduced the Law 2525/1997 that was a twofold assault on the existing system. On the one hand, the Law, by focusing on a specific level of education radically restructured the vital level of non-compulsory Secondary Education and the routes to Higher and Further Education, at the same time leaving relatively intact Primary and Compulsory Secondary Education (with the exemption of the introduction of all-day Nursery and Primary Schools). The non-compulsory Secondary Education level (lyceum) is the more 'sensitive' level of the educational system due to its explicit role for preparing, and 'controlling' access to Higher Education.

On the other hand, the Law introduced changes affecting all levels of pre-school, primary and secondary education by changing the system of teachers' appointment. It abolished the 'waiting'/'seniority list' (επετηρίδα) in which all higher education graduates with a degree corresponding to a school subject were entitled to subscribe. In the place of the waiting list, it introduced a teaching qualification for subject teachers, and an exam-based selection process for all teachers⁶⁸. In addition, this Law introduced an evaluation process –internal (at the school level) and external (covering all levels of the educational system)- for the evaluation of students, teachers and schools.

⁶⁸ Pre-primary and primary education graduates and some other graduates with degrees with strong educational/pedagogic orientation are exempted from undertaking the teaching qualification.

A two-year period of unrest including one of the longest teachers' strikes and a mass students' activist movement followed the introduction of this Law in the period 1997-1999 (see next chapter). However, teachers' and students' demands –the central one being the unreserved withdrawal of the Law- were not satisfied. The Greek part of this study was affected by this unrest since it took place during and immediately after it. This means that the 'snapshot' captured by the ethnographic research attempts to include both the 'old' and 'new' state of affairs.

The English and Greek recent reforms can be seen as part of the process of marketisation of education by Governments trying to cut-down the 'cost' of educational services and at the same time to increase their control of the educational system. Economic and Market concepts such as diversity, choice, consumers' rights, accountability, effectiveness, and cost-effectiveness are used to create a new 'language' of social justice, equal opportunities, and social inclusion, and of competitive education in a global economy.

For example, Bullen et al. (2000) argue that "Tony Blair's New Labour Government has set out to create and occupy a new political-moral terrain" (p. 441) in which education and social exclusion policies are seen as 'inseparable'. In the Greek context on the other hand the emphasis of the Law 2525/1997 was on a discourse of 'modernisation' (εκσυγχρονισμός) of education, of the State and the Economy in order to compete in equal terms in the context of European Union and beyond.

In both systems education as the means for economic security/advancement and social justice are seen as part of the recent reforms' justification. The dual role - economic advancement and social inclusion- of education is seen as self-evident. This is a 'circular' argument that can be read in two ways; 'better' education will create more opportunities for employment and therefore less (social) exclusion and 'better' education will decrease (social) exclusion and therefore more people will be able to find employment. However, the emphasis may be different in different reforms and contradictory changes/reforms may be introduced based on this argument.

This new 'political-moral' ideology is justified and legitimated by a 'crisis discourse' (see for example, Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p. 159, Berliner and Biddle, 1995). This 'crisis discourse' is a two-fold one; on the one hand the educational systems or components of the system (i.e. teachers, schools) are 'failing' in their existing role, and on the other hand, education fails to meet the needs of a new globalised economy, which demands a 'flexible' workforce. Flexibility in this context means that people need to be educated 'for life' in order to follow the technological changes of production, and, at the same time, be able to adapt to 'flexible' forms of employment.

Thus, the 'crisis discourse' questions the educational system as a whole and at the same time specific parts of it. It can be argued that this dual character of the crisis discourse gives it contextualised credibility since education is seen in relation to the wider context, and at the same time it can make a-contextualised claims since education is seen as a separate, insulated system, e.g. when failure/success of

schools is seen without reference to the wider context and the purposes of education.

Furthermore, this marketisation of education takes place in a globalised economy with changing modes of production, employment insecurity, and new forms of inclusion/exclusion (see Kress, et. al., 2000). National policy in this framework cannot be disentangled from trans-national organisations' policies and directives (Brine, 1999) in which localised reforms are perceived as having to respond in 'similar' ways to 'problems' that are assumed to be 'similar'.

However, to see the English and Greek Reforms as 'similar' demands a degree of caution. For example, Power et al. (1997) argue that the 'new' reforms are different from previous ones because responsibilities are not shifted horizontally or vertically across or within levels of education, but rather from the centre to the periphery, creating 'independent' centres of decision-making at different levels. This type of shifting of responsibilities is not evident in the Greek reforms up to now. A simple explanation might be that Greek reforms are at an 'earlier stage'. However, as has been discussed in Chapter Three, linear models of progression that identify educational systems at different stages of 'being there' or 'not yet there' are problematic. As Dos Santos (2001) argues in relation to inclusion and globalisation in Brazil, "'more' and 'less' are concepts which have been historically construed" (p. 323).

Three caveats are important in a comparative discussion of marketisation and globalisation in order to avoid losing sight of the actual realities of educational systems under the dominance of a particular marketisation model.

Firstly, the concept of marketisation needs to be examined in relation to specific systems, rather than being imposed on them (for the comparative implications of this, see Whitty et al., 1998, pp. 6-10).

Secondly, an understanding of the process of marketisation needs to be based on a historical and contextual examination of different educational systems. This understanding should not be limited to the education arena, but rather it needs to explore the purposes and aims of education in a specific (welfare) State, and socio-political and cultural context (see Lynch, 1988).

Thirdly, policy should not be seen as 'linear' and given. The marketisation project is not the only one taking place in an educational system at a given time, and the meaning of marketisation policy is subject to conflict and compromise. In addition, as Ball (1990) argues policy "is often unscientific and irrational" (p. 3), and rational cause-effect models may not be able to capture its contradictions. Finally, stated policy needs to be seen as they are defined by different actors and groups, and as they become practice in different institutions.

Keeping these three caveats in mind, the following discussion of the two educational systems covers more or less the period from 1997 to 2002. In Chapter Three, different ways of defining units of analysis in comparative education were discussed. In the following discussion, units (educational systems and schools) are seen both as 'historical' since the current state of affairs cannot be explained

without a historical understanding, as 'transitional' since both systems have undergone significant changes during this period, and as 'current' since the empirical data of the study comes from a specific period.

In order to explore the relation of the different bodies and actors in the two educational systems, the ways that decision-making/consultation, and financing take place within them are explored further.

Bodies involved in consultation/decision-making

Diagrams 9.3 and 9.4 present the decision-making/consultation processes within and across levels in the two educational systems. Decision-making is defined as participation in bodies responsible for making decisions about educational issues and/or about the working of educational institutions. The consultation process on the other hand, is defined as participation in bodies that enable their members to have a say about educational decisions (see for example, Eurydice, 1996). In addition, the consultation process includes any structural characteristic of educational systems that allows people to make known their views about education.

The distinction between decision-making and consultation is not clear and most bodies with a decision-making remit are involved in some form of consultation and vice versa. For instance, all consultation bodies take internal decisions. In Diagrams 9.3 and 9.4 block arrows represent bodies with a predominantly decision-making character, and the direction of their decision-making (i.e. which other bodies they are taking decisions for). Line arrows represent bodies

with a more 'consultative' character, especially when it comes to their relations with other bodies.

Both systems have a combination of top-down and bottom-up structure, and it can be argued that the former is mainly a decision-making and the latter a consultation one. However, there are significant differences between the two systems.

In the English system both decision-making and consultation processes take place mainly within levels and at the point that different levels 'meet'. All levels have a remit of decision-making. There is also a general, national consultation process open to everybody for debating proposed legislation. Diagram 9.3 cannot capture the complexity of decision-making/consultation processes because this process is not 'standardised' across LEAs. Each LEA has a number of bodies responsible for taking decisions about different areas of responsibility. In general, however, committees at the top end of the LEA organisation (e.g. Scrutiny Committees or Panels) include community and/or parents' representatives. The policy/decision-making centrality of LEAs was discussed in many teachers' interviews in which the 'history' of special education, integration and inclusion is seen mainly at the local level. For example the closing down of special schools and the introduction of integration in mainstream was mentioned in a number of interviews in relation to a 'local' policy.

In addition, the relation of Local Education Authority and school in relation to special educational needs is very strong (see also next section). For example, the SENCO in the English school said that "in principle we'll take children with

statements within our catchment area...ultimately the LEA makes the decision”
and he continues that

One child we weren't sure we can meet his/her needs, the year group had too many children and so forth but we were forced to take it...at the end of the day we don't have the final say...but if we work with the Education Authority we can have a lot of say in what provision is made and what provision we are getting.

(SENCO, English School)

In the Greek educational system decision-making is mainly top-down and the extent and scope of this decreases as one moves towards the school level. In addition, a complex process of consultation, within and across levels, exists (outlined in Law 1566/1985). This process is designed as a bottom-up one reaching the national level. When one tries to see how this model works in practice, some of the problems of the Greek educational system's decentralisation become apparent. For example, the National Education Council⁶⁹ with a total of ninety-seven members was introduced by Law 1566/1985 and enacted by the Law 2817/2000. However, the Presidential Decree needed for the formation of this body has not been issued yet. The situation is similar for the All-party committee. This is an extreme example of the disparity between stated, legislated, and acted policy.

Finally there is a clear distinction between decision-making and consultation bodies, which run to some extent parallel and in opposite directions with specific

⁶⁹ The National Education Council includes representatives from the Ministry of Education and other Ministries, political parties that are represented in the parliament, the National Academy, the General Secretariats, the Education and Vocational Training Body, the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Greece, presidents of institutions of Higher Education (AEI), presidents of institutions of Higher Technological Education (TEI), staff of AEI and TEI, teachers' unions, Higher Administration of Civil Servants' Unions (ADEDY), National Parents' Association, students, teachers in primary and secondary schools, trade unions and chambers of trades, scientific organisations, confederations in the production sector and local authorities, the confederation of people with special needs, the Council of Greeks living abroad.

points where they link. Decision-making takes place within the context of the Ministry of Education policy.

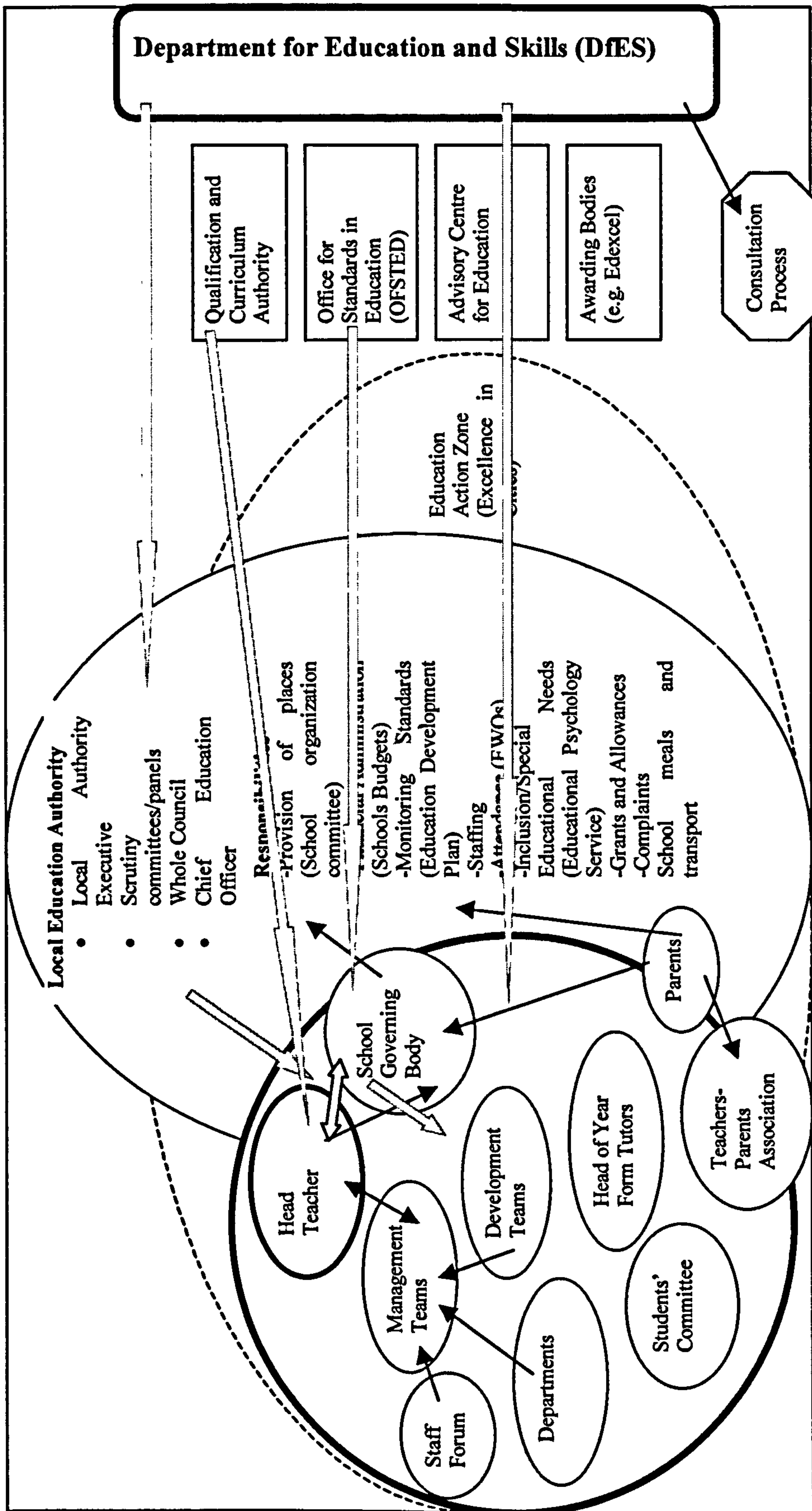


Diagram 9.3: Main Bodies involved in Consultation (English Educational System)

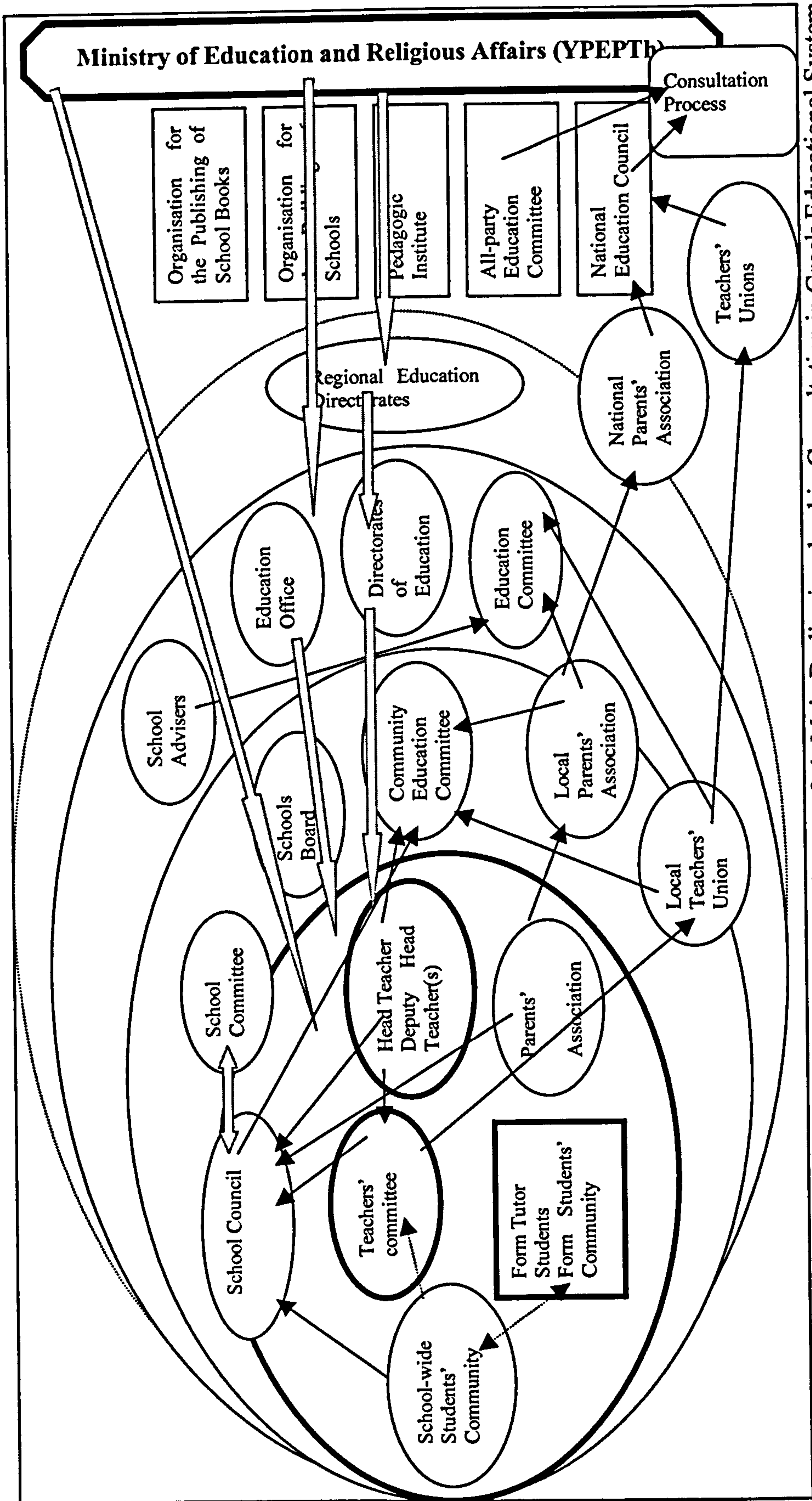


Diagram 9.4: Main Bodies involved in Consultation in Greek Educational System

Financial structure of the systems

Diagrams 9.5 and 9.6 present the bodies that are involved in the distribution of resources, and in taking decisions about resources. In these Diagrams arrows highlight where the resources come from and in what form. There are two main ways that resources are transferred; resources may be handed over as monetary ones (continuous arrows), or in kind (broken arrows). Usually, in the former case it can be assumed that the body receiving the resources has more say in the allocation of them (for a more detailed discussion, see Eurydice Focus, 2001).

In Diagram 9.5 the flow of resources in the English system is presented. Resources come both from the central government (via departments) and the Local Authority, most resources are transferred as monetary, and decisions for their allocation are distributed at all levels of the system. With the reforms of the last twenty years, more funding comes directly to schools from the National level –either from the DfES, or other bodies. The allocation of these resources is prescribed centrally without the involvement of LEAs (see Ainley, 2001). Comparing Diagrams 9.3 and 9.5 it becomes apparent that most of the bodies involved in decision-making/consultation also have direct access to monetary resources.

The funding system affects the provision for students with special educational needs in mainstream schools. LEAs are responsible for providing for students with special educational needs; however LEAs have freedom in deciding how to allocate resources. Two tendencies can be distinguished. At the school level there is the tendency for some schools to become ‘specialised’ in specific educational needs and accumulate the necessary infrastructure and expertise. It can be argued

that in most cases this is not the result of a Local Education strategy covering all schools in their area, but more the result of the development of individual schools. A negative result of this tendency may be that some schools become 'special mainstream' schools (Pijl and Dyson, 1998).

The second tendency is to allocate resources according to students' 'degree of need' or on a 'per capita' basis (see, Evans and Gerber, 2000). Thus LEAs may give a fixed amount of money to students at the first stage of assessment of special educational needs or to students with specific 'needs'.

The allocation of resources in relation to 'degree of need' is epitomised in the statementing process where needs are secured for a specific child (see Galloway et al., 1994). The 'statemented child' is a financial category as well as an educational one; allocations of provision between statemented and non-statemented students is differentiated according to the 2% of students with 'substantial needs' out of the 20% of students assumed as having special educational needs at any time (see Marsh, 1998). As Pijl and Dyson (1998) argue:

A major problem with the statementing system remains, however, in that schools are penalised for success with a pupil (the value of the statement decreases or it is discontinued) and rewarded for failure (the statement brings more resources).

(Pijl and Dyson, 1998, p. 269)

In the Greek educational system (Diagram 9.6) resources originate from the central government, mainly via the Department of Education and Religious Affairs. The financial contribution of Prefectures or Local Authorities to educational institutions is marginal, and part of it may again be originated from the national level as part for instance of the Prefectorial budget. Most of the

resources are allocated to schools 'in kind'. For example, the Organisation for the Publishing of School Books produces textbooks approved by the Pedagogic Institute for each subject according to the National Curriculum. These books are distributed to each school in the country via the Prefectorial Directorates of Education. Comparing this and the consultation Diagram (9.4) it is easy to see the clear differentiation between the bodies involved in a predominantly consultation role and those involved in the allocation of resources.

In relation to inclusion the allocation of resources is directed from the national level and mainly 'in kind'. However, bodies at the prefecture level and at the school level have decision-making responsibility. In the case of 'multi-cultural' education (Ministerial Decree (Υπουργική Απόφαση) ΓΠ/708/7-9-1999), which refers to students that do not have a competent understanding of the Greek language, schools decide which category of supporting/additional provision (reception classes, crammer classes, and preparatory classes), they require. This decision is taken according to a number of pre-defined criteria depending on the level of education (primary or secondary) and the number of students needing support. Bodies at the prefecture level are responsible for assessing schools' proposals, providing the resources needed, which again are defined and financed by the Ministry of Education.

For students with special educational needs a similar system for special classes/units in mainstream schools exists and in this case the new Diagnostic Evaluation and Support Centres are –according to the new Law- central in evaluating the schools' needs. In addition, the new Law 2817/2000 states that

support in mainstream classrooms is provided by teachers employed by the Diagnostic Evaluation and Support Centres, or from special education units/classes. This means that additional/special support is provided mainly by teachers outside the school.

Overall, in Greece additional resources for inclusion are allocated either to a specific component of the school (e.g. crammer class, special classes) or to a specific child/children in a mainstream classroom. The mainstream school on the other hand, does not receive any additional resources for students that do not belong in the above categories. It remains to be seen if the 'devolving' of power to the Diagnostic Evaluation and Support Centres will result in a degree of differentiation of policy across areas, or whether the national level will standardise their decision-making framework.

To sum up, the provision of the *necessary* resources for inclusion is central in how inclusion is defined. Firstly, there is the question of what resources are 'necessary' and secondly, who decides their allocation. The standardisation of the Greek system minimises the options that schools (and parents) have to negotiate additional resources. On the other hand, in the localised differentiation of the English system, schools, LEAs (and parents) fight over resources and their allocation, especially through the processes of SEN assessment and statementing, and SEN Tribunals. In both systems a 'quantitative' approach to needs is used in which 'more' need requires more resources. As it will be argued in Chapter Eleven in both systems the contestation of the 'cut-off' point of 'need' –the point in which needs are perceived as so 'great' that no amount of additional resources

would compensate for them- is where the 'limits' of inclusion are defined (see, Booth, 1994).

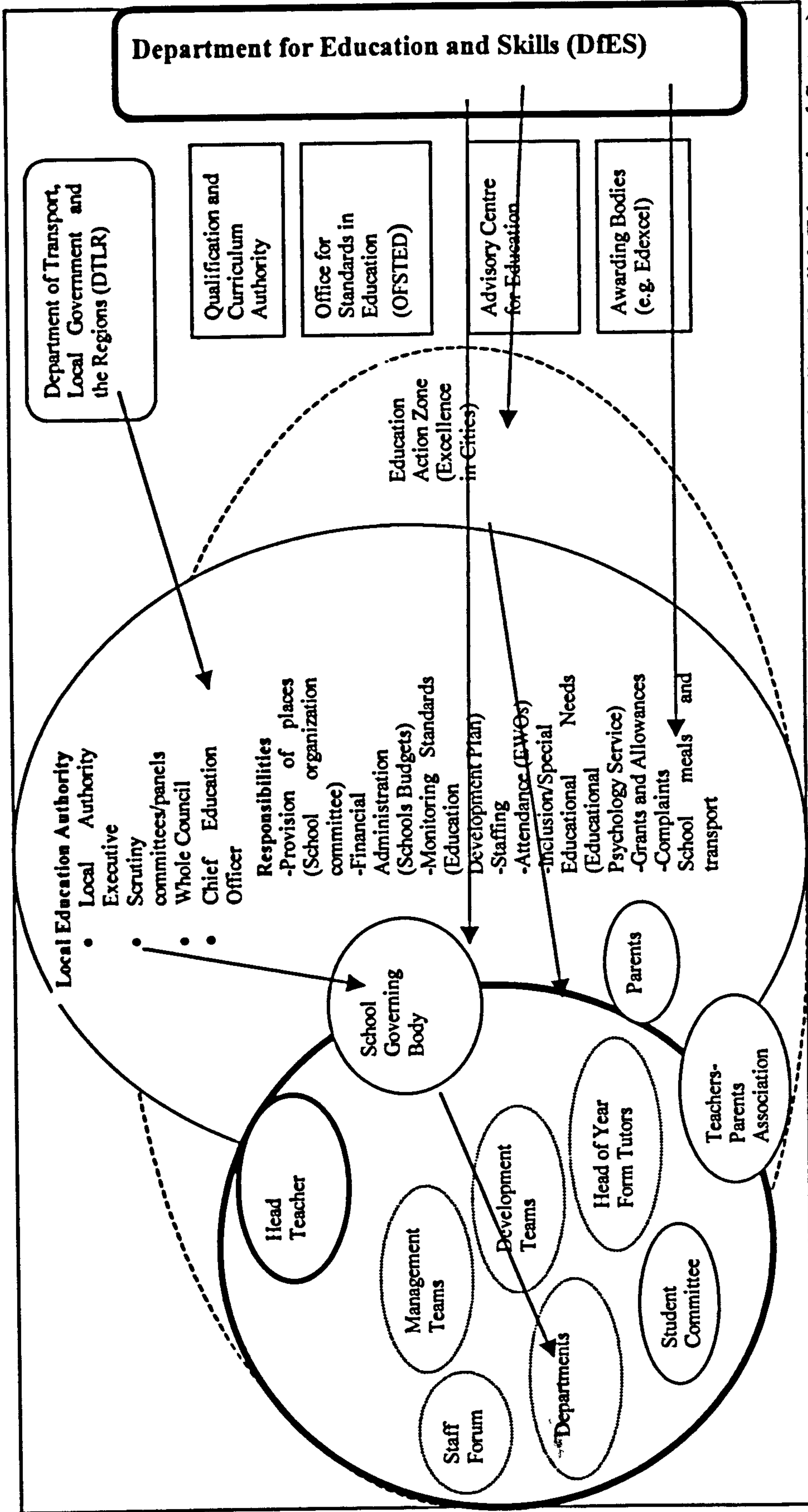


Diagram 9.5: Main Bodies involved in direct administration of funding (English Educational System)

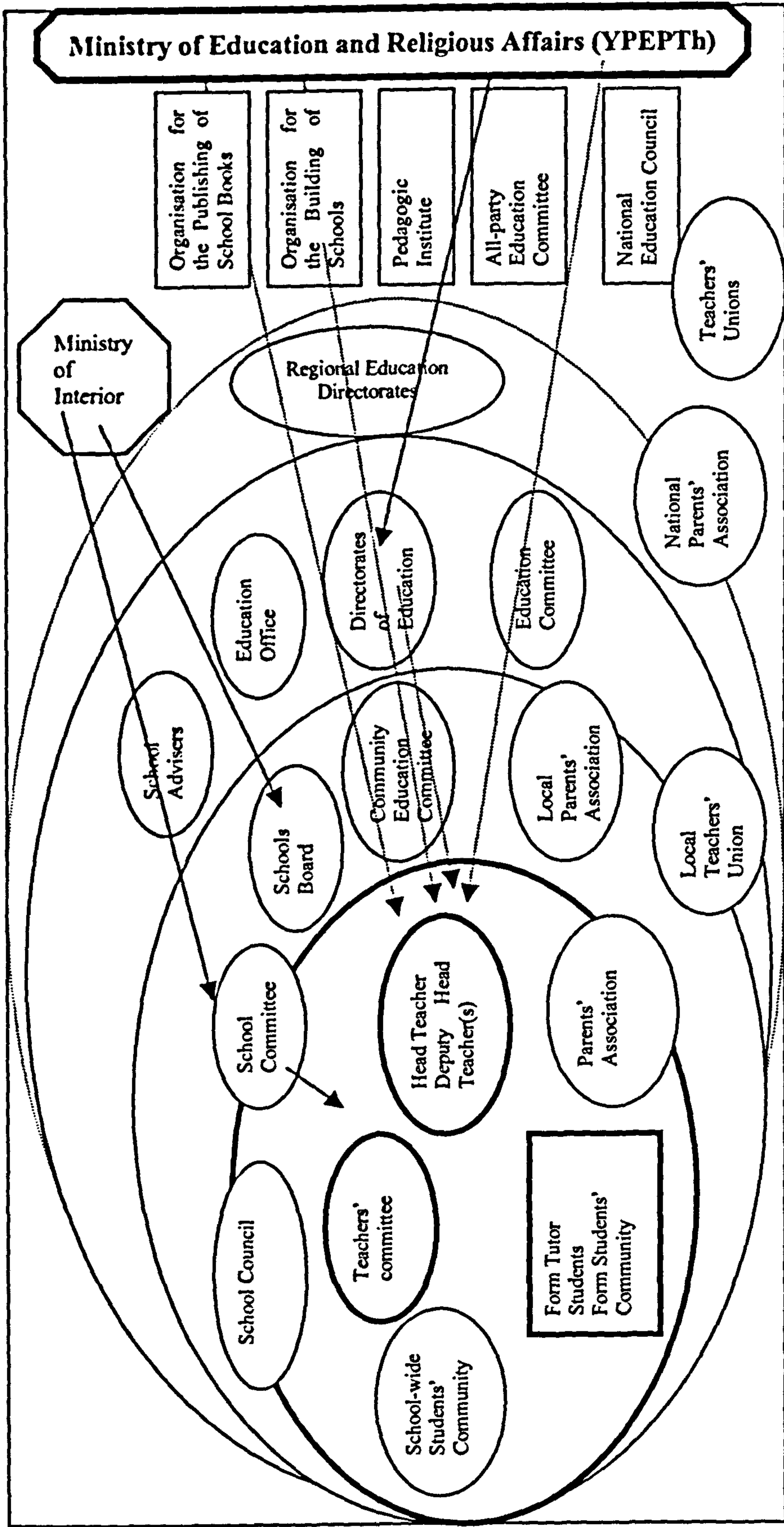


Diagram 9.6: Main Bodies involved in direct administration of funding (Greek educational system)

Short discussion

The above discussion of the structure and organisation of the two system is an incomplete one in the sense that not enough information is given for the reader to have a 'complete' picture of the two educational systems. For example, the specific remit and structure of different bodies are not included in the discussion. In addition, the use of diagrams means that the complexity of the systems is 'simplified' in order to make the diagrams 'readable'. Finally, readers with knowledge of one of the two systems may find that things about the system they know are missing and at the same time they do not have all the information they need to 'understand' the other system.

However, the aim of the above presentation is to highlight the blurring of centralisation/decentralisation in the two educational systems and to give some indications about their overall structure, in order to contextualise the structure of schools. Thus a number of points can be raised about the two systems.

A first point that can be made is that the relative 'power' of different bodies in the educational system relates to three aspects of their role: remit of decision-making, control over resources, and consultation input informing policies/practices within and across levels of education.

A second point is the overall control that in both systems the national level (mainly DfES and YPEPTh) has for initiating and implementing educational reform and policies. This 'control' could be appreciated more if the diagrams were extended beyond the national level. If trans-national levels, e.g. EU, OECD, were added, the centrality of the national level in selecting and introducing

policies would become even more prominent⁷⁰. Even in the English educational system where LEAs and individual schools have been able to introduce their own policies and practices, the imperative of preferring practices that are 'evidence-based' and for which there is proof that they 'work', possibly restricts the prospects for the introduction of a variety of innovative practices.

Thirdly, in comparing the two educational systems, it can be argued that the English one is characterised by 'diversity' within a legislation framework, and the Greek one from 'uniformity' according to a legislation framework. On the one hand, not all schools within a Local Education Authority have the same structure, and not all LEAs have the same structure. On the other hand, all the schools in a community/municipal area have the same structure, and all community/municipal areas and prefectures have the same educational bodies.

Taking as an example the School Governing Body and the School Committee, which are the bodies in the two systems where the school 'meets' other levels of education, we can distinguish a number of similarities/differences. Similar actors –from within and outside the school- are involved in both bodies⁷¹, which supports the view that similar actors are seen as stake-holders in the two

⁷⁰ For examples of trans-national Organisations' direct involvement in the Greek system, especially in Technical education, see Pasmazoglu (1987, pp. 242-247) and Kazamias (1980). The extensive involvement in Technical Education is the result of a long-held assumption that the educational system is responsible to some extent for the lack of economic development.

⁷¹ Members of the School Governing Body are the head teacher, (elected) parent governors, (appointed) LEA governors, (elected) teacher governors, (elected) staff [non-teaching] governors, co-opted governors, and foundation or partnership governors (if appropriate). Members of the School Committee are the teachers' committee (including the head teacher), all (elected) members of the parents' council, and a representative of the local government. In cases where issues directly concerning students are discussed, the board from the school-wide students' council participates in the School committee.

educational systems. There are, however, some striking differences in the role of the two bodies.

The School Governing Body has strategic, administrative, and consultative roles. It defines the overall focus and direction of the school (by taking decisions about the implementation of the National Curriculum, the school 'targets', and the structure and organisation of the school, etc.), how this focus is going to be implemented (by appointing staff, distributing the school budget, and monitoring the school and its staff, etc.), and how this focus relates to the school and local community (by responding to the 'needs' of the school and the community, and linking with the local community, etc.).

The School Committee, on the other hand, has mostly an administrative role, mainly to manage running costs (e.g. bills, cleaning costs, maintenance and repair work from the funding provided by the Ministry of Interior), and to ensure the smooth operation of the school. The School Committee is also responsible for informing the appropriate directorates and organisations (e.g. School Buildings Organisation) of the needs of the school. Finally, the School Committee is responsible for the management of the revenues of the 'snack-bar' (tuck shop), if in operation. In Greek schools there is also the 'parallel' body of School Council, which has a similar composition of members, but has an operational role (e.g. to ensure good relations between school and parents) and a consultation role.

In comparing the two bodies, the differences in their scope are obvious. The School Governing Body's remit of decision-making is greater than that of the School Committee. The Greek system's decentralised structure follows an administrative decentralisation model, where operational responsibilities are

decentralised, but the content and resources for the operation of the schools are defined by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs (Ifanti, 1995; Andreou and Papakonstantinou, 1994).

The role of students in the structure of the educational systems

Presentations of educational systems usually do not include the role of students. However, as was argued in the previous chapter, perceiving students as social actors requires their role in education to be uncovered.

In the English school the students' participation bodies -mainly students' committee/council in which selected (but not necessarily elected) representatives from all forms of a school are members- stands somehow separate from the other bodies of the system -inside and outside the school (see also, Wyse, 2001). The role of the students' committee in the English school is seen as part of students' development. Its role is to listen to the issues raised by students and to communicate these issues to the members of staff responsible for linking with it and in some cases to school Governors. In the school a series of meetings between representatives of each tutor group and Heads of School, and less frequent meetings of the full school committee, were in place.

Example of the student committee's involvement in the school includes a compilation of the views of students in relation to induction to the school for Year 7, degree of satisfaction with resources (Y9-Y11), and proposals for improvements/changes students would like to see happening. Two students that

are representing their form in the council referred to it (both of them are Year Seven students):

It's good because you have a say in what happens in the school and my sister is in it as well, my older sister. I think that it's good that the Year Seven and Eight get together as well and the Year Eleven (students) ask you to speak up and that's good.

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

I.S.: Is it something that you want to change in school?

Boy: Me and someone else from my class we are in the student council and we want to change things...stop people bullying.

I.S.: How did you decide to participate in the student council?

Boy: Mr C. came to me and asked me if I want to be in the student council and I said yes.

I.S.: Do you meet often?

Boy: We haven't had a meeting for a long time because the person who does it was busy...but we are supposed to meet every four weeks.

I.S.: And how it works?

Boy: You can ask people in your class what they think about something and you can put it to the teachers.

I.S.: Do you think you can make a difference?

Boy: Yes, some people that have been for a long time in the student council were asking about the changing rooms and they have changed a bit...brought more cleaners, the same with the toilets...If you see things that are happening in school -like people throwing litter- you can tell the teacher whose in charge [of the student council] and they can tell people that are involved and stop it.

(Boy, Year 7, English School).

Overall, the role of the student committee/council in the structure of school is a marginal one and it can be argued that this is the case in most schools. This may change with the introduction of a Citizenship Curriculum (in September 2002). According to the Crick Report (1998) whole-school approaches to the Citizenship Curriculum (including school and class councils) should aim

...to engage pupils in discussion and consultation about all aspects of school life on which pupils might reasonably be expected to have a view, and wherever possible to give pupils responsibility and experience in helping to run parts of the school.

(Crick Report, 1998, p. 36)

It is interesting however, that it is reported in an OFSTED (2002) survey of the preparation for the introduction of Citizenship in Secondary schools that the third strand of the Citizenship Curriculum, which refers to ‘participation and responsible action’, is the one that most schools find the most problematic (p. 8)⁷².

In the Greek system, students are acknowledged actors according to the Law 1566/1985, which states that students’ committees aim to help students “gain responsibility and direct experience of the importance of democratic dialogue in the development of conscious and active citizens” (Law 1566/1985, p. 2577, my translation)⁷³.

Each form has an elected council, and each school has an elected students’ committee comprised of fifteen members. The board (three members) of the students’ committee can participate in three of the school level bodies: the teachers’ committee, school council and school committee.

However, their participation in these bodies is not compulsory and takes place when issues directly related to students are discussed. In that way the students’ participation is defined and controlled by others/adults. For example, students’ representatives are usually ‘invited’ in the teachers’ committee when long-term (i.e. more than three days) or permanent exclusions of students are discussed.

⁷² For research on citizenship in education, see Lawson, 2001; Alderson, 2000; Howard and Gill, 2000). For comparative perspectives in citizenship see, Davies, 2000; Farnen and Meloen, 2000; Kerr, 2000; Lynch, 1992)

⁷³ In Greek a one-word translation of the word ‘citizenship’ does not exist. Arnot et al. (1996) describe how in group discussions on citizenship with Greek student teachers the English word ‘citizenship’ was used (p. 10). The Greek discourse is based on ‘being a citizen’ rather than ‘citizenship’.

Students are also consulted about the organisation of excursions⁷⁴, and they are consulted about how to find ways to tackle in a cooperative way smoking within and around the school.

The students' bodies need to make sure that students' decisions are 'democratically' taken, i.e. a representative number of students vote and the option with the most votes is selected. Student bodies and especially the school-wide students' committee are instrumental in negotiating students' demands with the teachers' association. In the case of student activism, the school committee calls a day for debating and voting (during school/lesson time). If action is agreed, the committee lets the head teacher and teachers know students' decisions (e.g., to walk-out, or 'shut down' the school, in which case the head teacher hands over the keys of the school to the students).

During the empirical part of the study in Greece, a mass movement of student activism took place (see next chapter) and student committees were fundamental in the development of the movement. The fact that students' committees have the 'power' to disrupt the working of schools gives them an ambivalent position in the educational system. This ambivalence –benign but potentially malignant- was evident in the interviews with the students⁷⁵.

⁷⁴ According to the law five one-day excursions can take place during a school year. In addition, longer trips –paid with funds collected by the students themselves in different events and/or their parents- are also organised.

⁷⁵ The malignant role of students' committees was evidenced in the 'myths' reproduced about them in the media. Some examples are the extent that they are 'hitchhiked' by specific political parties or teachers; their 'undemocratic' decision processes; that students vote –especially for the position of chair of the committee- 'naughty' or 'ethnic minority' students (and in particular boys) who do not care about their reputation and grades in the school in order for them to deal with teachers in the case of a 'shut-down' of the school; the practice of traditionally 'shutting down' schools before Christmas (to extend holidays) and before exams (to revise); and the 'dangerous' consequences of students having overall control of the schools buildings (see next chapter).

For example, while the chair of a form students' committee said that what they have done that year as a form/committee was to "adopt a tree" (boy, year A', 2nd Greek School), another boy in the same form when asked if he is a member of the committee, answered:

Boy: No, No. My mum doesn't let me.

IS: She doesn't let you? For what reason?

Boy: Because she is afraid that teachers may single me out because the 15-member [school-wide students' committee] create 'shut-downs'. That's why she is afraid. I don't want to as well, I don't like it... I don't want to have responsibilities.

(Boy, year A', 2nd Greek School)

Policy analysis of educational systems tends to forget the role of students in the educational arena. Students are seen as the recipients or the 'consumers' of policy and practice. Their disagreement, disaffection, or resistance to the policies that concern them are seen as individualistic and/or counter-productive. In addition, students' views about their schooling tend to be seen as a-political.

Bowles and Gintis (1976) argue that "the authoritarian classroom does produce docile workers, but it also produces misfits and rebels" (p. 12). Students' activism in Greece cannot be seen as 'exotic' or simply as part of a 'Continental'/Southern Europe tradition for protest. Students' activism, as students' bodies in schools facilitate it, is an expression of what the Greek society/educational system 'allows' –and even expects– from its youth in their progress to adulthood/citizenship through the process of education. However, students' potential for activism and influence of policy is restricted and controlled by how they are defined as students/young people in the educational system and in society (see next chapter).

School structure and accountability

From the above discussion it becomes apparent that the English school has a 'unique' structure, a structure that relates to its own terms of references and targets. On the other hand, the Greek school has the same structure as any other secondary school in the country⁷⁶. Furthermore, the English school can be seen as a predominantly decision-making organisation, and the Greek school as an administrative one.

These are not absolute roles, and for instance, the decision-making 'freedom' of the English school is defined, to a great extent, by legislation requirements, the national and local educational policy, the history and tradition of the school, the results of school inspection, and so on. The 'accountability' of the school to the rest of the actors and bodies of the educational apparatus regulates the extent of decision-making 'freedom' and the areas in which this freedom is exerted.

The English school may be 'unique' in structure, but the effectiveness of this 'uniqueness' is inspected, evaluated and compared with other schools at the local and national level. The accountability of the school is 'public' with qualitative and quantitative data being available about a number of 'comparative' performance indicators (see Karsten et al., 2001, for a comparative discussion of the effects of publishing school performance data in England and France).

⁷⁶ This may explain to some extent the decision to present the two Greek schools together, in a combined 'archetypal' Greek school.

A small number of specialist schools exist in the Greek system, i.e. music schools, sport schools, and 'experimental' schools (schools with close links to University Education Departments). None of these schools are selective, although 'experimental' schools may take students outside their catchment area by drawing lots to select between applicants. Specialist schools have the same structure with the rest of the schools and follow the National Curriculum. Any additional subjects are taught in the afternoon. The Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs is committed to increasing the number of specialist schools.

On the other hand, despite the highly regulated structure of the Greek school, there was (in the old system) a low level of evaluation of teaching and learning from the outside (for examples of models of evaluation in the history of the Greek system, see Gotowos, 1990, pp. 135-144). The 'accountability' of the school was of an administrative nature, and its overall performance was not 'evaluated', and no 'public' data about the school were available⁷⁷. The lack of inspection/evaluation resulted in an informal 'autonomy' and 'freedom' at the school and classroom level.

The new system of evaluation is not included in the above diagrams because it was not in place at the time of the empirical research and since then it has been amended with the Law 2986/02. The new evaluation system follows a similar structure to the administration system presented in the above diagrams and covers all levels of the educational system. The Educational Research Centre (national body) and the Pedagogic Institute are the main bodies defining the context and content of evaluation. A body of 'evaluators' (permanently employed) are responsible for evaluating schools. In addition, the teachers' association of each school is responsible for drafting a yearly 'self-evaluation' report to be submitted to the Educational Research Centre. For the evaluation of the members of the different bodies of the educational system, a complex hierarchical system is defined in which teachers (after preparing a self-evaluation report) are evaluated by the head teacher and school advisors; the head teacher is evaluated by the head

⁷⁷ Results of the success of students in entering higher education are published in reference to non-compulsory secondary schools. The comparability of this data is low and usually data is published locally. This is the only publicly available information about schools' performance.

of the Office of Education or director of education, and school advisor; the head of the Office of Education is evaluated by the director of education and the head of the Subject Assistance and Pedagogical Guidance Departments of the Regional Directorate of Education, and so on.

This system of 'multiple' evaluations (Kavvadias et al., 1998) taking place at different levels of the educational system has not been tested in practice yet. The (new) model is not so much concerned with accountability to consumers/users, but rather with the line-management of the system, and internal hierarchical accountability at an administration level (Solomon, 1998). This new form of control is again centralised since it is directed from and returns to the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs.

To sum up, it can be argued that the English school 'develops', according to decisions at all levels of the system, while the Greek school is 'given' according to developments outside its entity, and any deviation from the given state of affairs needs to be negotiated by tracing back the structure of the system until reaching the national level. For instance, the School Governing Body selects teachers in the English school, whereas the Ministry of Education appoints teachers in the Greek school. Thus the English school is seen as a school in a community, in a local authority, and then in a national context, and the Greek school, on the other hand, is seen as a State/national school in a specific area.

These different positionings of the schools in the educational system affect the way that the schools are perceived. For example, the 'dependency' of the Greek school on the educational system edifice –and especially the Ministry of

Education- is reflected in some of the students' answers. For instance, to the question 'what would you like to change in school?' a student gave the following answer:

The only and most serious problem in the school is heating, that is almost non-existent. This can be solved, but the Municipality, or the State doesn't give the money.

(Boy, year C', 1st Greek school)

However, it is important to note that each Greek school has its own ethos and is distinguishable from other schools. In addition, each school has its own history and identity and 'reputation' in the community. Although the range of differences –perceived and actual- between Greek schools is not as extensive as between English schools, it is important to acknowledge them in the understanding of the schools, since seeing the Greek system from the outside, it is easy to minimise the individual character of schools.

School structure and the roles of actors

The previous section presented the structure of the two educational systems. Moving to the internal structure of the schools and the different roles that different individuals and groups have, it is necessary to address the limitations of a comparative description. Ball (1987) argues that research exploring the organisational character of schools is characterised by a lack of understanding of the 'peculiar nature of schools as organisations', and a lack of 'basic research into organisational aspects of school life' (p. 7).

If one describes the English and Greek schools based simply on a system analysis, then the English school can be seen as having a 'complex' hierarchical structure and the Greek one a 'simple' hierarchical structure. This description, however, does not take into account the complexities in work in any organisation that are, to some extent, independent from the complexity of its structure. The micro-politics (Ball, 1987) of an organisation are therefore central in a comparative understanding of how schools work.

However, in this study it was not possible to capture the working of micro-politics in the schools. Obviously in both the Greek schools the fieldwork was very short and concentrated on the interviews with students. In the English school, on the other hand, I did not have access to most of the arenas where decisions were taken (I observed staff briefings and I participated in one of the schools training days). The interviews with teachers and special needs support assistants provided information about the working of the school and my presence in the staff-rooms gave me further insight. All these again are missing from the Greek schools since questionnaires were used with teachers (in the second school only) and I spent time in the staff-room only in the first school.

The 'objectives' of schools –as part of the educational system- affect their structure. In this way the English school can be seen as having a structure that allows for 'differentiation' to be achieved. For example, students receive 'different' education in different settings, and additional programmes (e.g. remedial reading). There are different 'routes' in the school, e.g. the 11-14 age groups follow a common curriculum, and the 15-16 age groups select options in

addition to a number of core subjects. Finally, there is differentiation of types of services, e.g. between 'learning' provision, pastoral, and non-learning provision (meals, after school clubs).

Finally, the school is linked to a number of outside agencies (e.g. education welfare officers, school psychologist, social workers, and links with the Police), business, and the community.

The Greek school, on the other hand, is characterised by 'uniformity'. It provides the same National Curriculum to all students, all students follow the same 'route', and it delivers predominantly 'learning' services (i.e. lessons). The school is separated from other agencies (although structures for seeking advice and support exist) and its role is mainly to provide education. It is important to note that some of the 'neatness' of the Greek school is due to the fact that diversification, differentiation and stratification happen at the non-compulsory level of secondary education, which has become even more diverse after the introduction of Law 2525/1977.

Differentiation and uniformity also affect the roles of different actors in the schools (see for instance, Burgess, 1983). Actors in the English school have diverse positions and roles. Members of staff may have strategic, administrative, consultative roles depending on which bodies they are members of. Staff within the school belongs in a hierarchical order with the head teacher and the Senior Management Team at the top.

Teaching staff in addition to their teaching responsibilities can be members of their departments that plan and monitor the implementation of the National Curriculum and the targets of the specific subject for the school. They may also have organisational roles, e.g. head of year, or form tutor, and they may be involved in different aspect of the school, e.g. pastoral, vocational. Finally, they may be involved in the organisation of different extra-curriculum (e.g. after-school clubs) and other activities (e.g. school prospectus, newsletter).

On the other hand, staff in the Greek school, being almost exclusively teaching staff, has a 'one-dimensional' role: they are teachers. They can also be 'form tutors' (but that role is more restricted than the English equivalent)⁷⁸, and they may contribute to the overall administration of the school (e.g. designing the weekly timetable at the beginning of the year). A small minority of teachers – increasingly more in the last ten years- are also involved in different, mainly EU or Ministry of Education initiatives (curricula and extra-curricula). In the two schools one such initiative was mentioned.

The different roles of staff in the two schools have a number of implications. In the English school, actors are positioned in different fori, which give them different decision-making 'powers' and different 'knowledge' of what is going on in the school.

On the other hand, in the Greek school all the actors belonging to the same group participate more or less in the same fori. The new evaluation system may affect

⁷⁸ As 'form tutors', teachers are responsible for providing support in their form, communicating with parents, liaising with the Form Students' Committee, and keeping in order the students' grade records and school records. The latter responsibility –which is predominantly an administrative one-is in practice the main one of this role.

this vertical hierarchical structure since it gives to the head teacher additional responsibility/rights for assessing and evaluating teachers.

These two different models of organisation are evident in the roles and positions of the students as well. In both contexts, the 'form' is where a student belongs; it is the basic unit to which students are allocated.

In the Greek school (Diagram 9.7) –I am starting from the Greek school because it is 'easier' to represent- students are taught all their subjects in the form they belong to. The only subject that 'settings' may be used is English language where two groups of 'advanced' and 'standard' can be selected according to the students' proficiency. In the second Greek school students are allocated in settings for English. Only one student referred to the settings: "We are 'beginners' and 'advanced' in English...I should have been a 'beginner' but I cheated [on the test]" (Boy, Year B', 2nd Greek School).

Allocation in forms is based on alphabetical order, and for example, students with surnames from A to K belong in form A1; B1, and C1, where A, B, and C are the three years of the school. Students usually stay in the same form during the three years of secondary education, although the form may change tutor. Each form is located in a classroom where all the subjects –apart from PE lessons and any other lesson that takes place in a specialist class- are taught⁷⁹. Thus forms are also 'spatial' units since the majority of classrooms are forms classrooms.

⁷⁹ In the first school there is an IT suite based in another school of the school complex, and chemistry in a new chemistry lab. In the second school there is also an IT suite. All other lessons take place in the form classroom.

In the English school, forms are also the basic 'unit' of organisation (Diagram 9.8). Each year is divided into forms and students stay in the same form throughout their stay in the school to ensure continuity. A number of criteria are used for this division, and one of them is to balance the presence of children with 'special needs' in different forms.

The logistics of providing in-class support for a large number of students means that two forms in a year have a number of special needs students (with and without statements) while the rest of the students in these forms represent the range of 'abilities' of the school population. These two forms have support in almost all lessons. The rest of the forms may have some students that are on the SEN register, but at the early stages of assessment, or students that are perceived as needing 'additional help'. However, these forms have less or no support.

Thus forms are based on mixed-ability, but the 'equal' representation of the 'range of ability' is restricted from the provision of support. Members of staff reported that the forms with statemented students tend to have more students with statements than in the past, increasing the pressure on teachers and support staff and making differentiation and individual provision more difficult. A special needs assistant with experience of another secondary school compared this system of 'focused' support (in a limited number of forms in all lessons) with a system of 'equal distribution' of special needs (to all forms of the year with less support), saying that in the former case

....it is difficult for the other kids in the class [the ones that do not need support] and you don't get to support all six or seven in a group [...] it comes down to resources, really.

(Special support assistant, English school)

Finally the forms are named using the year of the school and the name of the form tutor. For example a year eight form whose tutor is Miss Smith, is named 8SM.

Although students are 'defined' by their form, they do not belong only to it. In a number of lessons they are allocated to ability settings. As the prospectus of the School mentions, "increasingly students are grouped according to ability". In settings students from different forms are brought together according to their ability. In this way, students with 'special needs' in this school tend to be allocated predominantly to the 'lower' settings. The support available to these students follows them to their settings.

The 'form' as the unit of organisation (see Xohellis, 1990) is based on an age criterion. Children of more or less the same age are clustered together as a year group, which is then divided in a number of forms. Behind the 'neutrality' of chronological age however, there is another selective mechanism: that of 'school age'.

'School age' is how children/young people are defined as students progressing through the educational system. School age is defined in different ways in the two schools. In the English school, the unconditional criterion of chronological age, i.e. keeping all children of the same age in the same year, is diluted by the existence of settings that are based on ability. 'School age' therefore is ability related. An example of this age metaphor is that year-seven to-be students are tested in their primary schools before coming to the secondary school. Depending on their 'reading age' (i.e. a reading age below nine), they are referred to a

recovery-reading programme, which requires withdrawal from lessons. Hence 'school age' is a second-level categorisation following the primary chronological age categorisation.

In the Greek school however older students may be placed in a school year for younger students because they are 'repeating' the year⁸⁰. For example, a Year A' student was repeating the year for the second time, having previously repeated the same year in another school.

Students may repeat a year because of low attainment. Between 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate' attendance (which requires the repetition of the year), there is an area of 'un-satisfactory' attendance, in which attendance is judged in relation to attainment in order to determine the repetition of year, or the re-examination of the student. In this way the 'age' criterion is conditional on a minimum of attainment and attendance.

Actual and spatial organisation of schools

Although 'form' is the basic unit of organisation in both schools, the actual organisation of space and movement in the schools differ, according to the

⁸⁰ The numbers of students repeating the year are usually low, however, a number of students may interrupt their compulsory schooling before finishing secondary compulsory education (see, Haramis et al., 1998)

In the sample of this study two students (one boy and one girl) reported that they have repeated a year. However, a number of students mentioned that their grades are low and they face the danger of having to re-sit their exams in September.

spatial/actual organisation of the schools⁸¹. In the English school there is a teacher-centred organisation (Diagram 9.9), i.e. classrooms 'belong' to a teacher, and in the Greek school a student-centred organisation, i.e. classrooms 'belong' to a form/students. This has implications not only for the 'definition' of a form but also for space ownership (Gotowos, 1990, pp. 55-58). The 'class' (form) and 'classroom' (space) in the Greek school are difficult to distinguish when they are mentioned by students in the interviews. This is the result of the fact that almost all of students' time in school is spent in one 'room' with the same peers. The 'virtual' and 'actual' organisations of the school units coincide.

In the English school, students relate to their 'form' in a different way. In year seven, 75% of the timetable is spent in the form group and in year eight and nine this time decreases to around 50%. Moreover, although students are strongly defined by their form (e.g. disciplinary action, students' records, communication with parents starts from their form and their tutor who they meet everyday) the form is not the only 'group' to which they belong.

The power of 'settings' in categorising students according to ability is very significant in determining which groups a student belongs to and how he/she is perceived in the school. Many students mentioned the social aspect of settings, the fact that students spend lessons with different groups/friends: "I like being with many people [outside the form] because it's a change" (Girl, Year 8, English School), "I'd rather be with people from different classes [forms]" (Boy, Year 8,

⁸¹ A similar comparative analysis can be conducted in relation to 'school time'. School time is different in the two schools, e.g. the English school day is separated in morning and afternoon sessions with an hour for lunch-time in-between, while the Greek school day is comprised from seven lesson periods that are separated with breaks (lasting between five and fifteen minutes), for the importance of time, see Christensen and James, 2001.

English School). On the other hand some students said that they did not like particular lessons/settings for specific reasons. For example, a year nine boy said that he does not like science (in a low setting) because “people always pick on me” and this was happening only in this particular lesson. However, references to settings in relation to ability were very rare and when they occurred it was in relation to their ‘low’ status; “I am in a low group [in Maths] and I need more help. I’m not good at it” (Boy, Year 9, English School).

The teacher-centred organisation of space in the English school allows for ‘fluidity’ of the students’ role. Thus the actual and virtual organisations of the school are differentiated between the children-centred forms and the teacher-centred ownership of space.

However, the different organisations of space are also the result of differentiated use of space. In the English school the biggest part of school space is ‘specialised’, it consists of equipment that relates to a specific subject (e.g. science lab) or a specific use (e.g. kitchen/dining room)⁸².

Teachers have ‘ownership’ of their classrooms, which are repositories of the specific subject-knowledge (e.g. in the use of special/specialist equipment), and teachers’ tools (e.g. books, textbooks, exercise books) needed for transmitting this knowledge to students. In this knowledge environment students are required to bring with them some learning tools (e.g. homework books, homework diary, pen/pencil/ruler, and in PE their PE kit). The school provides textbooks, exercise

⁸² The specialisation of subjects is also hierarchical with Technology, Science, IT, Art, Music and PE using more specialised space and equipment than English, Maths, Modern Languages, and Humanities (History, Geography, R.E.).

books, and any other material. Although sometimes students take their exercise books or library books home, school 'knowledge' stays in the class. Finally, the outputs of students' learning are exhibited within (and outside) the classroom.

Two non-subject spaces are important for inclusion/exclusion in the school, the rooms/classrooms where recovery reading takes place and the 'duty room' which is a withdrawal room for students taken out of class, usually for disciplinary reasons or when feeling unwell. Students 'sent' to the duty room take with them subject work to complete or they are given work there. In both these spaces 'learning' takes place, although in the 'duty room' there is no 'teaching'. The former is organised as a classroom with special equipment (textbooks, displays, tape-recorders). The latter is also organised as a classroom, but without any specialised characteristics. The particular character of the duty *room* is evident in its name.

Finally, the teachers' ownership of their classroom is evident in the practice of letting students' wait outside classrooms for the teacher to open/unlock the door. In some cases, teachers wait outside their classrooms and 'invite' students to come in. In most cases support assistants wait outside with the students. The few minutes that students wait outside classrooms are potentially periods of time in which 'disruption' may occur.

On the other hand, in the Greek school although the students have symbolic ownership of the classroom, it is an empty space where students and teachers meet. In the Greek school there is limited specialisation of space. In response to the question 'what do you want to change in school?' large number of students

referred to the lack of specialised classrooms and equipment (from bins and volley balls, to computers and labs). For example, one student said:

What I would change? In general in all schools, not only in our school, I want them to have better material infrastructure, like the private [schools] have. The only good thing that I believe private [schools] have is that they have a chemistry classroom, music, classroom, and IT classroom. And these are things that most of the public schools do not have.

(Girl, year C', 2nd Greek School)

When however, there is specialisation (e.g. an IT suite) the space becomes out of limits for students in contrast to the a-specialised classroom space.

'Knowledge' does not reside in the classroom in any way. Teachers bring their tools (their textbook, the record of the content of lessons, specialised equipment such as maths instruments, and even pieces of chalk) and students bring their own tools (textbooks, exercise books, pens/pencils). At the beginning of the year the school distributes a textbook (or more) for each subject to the students. Students are responsible for their personal textbook throughout the year and need to bring it for every lesson of this subject. On average, students carry with them five textbooks each day. In addition students bring their homework books for each lesson of the day and note pads for taking notes during lessons and their PE kit⁸³. They also bring writing material, and art and technology material⁸⁴. None of these are provided by the school and thus are part of the family budget. Nothing of what teachers and students use during lessons remains in the class, and usually there are no exhibitions of the students work.

⁸³ Since there are no changing rooms, students either change in the toilets or in classrooms (if they have curtains) or they wear their PE kit for the whole day.

⁸⁴ The size and especially the weight of school bags are different in the two schools, with the Greek students carrying much heavier bags. School bags in both systems are attributes of the students' identity. Whether students bring their school bags, what they carry in them and the extent that they take 'care' of the bag's content categorise students in the 'good'/'bad' continuum (see Chapter Eleven).

Finally, the teachers go to the classroom after the bell rings and they expect the students to be in the classroom at their desks and waiting in an orderly way for them. Again this is a period of potential disruption –as in the English school- but in this case if it occurs it is inside the classroom and only between the students of that form.

Even though the ‘classroom’, as a knowledge transmission space, has different connotations in the two contexts, these differences are minimised in the layout of the classroom. In the English school, due to specialisation of space there is more diversity in the layout of the classrooms. Sometimes the equipment determines the layout of the classroom, e.g. IT suites are organised in relation to power points. In the newer building the ‘layout’ of classrooms follows more ‘modern’ approaches to classroom organisation with, for instance, science labs allowing pairs or groups of students to work together. In some lessons, the ‘small group’ approach is followed in the layout, e.g. in one Art and Music classroom four desks are brought together to create a workspace for students to work sharing equipment. In the rest of the classrooms in which observations took place, the traditional approach of rows of desks facing the whiteboard is followed. In the Greek school all classrooms follow the traditional model with rows of desks facing a blackboard.

Despite these variations, the layout of all classrooms in all schools is teacher-centred. There are two focal points in all rooms, the whiteboard and the teacher’s desk. These focal points are close to each other in all classrooms and it is the teacher who has ‘control’ of both of them. The significance of this space –

between the whiteboard and teacher's desk- is paramount. As one support assistant mentioned in relation to lack of 'respect' by some students,

...they know we are different, children know, they always know, that we never stand in front of the class and take a class.

(Support Assistant, English School)

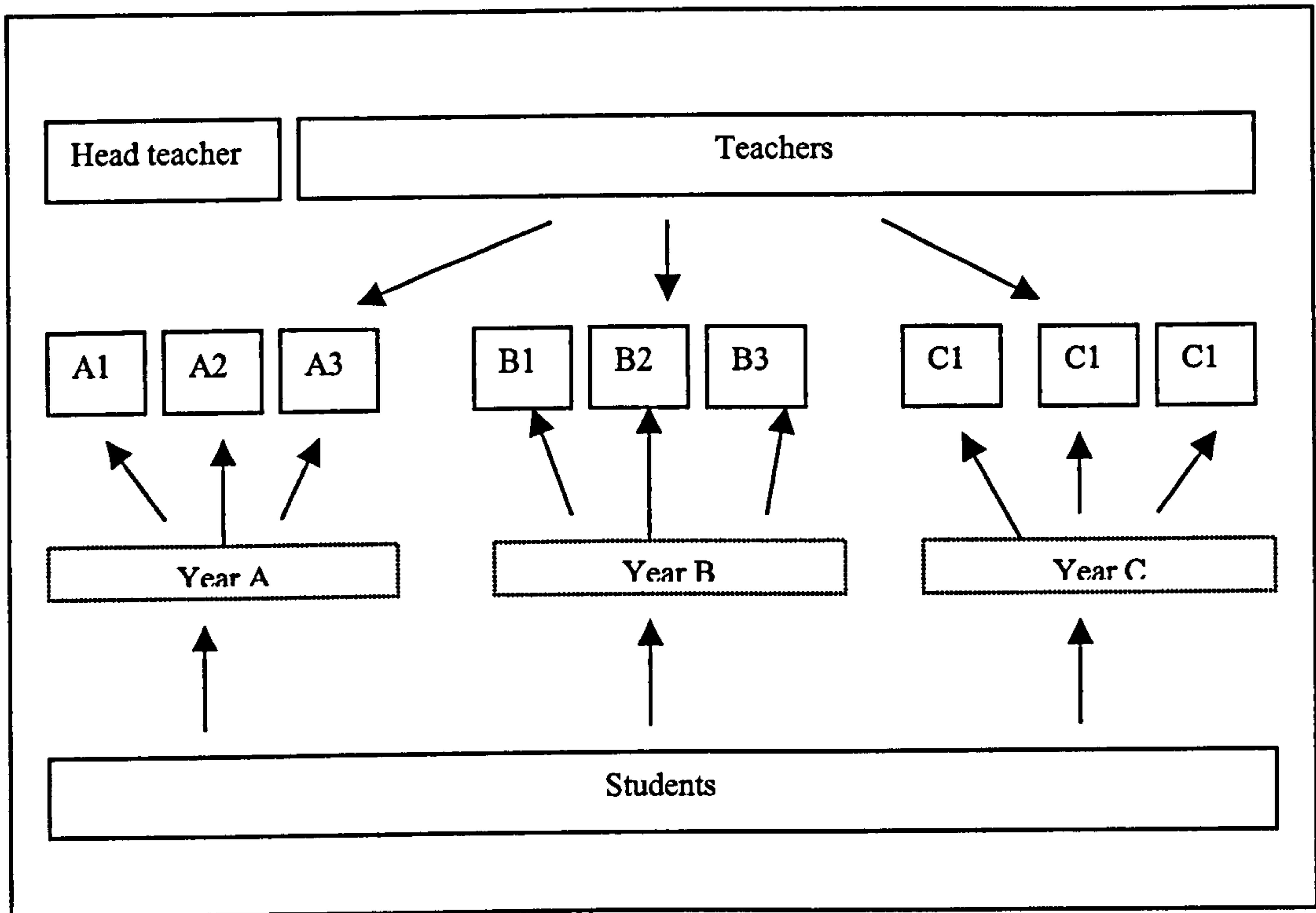


Diagram 9.7: Structure of the Greek school (virtual and actual)

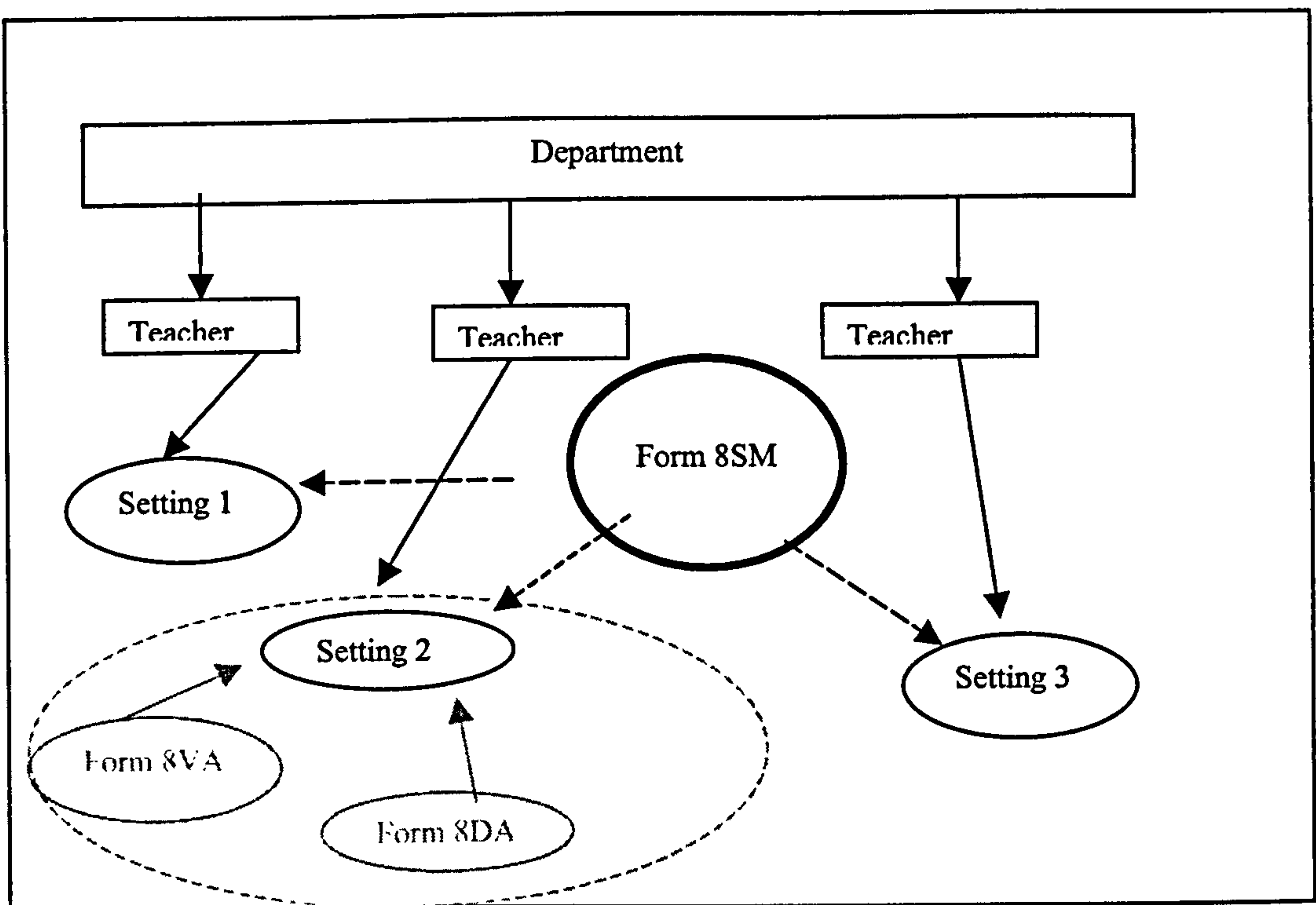


Diagram 9.8: Structure of the English School (virtual)

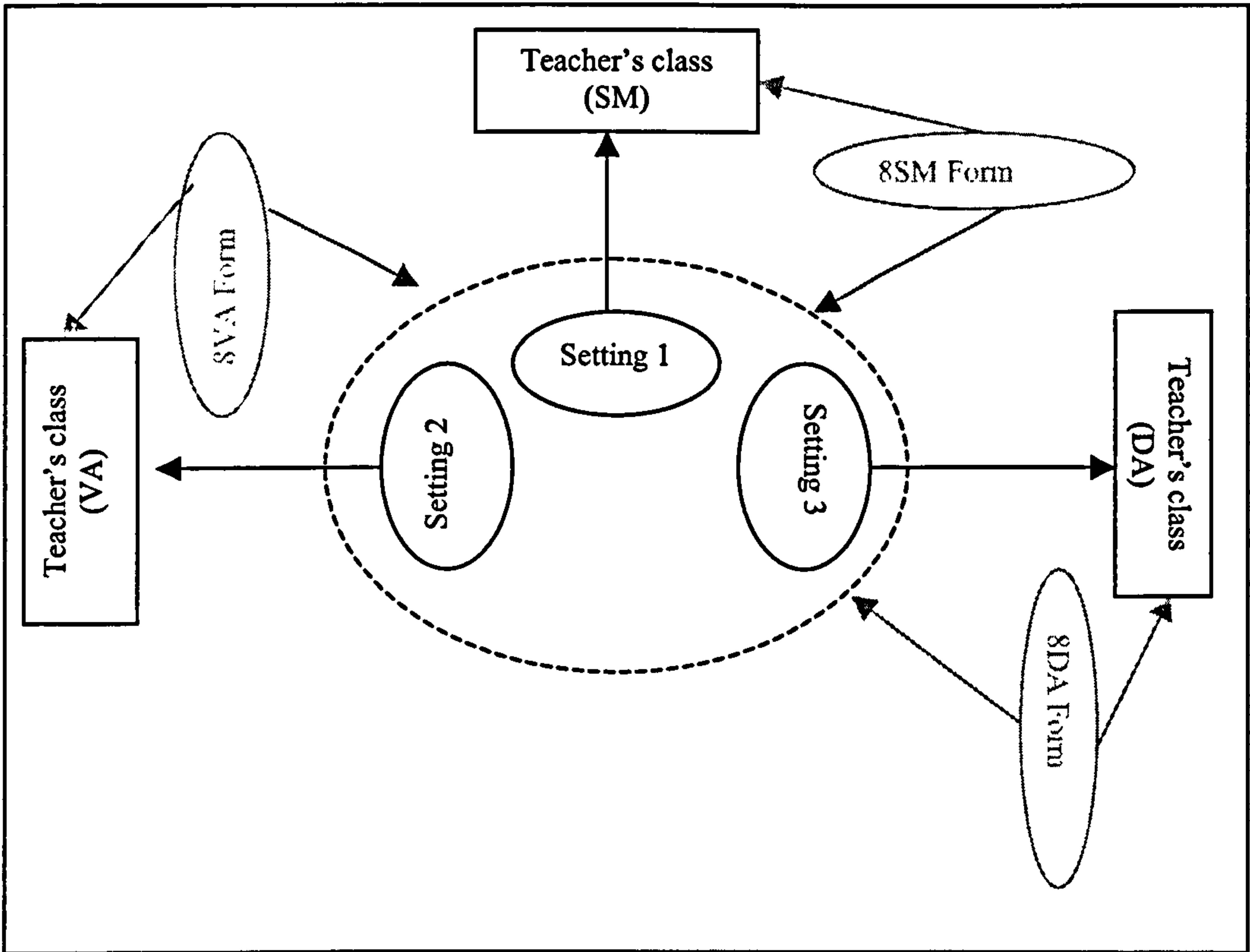


Diagram 9.9: Structure of the English school (actual)

The inclusive/exclusive significance of structure

The structure and organisation of the schools affect what inclusion/exclusion means in them. They affect the practical implementation of inclusion/exclusion, i.e. what inclusion/exclusion can successfully become in practice, and also the 'possibilities' for inclusion/exclusion.

The way that the given, 'familiar' structure of a school in a specific context restricts alternatives or utopian constructions of inclusion is very powerful. School 'traditions' can be extremely difficult to change. School traditions as they are expressed in the structure and organisation of space, time, movement and roles of actors are the practical expressions of the meaning of education and schooling in a specific context.

The way that 'chronological age' comes to create a 'school age' in the schools, and both of them together become the basis of the students' identity is an example of that. Booth et al. (1998) argue, "beliefs about the importance of keeping age-cohorts together generally override any desire to keep students of similar attainment together" (p. 212). In the same way in the Greek system some timid attempts to introduce 'settings' have failed, because they run against all notions of 'equality' of provision. The opposite practices in each context are defined as inclusive. Neither of these practices is by definition inclusive or exclusive. Their inclusiveness/exclusiveness is ideologically defined in a specific framework of participation and equality (see Chapter Eleven).

Conclusion: Marketisation beyond the educational systems

In this chapter the structure and organisation of the two educational systems has been presented. This discussion located recent education reforms in the context of marketisation. However, in order to understand the introduction of particular reforms in education it is necessary to move outside the educational system.

Focusing on the education reforms since 1997 in the English educational system, the increasing connection between education and social inclusion becomes clear. The Secretary for Education and Skills, Estelle Morris, in a speech given in March 2002 about the transformation of secondary education between 11 and 14, states that

Adolescence and the transition into secondary schooling affect all children. But they can present particular challenges to youngsters from our most disadvantaged communities. For the most vulnerable and those most in need of support and encouragement, this disengagement from learning can become terminal. These youngsters can all too easily slip into the ranks of “the disappeared”.

(Morris, 2002, p. 12)

The role of schools in relation to discourses of inclusion and social inclusion has increased and this role is understood in the context of a marketisation discourse. Schools need to expand their role even more, a role that is not seen as simply educational. Their links with other schools (as E. Morris in the same speech proposes for schools “to federate, to form companies, to provide community services and to develop the school workforce beyond the concept of a single teacher employed by a single school”, *ibid.* pp. 15-16), agencies, business, and the family, with the blurring of school/home division in ‘homework clubs’ (Edwards and Alldred, 2000), home-school agreements, and parents’ involvement

(see Cullingford and Morrison, 1999) go well beyond a traditional perception of schools as teaching/learning organisations.

The more schools' role becomes connected to (social) inclusion, the more complex the understanding of inclusion becomes. A larger part of the school population is seen as falling into the 'inclusive' discourse. However, 'inclusion' continues to be seen as relating to specific groups and individuals (see Weiner, 1998). Students with special educational needs, students excluded or on the verge of exclusion students, students from ethnic minority background, students receiving free-meals, students from disadvantaged backgrounds and communities, students who are victims of bullying and students who are 'bullies', and so on, are the students that need to be included or be included 'more'.

These categories fragment the school population even further creating different 'pathologies' and at the same time different education users/consumers with access to different services. Despite the rhetoric of inclusion being for 'all', inclusion can be observed only when it is related to specific groups.

In the OFSTED Guidance for Evaluating Educational Inclusion (2000) it is stated that

An educationally inclusive school is one in which the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every young person matter. Effective schools are educationally inclusive schools. [...] This does not mean treating all pupils in the same way. Rather it involves taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs. [...] They identify any pupils who may be missing out, difficult to engage, or feeling in some way to be apart from what the school seeks to provide. They take practical steps –in the classroom and beyond- to meet pupils' needs effectively and they promote tolerance and understanding in a diverse society.

(OFSTED, 2000, p. 7)

It is interesting how in the above extract the focus moves from ‘every young person’ to the ones that are identified as ‘problem’ children in one way or another⁸⁵.

On the other hand, the ‘assessment’ of inclusion⁸⁶ remains largely an ‘academic’ one since increased attainment is the ‘ultimate’ performance indicator, to which exclusion rates and attendance are complementary ones. A clearly ‘educational’ assessment of inclusion moves back inwards to the schools and their traditional role as ‘education’ providers.

This educational/academic discourse however, is separated from pedagogy, from any discussion of the content and meaning of knowledge transmission in all aspects of school life. It is seen as a technical issue of ‘good learning practice’ and as an issue of good management –at the class, and at a whole-school level. The relationship between the organisational/managerial approach to the educational ‘problem’ and ‘pedagogy’ is not a straightforward one. The ‘problem-solving’ school (see Ainscow, 1988) or the ‘inquiring school’ (Dyson, 1990; 1992; 1994) that try to accommodate ‘special needs’ in the overall structure and organisation, fail to take into account the significance of policy-

⁸⁵ In the same report the following groups are stated in relation to inclusion:

- girls and boys;
- minority ethnic and faith groups, Travellers, asylum seekers and refugees;
- pupils who need support to learn English as an additional language (EAL);
- pupils with special educational needs;
- gifted and talented pupils;
- children “looked after” by the local authority;
- other children, such as sick children, young carers; those children from families under stress; pregnant school girls and teenage mothers; and
- any pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion

(OFSTED, 2000, p. 4)

⁸⁶ For a discussion of segregation between schools and the effect of ‘choice’ in schools, see Gorard and Fitz (2000) and Noden (2000). These two studies using data about special educational needs and free meals come to different conclusions about the positive or negative change in segregation of schools. Both studies however highlight the problems with limiting the explanation of the effect of quasi-market reforms only to within schools analyses.

making outside the school. 'Pedagogy' as the critical engagement with what schools are doing in a specific context and of how schools 'promote' dominant knowledge and notions of 'good life' for future citizens, is not part of the remit of whole-school approaches or any other models that restrict inclusion to the 'effective management' of 'problems' that students bring in school.

In the English school, all members of staff interviewed were committed to the integration of students with special needs in the school and perceived integration as part of the school's role and values. For many members of staff this was exemplified when describing the school as a 'caring' environment for all students. However, all teachers and support assistants expressed the view that there were 'limits' in the 'inclusive' possibilities of the school and that some students may have needs that need more 'individual' provision than a mainstream school can offer. The head teacher of the English school describes her vision for the school as following:

My vision for this school is that we serve this community at full. That it's a place that parents want to send their children simply because they know they achieve their best while being here... they raise, we do raise the rate of our *externally monitored achievements*... to those that they are fully expected *for the children that we get*. But we are also being recognised in the community as *a place of learning* that we can offer the facilities that we have here to the community as a whole, to the parents, to business partners, because there is a lot of time that the children are not in school but the facilities are there and the expertise is there. [...] [The school] serves the community in the broader sense.

(Head teacher, English School, emphasis added)

However, the implicit pedagogical assumptions of this vision of a 'community' school are not part of the policy discourse.

In the Greek educational system a different model of marketisation is found. The Greek system historically has had a 'market'/private aspect. In parallel to the public state schools that the majority of students attend, there is a system that in Greece is usually called 'para-education' (παραπαιδεία). This system comprises private coaching schools that prepare students in school subjects⁸⁷, private crammers, and an array of after-school activities with the most important private centres for the teaching of Modern Languages. The main characteristic of this 'private parallel' system is that it is not the privilege of the few; it is rather a necessity for the majority (including students in private schools)⁸⁸.

The existence of this system is the result of the high demand for higher education and the restricted access to higher education (for an analysis of the role of Greek education to social mobility, see Tsoukalas, 1987). The system of *numerus clausus* for access to higher education, with the number of places being defined by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs⁸⁹, results in high competition within the system of compulsory and non-compulsory general education.

⁸⁷ These private cramming schools focus on the subjects that students are taking as exams and therefore perpetuate distinctions between 'important/exam' subjects and non-important subjects. The practice of students to shutdown schools before exams or to truant in order to revise is related to this parallel system of education (see Maurogiorgos, 1993).

⁸⁸ Private coaching at home exists also in the English context, but it is not common. I have not found any research on this subject. In fact, the only public references to private coaching that I came across were in popular soap operas. Both EastEnders and Hollyoaks had story-lines (the last three years) in which students seek support either before exams or in lessons that they had difficulties. Unfortunately, at the time since I am not a regular viewer, I did not record the dates and the outcomes of these story-lines.

⁸⁹ It is not possible to give an overview of the Greek Higher Education in this analysis. For access to Greek Higher Education, see Kontogiannopoulou-Poludoridi, 1995a; 1995b Papas and Psacharopoulos, 1993; Psacharopoulos and Soumelis, 1979. For Greek Higher Education see Psacharopoulos, 1988. For the relation between Higher Education and Technical Higher Education, see Kazamias and Starida, 1992; Kalamatianou, Karmas and Lianos, 1988; Karmas, Lianos, and Kalamatianou, 1988; Pasmazoglu, 1987; Dragonas and Kostakis, 1986 (Technical Higher Education now is equal in rank with Higher Education). For equality in Higher Education, see Gouviyas, 1998; Iliou, 1990; Fragoudaki, 1985.

The expenses to families of their children's education adds to a grand total higher than the cost to the State of public education (see Magoula and Psacharopoulos, 1999; Kanellopoulos and Psacharopoulos, 1997). Greece, with 29% per cent of the household income being spent on all types of 'private' education, is the highest spender on private education in the European Union and higher than the USA (25%) and Japan (24,8%) (Moshonas, 2002). In addition, Greece is the country with the highest number of 'exported' higher education students to Universities abroad, which is an additional substantial cost to their families and the economy.

The Greek statism (see Petmesidou and Tsoulovis, 1994) is exemplified in the fact that the State employs a large proportion of the workforce. This becomes problematic since for a large number of graduates the direct relation between higher education degree and employment depends on acceptance by the State, which is their main potential employer⁹⁰ (for a discussion of 'overeducation' see, Patrinos, 1997).

Education therefore is a highly valued 'social good' that families need to invest in economically (see for instance Tzani, 1992). The need for this additional investment is taken for granted, legitimising to some extent the 'failure' of the educational system in providing free education (Katsikas and Kavvadias, 1996). However, state schooling is not legitimated only by its role in controlling access to (higher) education. The role of education/schooling in transmitting the values needed for a 'good Greek society' and preparing 'good citizens' is very important. This ideological legitimation of education is evident in the answers of

⁹⁰ Greece has the second highest graduate unemployment in the EU. The relation between State and employment is particularly pertinent for teacher-graduates.

teachers to the question: ‘which according to your view are the values underpinning Greek education?’. Moral (seven times), humanitarian (five times), cultural/intellectual (four times), and social values (three times) were the ones mentioned the most⁹¹. Some other examples of answers are: “Hellenic-Christian [values]”; “freedom, free education, democracy, moral values”; “development of people with critical ability, initiative, and independent action”.

None of the respondents gave preparation for employment as an education value. Although for the majority of the respondents these values are not applied successfully in practice,⁹² the ‘rhetoric’ of humanitarian education is very real in the Greek educational system.

The paradox of the Greek educational system affects existing inclusion/exclusion and the recent reforms with inclusive intentions. On the one hand ‘inclusion’ is compatible with the humanitarian values of education. However, the way that education for ‘all’ within the humanitarian values of the Greek school is defined is both inclusive and exclusive.

The inclusiveness of education is based on long-standing assumptions about the homogenous character of Greek society and therefore of the students’ body. This inclusiveness due to homogeneity has been challenged the last ten years with the presence of increasing numbers of students in schools that do not ‘fit’ in the all-encompassing category of ‘Greek’ students. These students have to accept the given characteristics of the Greek educational system and create an assimilative

⁹¹ Most teachers (thirteen) gave more than one value, five gave one value, and one teacher gave none.

⁹² The breakdown of the answers is seven ‘no’, five ‘partially’, five ‘yes’, two missing answers.

students' identity. Reforms that challenge the (humanitarian) Greek-Christian values of the system are met with resistance from within some schools and parts of the wider society. The role of school in 'reproducing' specific notions of nationalism and citizenship influences the inclusiveness of schools.

Furthermore, both the competitive/individualist character and the ideological/collective character of education reinforce 'uniformity' and a 'mechanistic egalitarianism' (Persianis, 1998), since equal opportunities means that *all* students receive the same education *in* schools and then are free to seek additional/differentiated support *outside* the schools. Any form of inclusion then should not disrupt this uniformity. Therefore all the inclusive initiatives for ethnic minorities in education (e.g. reception classes, crammer classes, and preparatory classes) are based on additional provision outside the mainstream class, even though most of these initiatives are based on short-term or part-time withdrawal. In addition to this type of provision, "multicultural schools" (Διαπολιτισμικά Σχολεία) can be established. These schools provide schooling "to young people with educational, social, cultural or learning particular characteristics" (Law 2413/1996, p. 2450, my translation) (for a critique of this model, see Zoniou-Sideris and Haramis, 1997).

These initiatives are group-specific and consistent with the organisation of the educational system; the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs defines their structure and working. The school practices and the content of learning for the 'majority' of students is not adapted or changed in any way.

Finally, 'inclusion' in practice in many schools is a 'casual' affair. This means that it happens in the 'space' of autonomy that individual actors have to define

their role. The efforts of schools, individual teachers, parents, and students for inclusion stay 'unreported' when they do not fit in any official model. In this way, 'inclusion' becomes 'casual' because it is not reported, evaluated, or seen as 'good-practice' to be disseminated and imitated. The large number of disabled students educated with their peers in mainstream schools in this 'casual' model, stays 'hidden' in any official statistics.

The 'casual', 'hidden' character of inclusion means that inclusion as existing practice cannot be used in an inclusive discourse in order to question teachers' perceptions of the 'other', of the students that do not fit in their model of 'normality'. The 'humanitarian' discourse that teachers operate in affects their understandings of 'inclusion'/'ένταξη'. The teachers that filled in the questionnaire understand 'ένταξη' as the process of assimilation (six), equal participation (three), reversing marginalisation (three), integration (two), adaptation (two), and socialisation (one) of an individual or group of students in a group (i.e. school, society). 'Ένταξη' for teachers involves both the individual and the group. Greek teachers supported the view that 'ένταξη' in mainstream schools has limitations because of the lack of necessary resources⁹³. Finally, some of the Greek teachers referred to the pedagogical/educational dimension of 'care' 'αγάπη/φροντίδα' in relation to students with special educational needs.

In a Decree (Εγκύκλιος Φ4/115/Γ1/791, 2000) for the 'decrease of the educational and social exclusion' (related to students from ethnic minorities,

⁹³ To the question 'would you accept a student with special needs in your class?', nine teachers answered 'yes', seven 'maybe' and one said 'no' adding that 'it happens, though'. To the question 'should students with special needs be educated in special schools?', fourteen teachers answered 'depending on the individual case', two said 'yes' and three said 'no'. For teachers' perception in relation to 'caring' education and normalisation, see Vlachou-Balafouti, 1999; Kaila and Theodoropoulou, 1997, see Pedagogical Institute (1995) for special education teachers' perceptions, for normalisation in the Greek educational context, see Vlachou 2000.

repatriated students⁹⁴ and Gypsies), the need for co-operation between all bodies involved is stressed. However, the potential for possible innovation in the existing system remains limited. The limited definition of 'inclusion', in which for example the 'inclusion' of disabled students and students with special educational needs is not related to the 'inclusion' of students from ethnic minorities, fragments the response of schools to students' differences, minimising the significance of 'difference' for educational practice.

To sum up, this chapter has presented the structure and organisation of the two educational systems and of the schools. The discussion has tried to bring together educational policy, and recent reforms in the two systems and the different notions of inclusion. 'Differentiation' and 'uniformity' were used as analytical concepts in order to explore how the emphasis of inclusion and marketisation of education are differentiated in the two educational systems, the structures of schools and the organisation of classrooms/forms. This presentation tried to bring together 'macro' and 'micro' levels of analysis and see the 'school' and the 'educational system' together, within their contexts.

⁹⁴ Repatriated or re-migrant students are students that were born or lived a large part of their life outside Greece. In the last twenty years a large number of Greek immigrants returned to Greece, especially from Germany. In addition, in the 1990s a repatriation wave took place – mainly Russians with Greek origins and Greek political refugees from ex-USSR, and members of the Greek Albanian minority (see Mitis, 1998; Hatzichristou and Hoph, 1992).

Chapter Ten

Policy-making in practice: The Case of the Greek Students' Movement (1998-2000)

Introduction

This chapter presents the Greek Student Movement in relation to the discussion of policy in Chapter Nine. The aim of this chapter is to use an ethnographic approach to the student movement and to explore the views of students –from the first Greek school- after the ‘critical events’ of that period. The students were asked whether they agreed or not with the ‘shutdowns’ of schools which the events of that period referred to and, whether they agreed with the students’ demands. On the other hand students were not asked what they did during that period because these were events that happened outside the ‘normal’ working life of schools. This chapter discusses those events in relation to policy and inclusion/exclusion. Appendix III resents a chronicle of main events of that period.

The ethnographic exploration of the student movement as part of a school ethnography is challenging because it does not allow the researcher space for any pretence of neutrality. In ethnographic research on schools, the authority of the school structure and school rules restrict the researcher in what he/she can or cannot do and his/her level of participation. Even if the researcher 'disagrees' with specific aspects of the school, accepting the authority of the school is a precondition for doing the research. The critical engagement –including the critical emotional engagement and self-reflection- with the object of study takes place in the context of the initial acceptance of its 'authority'.

However, in ethnographically researching the Greek student movement I had a number of possibilities of how to interpret the object of study and how to participate in what was going on. An extreme example can be the complete denial of the existence of the student movement. In this case, the argument would have been that the students involved in these 'activities' are not 'mature' enough and they do not have a 'political' understanding of the issues. Thus, what they are doing is not a 'movement', but a 'parody' or 'bad imitation' of what a movement should really be. This view may seem extreme, but in practice it is widely held. In a newspaper article, for instance, Arvanitis (1999) argues that 'immature' students cannot make policy decisions about their education and these should be left to the responsible educators-advisors of the Government (p. 3).

Researching the student movement requires an explicit engagement with notions and constructions of childhood, children's role in society and the role of children/young people as social actors and citizens in the social context in which they live.

My own engagement with these issues did not start from a 'neutral' standpoint. I had been actively involved in student activism and the student movement. I was a member of students' committees throughout my school education from primary school –from the time that they were first introduced onwards. I was involved as a University student in student politics, although to a lesser extent than I had done as a school student, and I was involved in the student movement in 1991 and to a lesser extent in that of 1998-1999.

The same applies however to a number of other things that are examined in this study, e.g. being a student in schools, the subject of disciplinary action, having to do homework, being assessed as a student, and so on. The difference between these and my student movement involvement is that I had more say/'freedom' in deciding my degree of participation in the students' movement. This of course does not mean that I have the privilege of inside knowledge and understanding.

The following discussion is a tentative attempt to analyse some aspects of the Greek students' movement of that period. The discussion is centred on notions of childhood and how they were contested during the students' movement, and on issues of inclusion/exclusion.

School student movement: coming of age

Although students' activism has been part of the history of the Greek educational system, it was during the middle 1980s that school students' participation has become legalised, legitimated and organised. The School Committees and the

National celebration in all schools of the events of the 17th of November 1973 are the basis of the institutional acceptance of students' participation⁹⁵.

School students' activism has also been part of the history of the educational system, with students in individual schools taking action against decisions that they disagreed with. The most common action is 'walking-out' from lessons as a form, year, or school. Historically, school students participated in demonstrations and some students are organised in youth organisations of political parties.

Yet, the student activism of the 1990s is of a different kind. The turning point may be defined as the period 1990-1991. In that period school students joined Higher Education students in demanding the withdrawal of proposed educational reforms. However, the Higher Education students were the ones taking decisions and communicating with the Media and the Ministry of Education.

In the period 1998-1999 the school students' movement came of age since it was the first time that school students were 'running the show', so to speak. One has to be wary of claiming historical continuity and linear 'development' in a movement in which membership is based on age and therefore of limited lifespan. In addition, since the school students' movement is not pre-organised due to the lack of permanent regional and national students' bodies, it is also important to be aware of the limits of any 'pre-planning'.

The majority of students in the first Greek school mentioned that they did not expect the 'shut-downs' to last so long and their support decreased towards the end because they lost too many lessons. On the other hand, it is important not to

⁹⁵ For an early study of university Students' activism after the restoration of Democracy, see Psacharopoulos and Kazamias, 1980; for university students' perspectives, see Anthogalidou, 1990.

minimise the ways that students may have ‘learned’ from other movements (e.g. teachers’ movement the year before) and as they went along. Previous experience, and the tradition of activism, is very important as one student mentioned, “[...] my sister told me that in the past it [the shut-down] lasted one week [...]” (Girl, Year A’, 1st Greek School).

The fact that this spell of student activism started relatively independently from others, e.g. teachers or Higher Education students, may be one reason that the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs and the Government underestimated its potential magnitude. This is a ‘mistake’ that was not repeated the next year when ‘tough’ action was taken as soon as the first shutdowns started.

Getting visibility

The lack of regional and national structures, the large numbers of schools throughout the country, and the degree of independence between schools are some of the conditions that make it difficult for a mass students’ movement to be formed and to be kept going. In this case the role of the media was instrumental in giving students the ‘visibility’ they needed. In contrast to previous movements, this student movement was extremely ‘visible’ not only in Athens but in most major cities in the country.

This was possible because the private or quasi-private television channels that have been established during the last ten years all over Greece provided ‘pictures’

of events to their local communities and to the National channels⁹⁶. Thus most of the events included in the above table were broadcast on national private and, to a lesser extent, State-controlled channels (for a comparative discussion of Greek Media, see Hallin and Papathanassopoulos, 2002). The student movement got extensive coverage that was not limited to Athens. This is exceptional because Athens is by far the largest city in Greece and due to the centralised character of Government, all policy decision-making –and most protests against it- is conducted in Athens.

The adoption of roadblocks as a method of protest also increased the visibility of the movement. Roadblocks are easier to organise than big demonstrations; they can target many areas and make the students visible in places that are outside the traditional routes of demonstrations; need less participants to be involved; and move the action-points from the schools to the roads on an everyday basis.

The disadvantages of roadblocks are that the presence of small numbers of students makes the activity more ‘dangerous’ and less anonymous; it is difficult to keep the support of the public for long when one is the source of additional ‘misery’ on very busy roads. Thus, the most serious incidents between students and members of the public happened at roadblocks. However, the fact that adults ‘attacked’ young people at the roadblocks (with a number of ‘weapons’, e.g. cars, rifles, axes) engendered a sense of sympathy for students.

⁹⁶ The structure and content of Greek news programmes is different from those in England. National-wide channels have a common news programme for the whole of the country. Thus regional news programmes do not exist at a national level. This means that the broadcasting of students’ activism in the national channels reached the whole of the country.

The big party

The initial positive public perception of the student movement was due also to the character of students' presence. Initially a sense of humour and lack of traditional 'rigid' language (following the line of specific political parties) characterised the demonstrations: students from music schools were playing music, the banners were fun and artistic, the slogans were catchy, and the students were enjoying the whole experience. Even the 'cheekiness' of the students' 'attacks', like throwing yoghurts, or eggs at officials was seen as playful (see Adams, 1991, for a discussion of masculinity/childishness in students' protests, pp. 186-187).

This playfulness was contrasted with the initial somehow 'arrogant' response of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs. The 'victory' over teachers the previous year, and the overall tough line of the Government to any 'resistance' to its policies for the 'modernisation' of the country, made their approach seem paternalistic, perceiving students as 'children that do not know' and are easy to deal with. This paternalistic view was contrasted with the view that children/young people due to their lack of experience of the failings of social/political life and their optimism could mirror the faults and failings of society.

Furthermore, the Government was in a no-win situation because the demonstrations/parties of students in Athens and other cities were extremely big, demanding high levels of security, policing and intervention, but at the same time the majority of participants were young people. The safety of young people became very early on one of the central issues. The events of 1991 in which a teacher was killed in Patra when a group tried to re-open a school where he was a

member of the shutdown, and four more people died in Athens in a store fire during riots between demonstrators and the police, are very recent.

On the one hand, the Government had to respond to the almost weekly demonstrations of students and protect public and private property. On the other hand, the Government's ultimate responsibility was to protect the ones that need protection the most, the children of the country.

Newspapers reported that the police were also worried about the possibility of having to take action against students/children in demonstrations. My understanding of the riot police's plan is that they were focusing on separating specific incidents, i.e. individuals attacking banks or television vans, from the main body of the demonstration instead of using them for starting to disperse the demonstration. Most of the riots between riot police and demonstrators happened at the end of demonstrations or on the outskirts of the body of the demonstration. Usually these riots were between the police and small groups of demonstrators that the Media call 'anarchists' or 'the known unknown' (οι γνωστοί άγνωστοι) which loosely is translated to 'the usual suspects' because of their presence and role in most demonstrations over the last fifteen years. This does not mean that riots between police and students were completely absent, but they were uncommon and not extensive. Furthermore, it is important to remember that many of 'the usual suspects'/'anarchists' are young people. Initially, the 'usual suspects' were presented as distinct from the 'students'. However, as students were involved more in incidents in roads and within and outside schools this distinction become less clear. As Stamou (2001) who calls this category 'hooligans' argues

Moreover, the protesters' violence was not depicted as an inherent characteristic, in disagreement with the dominant discourse of protest. Only hooligans were represented as being inherently violent. Consequently protesters were differentiated from hooligans: protesters belong to Them, but are closer to Us compared with hooligans.

(Stamou, 2001, p. 676)

An example of the relation between police and protesters is taken from the demonstration on the 9th of December 1998 in the centre of Athens by school students, higher education students, teachers, unemployed teachers, political parties. This was one of the largest demonstrations. There were some incidents near the Ministry of Education central building, and damages to banks, a McDonald's store and two cars, a van, and a police car during the procession. At the end of the demonstration there were riots and eleven people were arrested. However, the demonstration was in general a peaceful one.

At some point, I was walking in the opposite direction from the demonstration on the pavement so I could see the banners and what was going on better than if I had been in the demonstration following a specific block of demonstrators. This meant that I was walking next to the police who were on both sides of the street on the pavement. In front of me I noticed two girls who broke out of the body of the demonstration and approached a police officer and started talking to him. I was very intrigued by that because it is not something that demonstrators usually do. I was so curious that I stopped close to them and eavesdropped on their conversation.

Girls: Where is the Parliament, please?

Police officer: Do you want to go to the Parliament?

Girls: We want to go where the demonstration goes.

Police officer (laughing): This is the demonstration (Police officers next to him start laughing as well).

Girls: Yes, but where is the Parliament?

Police officer: It's in this direction, and the demonstration is going that direction. If you want to go to the Parliament you should be on the other road where the other end of the demonstration is.

Girls: How we go there?

Police officer: this is Panepistimiou street the street over there is Stadiou, it is parallel and the people [demonstrators] go towards the Parliament.

Girls: Thank you.

Police officer: Bye.

I do not know if this conversation seems as striking as I perceived it. I might be prejudiced but from my experiences of demonstrations, I have a clear distinction between 'them' and 'us' when it comes to police and demonstrators in that specific social situation. These girls, possibly from an area outside the city centre, and being in their first outing alone in the city centre, challenged this distinction and asked for directions from a riot policeman. The police officer on the other hand, 'educated' the girls on the workings of the demonstration explaining to them what was happening, and what they needed to do.

The argument is not that the demonstrations of the student movement were more peaceful, or free of incidents, or that some students did not experience 'violence', get beaten, arrested and charged. The argument is that because of the age of the protesters and the positive (at least initially) public view of their movement, different actors were negotiating and defining students' activism in relation to their status as children and minor.

The 'big party' approach however, affected the 'seriousness' of the students' movement. As Lianos (1999) notes, what most students wanted was some "simple, innocent, Greek fun" (p. A' 23). Students did not want to have only some fun. They were dissatisfied with their education and disillusioned about the improvements promised by the new Law.

A party going wrong

It was argued that students managed to make themselves and their actions visible. At the same time, students gained a 'privacy' that was perceived as a potential 'risk'. They closed their schools; they got the keys and were able to do whatever they wanted inside the school buildings without the presence and supervision of adults (head teachers could gain access to make sure that damages did not happen). Some students, at least at the beginning of the shutdowns, even slept in their schools to make sure that attempts to reclaim them were not made. This situation gave students a place to congregate, which they could manage.

What students were doing in schools was a question that parents, teachers, administrators, and the media were asking. The main questions were: whether students could be 'trusted'; who was responsible if something went wrong; and whether the parents who trusted their child were responsible for his/her actions. The latter was less of a legal issue in relation to criminal responsibility of minors and more of a moral issue. The liberal beliefs of parents who 'allowed' their children to participate in shutdowns were tested when the reports of 'risk' and criminal activities started to increase.

The main issues under question were vandalism, use of drugs and sexual activity. The latter was only implicitly mentioned in the media while the first two were magnified and a 'name and shame' culture was developed. When I asked some seventeen-year-olds what they were doing in their closed schools they mentioned listening to music, drinking coffee, playing games (e.g. cards, backgammon),

meeting their friends, and smoking. It can be argued that for the majority of students these were the activities they were doing.

However, in many schools extensive damage happened. In some schools the students' records were destroyed which meant that students at the point of having to repeat the year due to number of absences, were seen as 'suspect'. In other cases the blame fell on 'outsiders, un-related to the school' (εξωσχολικοί). 'Outsiders' is another category that is used in a similar way to the 'usual suspects'. In the same way that the 'usual suspects' are responsible for incidents during and after demonstrations, creating headlines and pictures of damage in demonstrations that for the most part are peaceful, 'outsiders' are blamed for damage and vandalism in schools. In the first Greek school damage was limited – especially in comparison to the previous year. As one student mentioned, "last year they broke [windows] panels, they smashed the office" (Boy, Year C') (for this boy the fact that damage was limited was his answer to the question 'what was the best thing that happened in school this year?').

As time went by fewer students stayed in the closed schools for less time. A large majority of students follow the parallel 'education' of crammer schools and they are also doing other out-of-school activities. These continued as normal. To some extent students of non-compulsory secondary school age could 'afford' to close their schools for two or three months because they were continuing their 'education' outside schools. Students were negotiating their identity but without stopping their education. As one girl reported in a newspaper article about the increased presence of students in coffee shops during the daytime:

Before the shutdown we came for a coffee on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Now we come every day. In the morning we go to the school to support the shutdown. Around twelve o'clock we come here. And in the afternoon we go to the crammer school (φροντιστήριο)... Now we can go out in the evening because we don't have to wake up early in the morning.

(Spyropoulou, 1999, p. 43, my translation)

The end of the student movement came when the threat of loosing the school year seemed a real possibility. The pragmatic view of not loosing their individual school student's identity surpassed the collective "embarrassment" of stopping without having won. As one student said

We were lots of kids, but the Government didn't understand it. We tried as much as we could, but at the end we gave up.

(Boy, Year C', 1st Greek school)

Doing politics

The main problem that students faced was to find a language to express their politics, to be visible and have a voice. This was not easy. One of the main slogans was "It's not the books, it's not the grades, what we don't have, is life" (Δεν είναι τα βιβλία, δεν είναι οι βαθμοί, εκείνο που μας λείπει, είναι η ζωή).

This and other slogans were interpreted from a romanticised view of children/young people as 'rebellious', as extremely optimistic about life and unrealistic about the world. Students needed to 'prove' that they were able to be involved in politics both within the movement and with other actors, e.g. the Ministry of Education, and the media.

This can be seen as a no-win situation for students. On the one hand in order to do 'pragmatic' politics they needed to use an 'adults'' language. On the other

hand, using an adults' language, was seen as 'fake', as a betrayal of their distinct youth identity. In addition, one of the main accusations of the students' movement was its undemocratic character; the way that elections for shut-downs took place and how a 'majority' was defined; the lack of democratic representation at the national level and the dominance of students with party affiliations; and finally how the wishes of the 'minority' were not taken into account were the main accusations of this type. What was expected from students was not to imitate the 'imperfect' democracy in which they were living, but to construct an alternative (better) one.

Language and democracy are interconnected. On the one hand when students demanded dramatic increases in public expenditure for Education they were 'idealistic', on the other hand when some of them imitated (undemocratic) practices in order to achieve their aims, they were not seen as 'pragmatically' playing the system, but as failing an ideal notion of democracy.

For example, the Ministry of Education tried to control the students that were going to participate in negotiations by asking for a small number of students to be present (representative democracy). However, when this small number was not selected 'democratically' since there were not the relevant bodies⁹⁷ to do so, and because most students were 'unwilling' or did not have the 'experience' to take part in negotiations, the movement was accused of being undemocratic. The more the 'protagonists', the students that were active in 'representing' the movement,

⁹⁷ Two bodies were central in decision-making; the 'Co-ordination Body of the Struggle of Schools of Athens' (Συντονιστικό Αγώνα Σχολείων Αθήνας) and the 'National Body of Students' (Πανελλαδικό Όργανο των Μαθητών) that were meeting every alternate Sunday at the Schools Complex of Grava in Galatzi. Each school had an elected co-ordination body, two members of this body represented the school at the Local Co-ordination body and two members of this body were elected to participate at the National Co-ordination Body.

were scrutinised in the Media (their party affiliations, family background, grades and behaviour in school, attitude, appearance, etc.), the more the rest of the students opted for anonymity. The 'mass' of students, described as incited by teachers, parents, Parties, peers, the media and lacking 'information' and a viable alternative, was contrasted with the 'few' –selected or imposed- using an adults' political language. In both cases students were seen as failing their test to prove that they can do 'democracy'.

The student movement and inclusion/exclusion

Before closing this chapter it is necessary to make some remarks about how inclusion/exclusion was negotiated in the students' movement. In addition to the inclusion/exclusion created by different definitions of bad/good students, informed/or not, law-abiding/criminal, within the movement/in its outskirts (e.g. 'usual suspects', 'outsiders') discussed above, a number of other inclusion/exclusion aspects can be distinguished.

For example particular types of schools were not included in the movement; private schools stayed open and the only mention of a special school closing is the one in Thessalonica that closed when most schools were re-opening. This symbolic act is an indication of the separated status of special education. During the three years of reaction to the new Law, education meant mainstream, general education.

In addition primary schools stayed open which is one example of how age is a determinant for social participation. Older students from non-compulsory

secondary schools were seen as the 'leaders' of the movement. To some extent this was the result of the focus of the Law (in non-compulsory secondary education). In fact, the high active participation of compulsory secondary education students in the movement can be seen as an extension of the lower limit of the transitional period between childhood/adulthood.

Furthermore, a gendered dimension can be noticed. The gendered balance that was evident in demonstrations was not present in the roadblocks where boys tended to be involved more, especially towards the end. In addition, the majority of the arrests were of boys, although almost equal numbers of boys and girls were reported to be hurt in roadblocks. A number of 'psychological' explanations were given to explain that. For example many expressed the view that boys found the opportunity to release their suppressed (male) violent tendencies and 'natural' aggression.

Finally, more boys tended to represent the students in meetings with the Ministry of Education or the Media, but students' representation was more gender balanced than that of adults (e.g. Representatives from the Ministry, OLME who were predominantly males).

Students from ethnic minorities participated in the movement; however, their participation as students' representatives was disproportional between the school and national level with very few students participating at the national level.

The incident in which a police officer cut an Albanian student's ponytail was the main case in which ethnicity was discussed explicitly, especially since the student and his family were 'semi-illegally' in Greece and it was questionable whether they were going to press charges (in a simplistic way 'semi-illegal' can be

described as having the 'right' to stay in the country and participate in education, but as not having 'legal status' or being in the process of getting legal status). In this case the Public Prosecutor pressed charges against the police officer. The 'semi-illegal' status of many of the ethnic minority students may explain to some extent their lack of participation at the national level. Other possible reasons may be lack of previous access/experience of Greek politics and political 'language', and institutionalised racism.

It is difficult to comment on Party affiliation and the real influence of specific Political Parties (for a discussion of the role of Political Parties in the development of educational policy, see Vakalios, 1994). For instance, in Thessalonica in more than one case separate demonstrations took place due to differences between some students and students affiliated to the KKE (Communist Party of Greece). It is very difficult from the newspaper reports to understand what exactly happened in these cases. The party affiliations of some of the students' spokespersons were magnified in the media, and in the meetings between students and representatives of the Ministry of Education. Party affiliation was seen as an 'adult' way of doing politics.

Finally, the traditional distinction between right-wing and left-wing politics was not easily applicable to the movement, firstly, due to the lack of an active political role of the majority of the students and secondly to the fact that the government introducing the new Law was a 'left-wing' one. The fact that young people lack a 'political' (party) identity as voters, made it difficult to pinpoint their political 'sympathies'.

The above are some examples of inclusion/exclusion and of the different levels that took place. However, the main question of inclusion/exclusion is whether the student movement managed to represent the diverse views within the movement and to include the views of the students that did not agree or did not participate in it. The number of students in compulsory secondary education in the Greater Area of Athens was 117,564 for the school year 1997/1998 (National Statistics Office of Greece, 2002). A similar number of students were following different types of non-compulsory secondary education. Not all of these students agreed or participated in the students' movement; the student movement does not encompass all students with the same extent of participation. Although the extent of participation and representation are still unexplored questions, the main characteristic of the students' movement is that it started from and was based on the school unit. It was a bottom-up movement where decision-making took place at all levels.

A sober view

However, in the interviews students present a different picture. Students have a 'pragmatic' view of their position in the educational system and of the reasons for voting or not for the shutdown of their school. It is important to note that these views were collected after the end of the movement when students were making up for the lost lessons on Saturdays. Students and teachers were in a race against

time to complete the statutory part of the syllabus⁹⁸. In two of the three lessons I observed in the school, the pace of teaching was nothing like I had experienced before. As one student put it “we make up for the [lost] lessons in a very tough way” (Boy, Year C’)

To start with, the majority of students perceived their movement as an educational one, related to the specific reform of the Law 2525/1997. This was a perception held by all pupils independently whether they agreed or not with the movement. This was the cause of the movement and its main demand was to withdraw the Law:

Boy: For some students of the second year of Lyceum that are going to sit the exams...their demands were fair... and some other [demands] like the Unified Lyceum [Ενιαίο Λύκειο] that I don’t think it’s going to give the solution, it’s not going to replace this system.

(Boy, Year C’, 1st Greek School)

To be honest, I am not interested in the ‘shut-downs’ because I am in the gymnasium, but if I was ... for the Lyceum students I would agree because it’s not possible to change the system by whoever is in power, it’s change all your goals.

(Boy, Year C’, 1st Greek School)

Students perceived the rest of the demands (more money to education, open access to higher education, more democratic society, etc.) as ‘unrealistic’:

I agreed with the demand about the Law, the rest, they weren’t that strong [demands].

(Boy, Year B’, 1st Greek School)

Girl: I didn’t agree because we were asking things that the school could not give.

(Girl, Year C’, 1st Greek School)

⁹⁸ The making up of the lost time is something that none of the students questioned as a practice. However the system did not work perfectly and as one student said “We don’t make them [lessons] up because one Saturday teachers are on strike, one someone [teacher] is ill, another we play truant because it’s a nice day” (Girl, Year C’, 1st Greek School).

In this way the students did not question the system itself but rather the specific policy. Students accepted that the school gives them the 'opportunity' of higher education and employment, and at the same time controls how this opportunity is given. Students need to comply with the system and try their best within the system. They compared the new system with the old system, but not with an alternative system:

And from the moment that a Law was voted, I knew that nothing could happen with that. Because the Law couldn't be taken back, after it was voted at the Parliament. And because the Law said that we needed to study more, some reacted. I was going to study with the 'Panhellenics' [exams of the old system] and now I am going to study a bit more. There is no difference. In both cases I was going to study.

(Boy, Year B', 1st Greek School)

Students accepting the fact that the new system was going to be implemented, were trying to find ways to rationalise their concerns about the 'unknown' they were going to face. This meant that they were trying to understand this unknown and be prepared for it. This contradicts the view of students as lacking 'understanding' of and information about the system.

I agreed with the shutdowns because our demands were just, but after the first month I wasn't anymore because we lost lots of lessons...and I saw that nothing was going to happen and I know some teachers and they are involved with that [education politics]. And they explained to me that the Law has disadvantages, but has many advantages as well. The bad thing with the new system is that from the first year of the Lyceum you don't have as much time as you had before. You need to study all the time, twenty-four hours every day.

(Boy, Year C', 1st Greek School)

IS: Are you concerned [about the new system] now that you are moving to the Lyceum?

Girl: Yes, I am very worried, and I was thinking about that this week, because we don't know what we are going to face, because the previous years we knew that it needed more studying and all these, ... the course [options] we were going to select, but now we see that it's more difficult. A kid that was not that good in the pure subjects

[sciences] as in the exact [sciences] is going to face difficulties, that's how it seems.

(Girl, Year C', 1st Greek School)

From the above, one may argue that the student movement was a 'reactionary' one aiming at preserving a 'status quo' that the students did not agree with, but were familiar with and knew how to negotiate on an individual basis. Their movement in this respect may be seen as a collective movement aiming to achieve individual gains. The students therefore 'imitated' other movements (for an example see Pigiaki, 1999, for a discussion of OLME position on reforms⁹⁹) that see any reform as threatening their 'rights'. This is however, only a partial explanation.

Alternatively the students' movement can be seen as an attempt to negotiate 'education' in an era in which it is argued that

...the problem with a scenario of democratic education in the context of the decline of ideological clarity in contemporary politics is that none of the *alternatives* to professionalism, vocational education, and entrepreneurship –the troika of the current emphasis on education for jobs and business- seems credible.

(Aronowitz, 1997, p. 193)

In this case students' pragmatic recognition of the limitations of their movement in proposing social change is not the result of their individualism, but rather the

⁹⁹ Ifanti (1994) argues that, "OLME has appeared to be more interested in the satisfaction of the economic demands of its members rather than to struggle for the improvement of education" (p. 225). An example of that is the additional 'benefit' that teachers working in special schools or classes receive. When the new Law of Special Education was debated, teachers working in special education were demanding for the continuation of this benefit (see, Xanthopoulos and Sakkas, 1997). On the other hand, the State is instrumental in the continuation of the long tradition of 'clientele' relationships (see Eustathios, 1997). For instance, the Special Education Law (2817/2000) states that candidates with special needs are 'preferred' in the staff selection (up to 20% of selected staff). This is a point that was mentioned in the Primary school teachers' Union (DOE) response to the proposed Law in which they state that the role and criteria selection for employing people with special needs in educational position should be clearly clarified (DOE, 2000, p. 12). In addition, the Law states that candidates that are first or second degree relatives or spouses of people with special needs are 'preferred', when they have the same qualifications to other candidates (p. 1573).

result of the context of educational policy debates in which any alternative to dominant education prerogatives is perceived as 'childish'.

Defining the student movement in relation to the extremes of 'hope' and 'despair' is problematic. Both 'hope' and 'despair' are real and evident in the everyday experiences of students. However, as opposite extremes they cannot encompass the diversity of meaning that the student movement has had for different participants.

Moreover, as an attempt in policy, the students' movement cannot be seen in absolute terms of failure or success. After the movement deflated, the fact that the Law was not withdrawn was seen as a total failure of its objectives. However, the students' movement claimed a new space for school students in the educational arena. The fact that the Ministry of Education had had to take students 'seriously', listen and negotiate with them is one of the successes of the movement.

In addition, some of the minor temporary changes to the Law become permanent in the following year. Finally, the students were proved right in their claim that the new system is not 'easier', does not offer a 'free' place to each student in higher education, and does not minimise the need for students to attend crammer schools.

Conclusion: a comparative dimension

One final question is whether it is possible to use the Greek student movement in a comparative way in the context of this study. This chapter is not an explicit

comparative one and belongs to the 'country report' type of studies discussed in Chapter Four. This chapter explored the ways that students –during their movement- participated in the Greek educational arena. Similar representation of students in the English educational arena did not happen during the period of this study.

On the other hand, students participate in protests in the English context. An educational example is campaigns against proposals to close or merge mainstream or special schools. Other recent well-reported protests that students/young people participated in are environmental and anti-globalisation protests (e.g. May Day protests in London in 2001 and 2002), the riots in an estate in Portsmouth against 'paedophiles' in 2000, and the ethnic riots in Oldham, Bradford and other cities in the summer of 2001. However, these protests were not educational; the participants' student role was secondary to their children/young people's role; and the young people themselves did not run them. In addition, other forms of protest for educational or other issues, e.g. petitions, writing letters to MPs or to newspapers, exist in the English (and Greek) context.

Educational protests by students take place in the English context. Adams (1991) provides a comprehensive account of the history of students' protest and of specific incidents (see also Marsh et al., 1978). However, a mass educational student movement similar to the one in Greece does not exist in compulsory education. A number of historical, cultural and educational differences between the two systems that may/or may not allow this type of protest to take place can be found. However, the most important difference is that in the English context a

'language' –either as a sociological/educational category or in common use-defining students' collective protest as activism is missing (see Lawson, 2001 for an example of a Citizenship lesson on the topic of law and order, p. 171). As Adams (1991) argues

One consequence of neglect by researchers is the lack of development of an adequate conceptual framework which enables protests by pupils to be discussed in other aspects of education and schooling.

(Adams, 1991, p. 2)

In a lesson in a bottom-set with a small number of students (all, but one, boys on that particular day) in the English school, the teacher was struggling to impose order to begin the lesson. At some point she sent out (to the duty room) a student and after a while a second one, in addition to a student that was sent out even before the students entered the classroom. The remaining five students continued the disruption and the teacher threatened that if they did not settle down, she was going to send more out. One student asked her what would happen if she sent all of them out and no student was left for her to teach. The teacher –after pausing for a few seconds- replied that she would continue the lesson with 'misses' (the support assistant and me).

The boy's implicit suggestion that the students' consent (and presence) is necessary for a lesson to take place is the basis of the Greek (and many other) student movement. In some cases in the English context this consent is withheld collectively in a school, but very rarely across a number of schools.

Finally, I am not suggesting that all classroom 'disruption' is protest and all protest is disruption. 'Disruption' in both systems can also be a number of other things, such as individual/collective resistance, 'fun', an accepted practice

between students and/or students and teachers, the sorting out of personal differences between students or students and teachers, picking on specific individuals, and so on.

What is suggested in this chapter is that a category/language of collective protest which is not limited within a specific institution, and is contested within and outside education is an existing condition for the Greek type of student movement to take place.

To sum up, at the beginning of this chapter it was argued that it is difficult to take a neutral stance in relation to the student movement. Regardless of whether one sees it as 'a lesson in participatory democracy', or as children out of control keeping 'a society hostage', or anywhere in-between, specific notions and values about childhood, morality, social order, participation, policy making and citizenship are in play. Despite the fact that I 'confessed' my own participation in students' protests, this chapter tried to avoid justifications of the students' movement of that period as 'right' or 'wrong', or what Pitt (1998) calls 'the 'good' and 'bad' stories of resistance' (p. 536).

This is not the result of 'scientific neutrality'; it is rather the result of my own ambivalence. I do not believe that student movements can be seen simply as wrong or right, or some parts of it identified as such. For example, it was discussed how 'the usual suspects' could be used both to remove responsibility for damage and riots from 'students', and to present a picture of disorder and chaos in the media. The function of these groups –that also have their own diverse objectives- cannot be limited to a one-dimensional good/bad explanation.

This presentation tried to provide some tentative insight into different constructions of students as 'social actors' and the ways they negotiated their different roles as individuals and groups, collectively within their movement and in the wider educational arena.

Part Four: Inclusion/Exclusion in Schools

Chapter Eleven

Students' Identities and Knowledge Discourses

Introduction: 'Good' and 'bad' students: students' constructions of ideal types

This and the next two chapters aim to explore inclusion/exclusion as it happens in schools, mainly through the students' accounts. In doing this, knowledge and discipline are seen as the two central discourses for defining the meaning of inclusion/exclusion, the manner and variation of students' participation, the context in which participation takes place and its desired outcomes.

To some extent the relation between knowledge/discipline and inclusion/exclusion may be seen as obvious, since knowledge and discipline are the main 'markers' of schooling and therefore of inclusion/exclusion. However, when they are seen in an ethnographic comparative context, when their meanings, as constructed by the participants in the study in one context, are juxtaposed with

those of the other context, their ‘familiarity’ and their ‘strangeness’ become apparent¹⁰⁰.

When answering the question *what in your view does a good/bad student do?* (or the alternative questions *what do you mean when you say that someone is a good/bad student?*), a striking majority of students brought knowledge/ability and discipline/behaviour together:

[Good student] Always brings homework, is never messing about, never gets done, does all his work.

[Bad student] Never brings his homework, is messing about... doesn't listen to teachers, being late all the time.

(Boy, Year 8, English School)

[Good student] contributes to the oral exam and writes well in tests...and doesn't disrupt the class.

[Bad student] The opposite. That is, doesn't contribute to the oral exam, doesn't write well in tests and disrupts the class.

(Boy, Year A', 2nd Greek School)

[Good student] Bring their homework, they behave in the class and get on with their work.

[Bad student] They don't bring their homework, and they're bad in class and they aren't trying hard.

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

[Good student] I mean... the grades she has, her character...her character, that's it really.

[Bad student] Bad student? When [someone] doesn't get good grades. Her character...her character is not good, that's it... I don't know.

(Girl, Year B', 1st Greek School)

The pattern of students' description of good/bad student is very powerful. In reading the first extract one gets an idea of the pattern and by the fourth the

¹⁰⁰ See Karatzias et al. (2001) for a comparative study of Quality of School Life between Greek and Scottish secondary school pupils. It is interesting that in this study the applicability of a common instrument is not problematised even though the research instrument does not provide any indications for the differences between the two contexts.

pattern is quite clear (see also Xanthakou et al. 1995 for similar findings with Greek students).

These are 'matter of fact' statements; they provide a construction of good/bad student according to the 'official' school perception of learning and behaving, but completely stripped off from any official school 'rhetoric' (see Jones, 1993, p. 163). There is no mention of the 'active' or 'critical' learner, the student that fully participates in all aspects of the school life, or the student that 'enjoys' school, and so on. The pedagogy presented in this construction is a crude and even cruel one; students need to behave and work hard.

This construction is also abstract; it applies to all students. Even when the students use pronouns (e.g. he or she)¹⁰¹, the construction is not gender specific; a generic construction of good/bad student is given which appears to be equally applicable to boys and girls, regardless of age, ability, or any other personal characteristic. This abstract character is also compatible with the 'official' school perception of 'equality' of students.

Furthermore, it is teacher-centred since teachers are the ones that define and assess the attributes of a good/bad student. In this way, student identity is constructed in public when and where interaction between students and teachers takes place.

¹⁰¹ One linguistic difference between English and Greek is the use of pronouns. Greek language is gender specific, which means that there is no equivalent to the gender-neutral 'student(s)'. In Greek, one necessarily refers to male/female student(s). In the case of plural, the grammatical convention is when one refers to a mixed-gender group, i.e. a group comprising male and female students, using the male plural. A noun that Greek students used very often in the interviews is 'παιδιά' (neuter plural noun), which is translated to 'children'/'kids'. In addition, 'Παιδιά' is a word that is used to define in-group membership and in this case can be translated as 'guys', 'mates', 'the boys'/'the girls' (like in the expression 'I'll go out with the girls'). This use is not age specific and adults use it often.

However, despite this teacher-centeredness, students are presented as 'active' in assuming a good/bad role. Students *do* or *don't* bring homework, *mess about* or *don't mess about*, and so on. Students are seen as having a 'choice' in constructing their identity. This also is compatible with the 'official' school perception of students' self-management of their behaviour and learning.

In addition, this construction is a 'neutral' one; students are not differentiated in relation to the consequences of belonging to one or the other opposite end. There is no information about what it means to be a good/bad student in these extracts. Implicitly being a 'good' student is 'good', but the potential inclusive/exclusive significance of this is not stated and students do not evaluate or express their own views about the two opposites of the good/bad student.

Finally, the above extracts do not give any information about the students expressing them. For instance, one of these students was on the SEN register as having emotional and behaviour difficulties and another one had been in the Greek educational system for only two years. I do not think that one can guess who these students are from their answers.

These succinct, generic, abstract and matter of fact constructions can be seen as 'ideal types' of what a 'good'/'bad' student is. What students describe is the essence of being a student, but at the same time these types do not really exist since they are high-level categorisations of the real, complex and contradictory experience of being a student. For example, "*Always* brings homework, *never* messes about, *never* 'gets done', does *all* his work" is simultaneously very 'real', and not 'real'. These 'ideal types' are constructed clearly from the viewpoint of

students; they are based on a hegemonic view of what a student should/should not be, but at the same time, they avoid using the rhetorical language that legitimises this hegemonic view.

Yet, these ideal types are context specific and defined by different knowledge/discipline discourses and practices. 'Gets on with their work' and 'brings homework' on the one hand, and 'oral exam', 'tests' and 'reports' on the other, are different practices that express the two different knowledge discourses. Students in both contexts do work, sit tests, get grades, do homework and so on, however, the significance of these practices as 'attributes' of the good/bad student is different in each context. For instance none of the Greek students mentioned 'get on with their work' and none of the English students referred to 'oral exam' or 'answering teachers questions'.

Students' 'ideal types' are, in my view, very helpful tools in exploring students' experiences. As 'ideal types', however, they do not represent students' experiences. When students move away from these types, presenting their or others experiences, the complexities of the 'good'/'bad' student reality and their inclusive/exclusive significance start to become clearer.

While the good/bad student construction refers to an 'abstract' student, when students talk about themselves or others, they refer to a person and not to a one-dimensional character. Their comments become context specific, evaluative, and even emotive:

Many times [I have had problems with other students]... Some they make fun of me, different things...I am a good student and they say

'this swot' [literal translation 'vegetable' (φυτό)], well of course most of them don't mean it, a few mean it, but many times it's bad.

(Girl, Year B', 2nd Greek School)

[Good students] listen, they understand, and they are brainier than me and their mum and dad help them at home to learn. My cousin, he is in Year Seven in another school [...] he is very brainy, he knows a lot.

(Boy, Year 9, English School)

Boy: Well, you know, there isn't such a thing like bad students, just kids that like to mess about.

I.S.: Why do they like to mess about?

Boy: They made them to.

I.S: What do you mean?

Boy: I mean that there are some teachers that the kids had tried [in their lessons]...and they [the teachers] left them in the same year or gave them a fail grade.

(Boy, Year C', 1st Greek School)

[Bad students] Fight all the time, walk about in class, get on teachers nerves...waste time so they don't have to do any work.

(Boy, Year 9, English School)

In these extracts the interplay between knowledge/ability and discipline/behaviour is present, but the abstract character and neutrality of the previous extracts starts to disintegrate and the meaning of being a student is more obvious. These extracts also give some hints of the inclusive/exclusive consequences of being in one or the other position.

Knowledge/ability into context

The 'differentiation' and 'uniformity' discussed in the previous chapters are evident in the structure of the lessons in the schools. A task-oriented teaching approach allows for differentiation in the classroom to take place in the English

school. On the other hand, a whole-class teaching method reinforces uniformity in the Greek context.

These teaching methods are not absolute and in fact both task and whole-class approaches are used in the two systems to a different extent. Their application is also influenced by the specific learning requirements of each subject since both Curricula have a clear subject-base (see Penney, 1998). However, differentiation as a teaching approach is integral to the English system in the same way that uniformity is in the Greek (for comparisons between different teaching approaches in different countries, see Osborn and Broadfoot, 1992 and Vulliamy et al., 1997).

A note of caution is needed at this point. As was mentioned earlier, I did not have any previous experience of the English educational system and of course my knowledge of the teaching practices in schools prior to the introduction of the National Curriculum is informed only from my reading. The discussion that follows is necessarily a comparative one, based on the ethnographic experience at a given period of time. Ball (1994) argues that in the English educational system

A standardization and normalization of the classroom practice is being attempted. The curriculum provides for standardization and testing for normalization –the establishment of measurement, hierarchy and regulation around the idea of a distributionary statistical norm within a given population.

(Ball, 1994, p. 49)

The English school's teaching practices have changed and adapted to the requirements of the National Curriculum. As one teacher argued

I don't think that there is the opportunity to educate a child in the sense of whole education. People say it's time and everything else and we try our best in terms of personal and social education and working

together [...] But I think we lost our aim with the National Curriculum, I just find it too restrictive.

(English Teacher, English School)

Furthermore, the National Curriculum imposes specific notions of 'differentiation' distinguishing students in relation to ability, e.g. students with 'special educational needs', 'majority' of students, 'exceptional' students. These groups are entitled to the Curriculum, but not necessarily in the same form and they are expected to reach different levels (for implications for children with special educational needs, Dyson and Gaines, 1993; Gold et al., 1993; Swann, 1992).

In the English school the targeting of different groups of students was a central issue: 'high fliers', 'potential A-C GCSE students', the 'middle band', 'special educational needs', 'disaffected students', 'behavioural problems students' are some of the categories mentioned in the teachers' interviews. The need for the school – that a few years before this study made several members of staff redundant due to falling student numbers- to improve its exam results was one of the main concerns of the school (currently the school is over-subscribed). The 'background' of the students, their different 'abilities' and behaviour', a commitment to the mission statement of the school to provide an environment where all students can thrive, the 'realities' of the National Curriculum and exams targets, available resources, teachers' overload, lack of time and paper work were the themes that informed teachers' interviews (see for instance, Conway and Lawrence, 1995). As one English teacher arguing for the introduction of settings in English said:

Ten years ago, if someone told me that I'd be saying this, I would argue, and I would say "Never". But it is a different world and we've got to survive it...and we've got so many pressures to get kids through the exams, to ensure that they achieve...and I think that the fact that our exam results haven't gone up, is the fact that we've still trap...still cling on mixed-ability classes. And we spend so much time dealing with discipline problems, which are the result of kids being frustrated because you ask them to do something that they find difficult.

(English Teacher, English School)

In the Greek school on the other hand, there is no indication of an imperative for change from within the school. The indication that is given from the questionnaires is that teachers expect any change to start from outside the school, from the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs or society in general:

I'd like to be able to work without pressure of time and to have adequate [teaching] resources.

(Philologist¹⁰² Teacher, 2nd Greek School)

I'd like the teachers' role to gain more status and to be seen with respect and understanding.

(Philologist Teacher, 2nd Greek School)

I'd like to (1) have parents' trust, and more co-operation with them [and] (2) to be able to provide for all our students (for instance the introduction of two levels [settings] in English is a step towards this direction).

(English Language Teacher, 2nd Greek School)

Although the last extract refers to 'settings', there is not a widespread debate that challenges the norm of mixed-ability teaching in Greece. Modern Languages and especially English are the subjects that this debate is centred on as a result of the fact that most students learn English outside school as well.

A 'typical' example of how these methods differ is given in the table below:

¹⁰² Philologists are teachers with a degree in Greek Language and Literature and they usually teach Greek Language and Literature, Ancient Greek Language and Literature and History.

	English Lesson	Greek Lesson
Start of the lesson	<p>Register Students hand over their homework books, and/or Teacher returns corrected homework. Comments on homework, if any. Distribution of textbooks.</p>	<p>Register Students hand over their homework books, and/or Teacher returns corrected homework. Comments on homework, if any Students take out their books from their bags</p>
.Linking with previous lesson	<p>Teacher makes connections with previous lesson, if appropriate.</p>	<p>‘Oral exam’: The teacher asks questions to see if students learned what was taught in the previous lesson. Teacher makes connections with previous lesson, if appropriate.</p>
New Lesson 1st Stage (Introduction)	<p>Teacher introduces new lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher may ask students questions, or • Students may contribute. 	<p>Teacher introduces new lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher uses students ‘knowledge’ to unfold the new knowledge.
New Lesson 2nd Stage (Learning of new knowledge)	<p>Teacher allocates tasks Students work on tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individually or in group • Doing the same or differentiated tasks. 	<p>Teacher and students work together on a task with demonstration on the blackboard OR Teacher allocates a task (same for all students). Students work on task. Students are chosen to demonstrate the task to the rest of the classroom.</p>
Methods of Support (During 2nd stage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher and support staff may go around the classroom and provide help to students asking for it, or • Support staff helps specific students, or • Support staff stays with one student, or • Small group of students with SEN may 	<p>Students ask teacher if they do not understand something or need help.</p>

	work with support staff, or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group of students with SEN may be withdrawn to work in a different room. 	
New lesson 3 rd Stage (Conclusion)	Teacher and students may summarise the main points of the new lesson.	Teacher and students may summarise the main points of the new lesson.
Extension to the lesson	Teacher allocates homework.	Teacher allocates homework.

Table 11.1: Structure of lessons in the two systems

The significance of the differences of the two approaches may not be apparent immediately from the Table. However, the second stage of the introduction of the new lesson –where the students ‘acquire’ the new knowledge- comprises approximately half of the overall time of the lesson. While for most of this time students in the English school work individually or in groups, Greek students work mostly as a class with the teacher. Thus, the performance of students in the Greek school is ‘public’ (i.e. taking place verbally in the whole-class context) for more time than for the English students.

This creates a different kind of ‘performance’ identity for students in the two contexts. On the one hand, English students refer to what they *do* in lessons:

[Maths] I just like working with all different kinds of like mathematical stuff, like algebra.

[English] It’s been harder because we started doing Shakespeare and plays and that, in primary school we used to do writing all the time.

(Boy, Year 9, English School)

[English] I like the books and the writing and the projects we are doing.

(Girl, Year 9, English School)

[In History] I am listening and I understand it, I am doing my work and ...every time I get questions [back] I get red marks and telling me to do it right, and most [questions] are wrong.

(Boy, Year 9, English School)

On the other hand, Greek students refer to the *verbal performance* that was expected from them:

[Good students] put their hand up in *every* question.

(Girl, Year C', 1st Greek School)

[Physics and Chemistry] I try hard, I study with my dad, but I don't know... the teacher asks some tricky questions and I can't answer them a lot of the time.

(Girl, Year C', 1st Greek School)

Well, the lesson that I came from [for the interview] it's Ancient Greek [Language] and the teacher told me off. [...] she asked me the present tense, imperative [mode]... and then she told me "Why did do you look at them? [he looked for the answers in the open book]. You looked at them and still you got them wrong!"

(Boy, Year, 2nd Greek School)

In addition, the evaluation of students' 'learning' is different in the two contexts. In the English school, students follow the Key Stage 3 (year groups 7 to 9) of the National Curriculum¹⁰³. At the end of each stage students are assessed in relation to eight 'level descriptions of increasing difficulty' in all subjects (with the exception of art, music and physical education), plus a level above 8 for 'exceptional performance'¹⁰⁴. For example, in Geography students at the end of Key Stage 3 are expected to be somewhere between level 3 and 7 (with the

¹⁰³ In the English school at the time of the research the following lessons were taught: English, Maths, Science, Technology, IT, Modern Languages (French or German), History, Geography, R.E., Art, Music, P.E./Health, plus tutor time and guidance.

¹⁰⁴ They are also eight Performance Descriptions for early learning and attainment before level 1, see for instance QCA (2001) for teaching the Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship Curriculum to pupils with learning difficulties.

majority of students at levels 5 and 6) (DFE, 1995, see also DfEE and QCA, 1999)

Students receive reports, which include qualitative information about their progress within the Key Stage and about their strong/weak points. These reports see knowledge and discipline together and give a 'holistic' view of the student according to the teachers' assessment. For example one student commented: "In history I mess about a bit. In my report...it says that I am always asking for pencils and things like that" (Boy, Year 7, English School).

In the Greek school, students are assessed according to the syllabus (i.e. the part of the textbook that is taught during the school year)¹⁰⁵. The daily verbal exam in the class, homework, 'set' (expected) and 'surprise' (unexpected, only in relation to that day's lesson) tests during each term define their grade in each subject. At the end of the year students sit internal exams in most subjects. The subject grade is given in a scale from 0-20 and a passing grade is 9.5. Their mean grade for each year is the sum of the means of the three term grades in each subject, divided by the number of subjects, where all subjects have the same weight (regardless for instance whether they are taught an hour a week or five hours a week)¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰⁵ The subjects of the National Curriculum for compulsory secondary education are: RE, Ancient Greek Literature, two Modern Greek Language and Literature, History, Civics and Social Studies (only in Year C'), Modern Languages (English and French or German), Maths, Physics (Year B' and C') Chemistry (Year B and C'), Geography (Year A' and B'), Biology (Year A and C'), PE, Music, Art, Home Economics (Year A' and B'), IT, Technology (Year A' and B'), School Vocational Guidance (Year C').

¹⁰⁶ For a discussion of how students differentiate subjects in the Greek school see Koumi and Meadows, 1997.

When students receive their records (every term), they do not get any qualitative information about their progress. The record gives the numeric value of their grade, a standard qualitative description of behaviour (excellent, very good) and absences. Each grade is significant because it affects the final mean grade:

I.S.: Can you describe something good that happened this year?

Girl: My grades.

I.S.: Are they good?

Girl: Yes, I've got [a mean of] 15.6 but I didn't do very well in French and IT.

(Girl, Year, B', 2nd Greek School)

Grades determine if the student will progress to the next year, re-sit exams in some subjects in September, or repeat the year. For students that are close to re-sitting exams or failure, negotiating their grades in order to get the necessary 'pass' is very important:

I.S.: Can you describe something good that happened this year?

Boy: I've got 10 in Iliad and R.E.

I.S.: And something bad?

Boy: The only 8 I've got, is in French. Most [grades] that are below pass are 9, only French is 8. If I try a bit, if a try a bit, it'll go ten [in the third term] from nine [in the second term].

(Boy, Year B', 2nd Greek school)

In both contexts students are subject to ongoing assessment of their learning through examination, homework, testing and so on. In both systems assessment is individualistic since the 'progress' of each individual child is seen separately although always in comparison to assumptions about the 'normal' progression expected from the majority of students.

However, in the Greek system students are more 'aware' of the process and the significance of assessment. This assessment is a linear one, taking place each

term from the first year of primary education until students leave school. The content of knowledge is specific and the assessment is based on the students' progress in relation to the taught knowledge, rather than the individual progress of each student according to some individual 'baseline' criteria. The Greek assessment system is geared towards accumulating 'credits' in the learning/teaching in the classroom for the final mean grade. This means that students 'compete' in the same arena and since a large part of this competition is oral, everybody is aware of where each student more or less stands. As one student said: "[Good students] compete very much with the other students..." (Girl, Year C', 1st Greek School). The assessment process is legitimated by its 'totality' and the all-encompassing 'power' of a numeric value (grades).

The English assessment system is more complex and one may argue, more 'sophisticated'. For example different subjects may have different assessment processes, especially the ones that are not part of the SATs exams (e.g. Music, Art). Students are aware of the settings they are in and in-class differentiations taking place, however the meaning of this differentiation is not made clear in their accounts (see for instance Davies and Watson for students' understandings of settings). It is interesting that year 7 students referred more to different types of differentiation and provided more information about assessment. This might be because they were still getting accustomed to the systems of the new school:

Girl: We are all in the same class in maths but we work at different stages.

I.S.: Do you know which level you are at?

Girl: I don't know.

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

[The best thing that happened] I think it might be science because in the top set [level] we have to work at a certain level and...in a test we've done I've got 40 out of 60 and 48 would be a GCSE C.

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

In addition to the in-class assessment of acquired knowledge (e.g. homework, class work, tests, etc.), a number of other assessment systems exist. For instance reading tests, special educational needs assessment, psychological assessment are types of assessment closely related to school knowledge, but at the same time taking place somehow outside the class. Thus, a strand of an explicitly 'medical' model of assessment is evident in the English context. The standardisation of them assumes a 'validity' that is not restricted to the specific school population. None of the students mentioned this type of assessment.

In addition students may be 'on report' which means that they have a number of goals (in relation to behaviour or achievement) that they need to achieve each day in lessons for a period of time. A number of students –the majority of them boys– reported that they had been on report: "I've been on report for throwing stones outside" (Boy, Year 9, English School).

Although 'being on report' is a type of disciplinary action, it has a 'pedagogical' dimension, since it aims at students self-managing their behaviour. The report is designed in a way that can demonstrate and 'assess' change of behaviour. A couple of students mentioned that they voluntarily asked to be on report:

Boy: Once I asked to be on report. I asked my form tutor to be on report.

I.S. Was it helpful?

Boy: Yes, I worked more.

(Boy, Year 8, English School)

At the period that the study took place Individual Education Plans (IEPs) were introduced in the school for statemented students. These plans also have a number of individual goals for students to achieve. Again, not many students mentioned these plans:

Boy: I've got one [report] but I don't know what it is for.

I.S. Do you know what it says?

Boy: Yes "Speak clear at all times", stuff like that.

(Boy, Year Eight, English School)

Finally, a 'reward' scheme is in place in the school. This scheme gives merits to students for trying in class, doing something well, having good behaviour, and so on, and accumulation of a specific number of merits results in getting certificates. Year 7 students found this reward system novel and interesting: "I was the first person in the whole year 7 to get a merit. I got it in IT for wishing Mr. K. happy birthday" (Girl, Year 7, English School), "I have 52 merits, and I am going for my gold [certificate]" (Girl, Year 7, English School). Year 8 students were less enthusiastic about the merits scheme and year 9 students did not mention it at all or if asked said that it is for the younger ones.

Moreover, while the results of attainment assessment are not as 'public' and 'explicit' as in the Greek context, good attendance is publicly acknowledged. Outside one of the staff-rooms there was a list with the names of all students with 100% attendance, which was regularly updated and mentioned in Assemblies and Tutor Time. A number of students mentioned that their good attendance is the best thing that has happened in school that year: "I never had a day off since year 7 and I have a 100% attendance certificate" (Girl, Year 8, English School).

Curriculum and the content of knowledge

The different structure of lessons and different models of assessment relate very closely to how school knowledge is defined in each context (see Apple, 1999; 1995). McLean (1990) distinguishes three European traditions of knowledge: Encyclopaedism, Humanism, and Naturalism. He argues that different combinations of these traditions are found in the educational system of each country (see also McLean, 1995a; 1995b). According to McLean,

England and Wales, Ireland, and Greece are not only on the geographic periphery of Europe. Their failure to join in the mainstream of European educational rationalism threatens to make them economically and socially marginal in a single market Europe.

(McLean, 1990, p. 93)

McLean interprets differently the roots of humanism in England and Greece since in England it is the result of pre-industrial values and in Greece is the result of strong nationalism. In his critique of the Greek educational system, McLean argues that

Indeed there is a mechanical approach which is associated with sterile encyclopaedism elsewhere. The criticisms noted by the OECD (Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development) examiners in 1982 were that the curriculum was overloaded. There was too much factual rote learning and too much formal instruction. There was little opportunity for class discussion or independent work. These criticisms are not unusual in any school system at its worst. But they would rarely apply *in toto* in a school system devoted to the individualist humanism of England.

(McLean, 1990, p. 109)

To some extent I agree with the above statement. However, both systems 'fail' a big proportion of their school population. Seeing the 'failure' of the system only

in relation to what is 'missing', what the educational systems are not doing, or what they are doing too much or too little of, is problematic.

To give an example, in the English school a Modern Languages teacher describes the way that she adapts the National Curriculum for a Year Eight bottom set class as follows:

What I generally do...you're given a textbook, I read the teacher's chapter and I take this chapter and water it down as much as possible trying in each lesson to be...to have lots of games so they will be motivated to practice a word. I don't like...I keep to maximum of nine words, generally single words, like body parts [...]. They find long words confusing [...]. I get them to do illustrating, drawing, and labelling and then just the minimum amount of writing. I mean it's the only class I probably allow to write in filling gaps with letters or even drawing a picture. They do have to follow the National Curriculum but it is watered down to the basics they do not learn complex grammar structures or anything...

(Modern Languages teacher, English School)

In the first Greek school, I observed three lessons. One of them was French in a Year A' group. At the beginning of the lesson the teacher returned the students' tests and told them that most of them did badly. She started revising the first conjugation verbs. She wrote a verb on the blackboard and asked students to come forward to conjugate the verb. None of the students volunteered and she started looking around the classroom asking students to say the first singular person of the verb, and then the second singular person, and so on.

When she had finished with this verb, she selected a second one to demonstrate to the students the applicability of the rule. However, some students were reluctant to contribute or kept giving wrong answers. The lesson ended with the teacher expressing her frustration to the students saying that they had to try harder, and that this was easy, and next year they are going to do even more difficult things.

After the lesson she commented that she found this form difficult because it had a number of 'not so good' students, and some students that were new to the Greek educational system and did not know the Greek language and grammar well.

What I am trying to argue with this example is that both these approaches to knowledge learning are problematic. However, they are not problematic *per se*, they become problematic in the context that they are applied, as part of mass education.

The English approach starts from the (individual) experiences of students (in this example, experience relates to 'games' that students are familiar with and in this known context they can learn the new language), expecting students to accumulate knowledge in small parts (in this case, words) and then derive the 'theory', so to speak, behind what they learn in order to become competent speakers. Students may follow different processes in knowledge building according to their abilities, interests, and personalities. Learning is an individual and idiosyncratic process.

The Greek approach gives students the 'theory' (the high level structural 'language' of a subject¹⁰⁷), expecting students to be able to apply it to their experiences and to other contexts (e.g. to adapt their knowledge of Greek grammar in understanding and mastering French grammar) and then be able to apply their knowledge in new situations as competent speakers. Students follow

¹⁰⁷ An example of the structural understanding of knowledge is how students are assessed in the subject of Ancient Greek Language. In the Programme of Studies the assessment for instance for Year A' comprises.

-two (2) grammar and two (2) syntax exercises that are graded with 2 points each (total 8 points)

-two (2) lexical-semantic exercises that are graded with 2 points each (total 4 points)

-two (2) understanding of content questions that are graded with 4 points each (total 8 points). Each of them may be divided in two sub-questions.

(Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, 1999, p. 42, my translation)

the same process according to the subject knowledge. Learning is structured and standardised.

However, for many students in each context these approaches do not work and they end up either having to repeatedly learn unconnected things that they cannot use to 'increase' their knowledge in a structural way (mainly in the English system), or they have to learn by rote things that are more or less meaningless to them in order to achieve the minimum level of performance needed to pass (mainly in the Greek system).

Furthermore, the content of the knowledge is different in the two contexts. It is difficult to summarise in a few sentences all the differences of the content of knowledge. An indicative example is, that for instance in the English school young people's literature such as Roald Dahl's books (e.g. *Matilda*) are used as set-books in English and students take out of the library, for in-class reading, books covering different aspects of children's literature and interests (e.g. football, animals, cars). In the Greek school on the other hand, modern children's literature is absent from the curriculum. In addition, when in Year Nine English students studied Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, lessons included watching a film adaptation, role playing of scenes, designing story boards of the plot, and so on.

In Greek schools, in Year C' in the subject of Ancient Greek Language and Literature, students study Aristophane's *The Birds* amongst other set-texts. I did not observe any lessons on this subject, but in the Programme of Studies it is stated that despite the reservations about whether it is possible to teach ancient

comedies in schools, it is important to include them in the curriculum because they can promote an 'education of laughter'; give a complete picture of the ancient Greeks (i.e. that they were not always involved in 'serious', 'philosophical' discussions); they are relevant to our times; and they are important texts in their own right (pp. 28-30). However, ancient comedy is presented and taught with 'reverence', as a text to be studied, belonging to a 'golden' past and separated from any 'comedy' students experience in their lives (for a historical analysis of Greek curricula, see Terzis, 1993; Noutsos, 1979, for an analysis of how national identity is presented in Greek textbooks, 1999; Fragoudaki and Dragona, 1997, for a comparative study on the History textbooks of Balkan countries, see Xohellis et al.).

Ball (1994) calls the English National Curriculum 'a curriculum of the dead'. The Greek Curriculum in this respect can be described as a curriculum of the dead that have been dead for a bit longer. The interplay between 'high' and 'popular' culture, school knowledge and students' experience is different in the two schools. As one English teacher noted:

In terms of the National Curriculum, I am sure that I am not the only one who feels that National Curriculum is quite often unrealistic in terms of the less academic. In English it becomes very prescriptive, there is a lot of emphasis on pre-20th century texts, that sort of thing. [...] I am not saying that less academic children shouldn't have that information and material...I think very often is very effective...at the moment for example I think the Year Nine class that you see are actually responding well to the Shakespeare, but with no doubt you see I am doing it at a very superficial level, there are a lot of children in that classroom that I don't think we'll put them for the SATs exams [...] Ultimately these children do know that they are not doing the same as the others. They know that they've been treated differently and we try to sugar the pill so to speak and to give credit for what they can do. My personal belief is that English SATs is inappropriate not only for the less able but for many children of that age...I think it's not

about particular skills and abilities in English, but an attitude and background, I think it's very middle class based, assumes a middle class attitude that's not prevalent in a school like this [...] I'd do Shakespeare with those groups, and I have taught it anyway...but I wouldn't do it and gear it up to an exam [...]

(English Teacher, English School)

This extract highlights the main issues of the Curriculum debate in the English context. The 'appropriateness' of the Curriculum is seen in relation to ability and the purposes of education (in this case exams). However the (class) 'background' of students and the class background of knowledge are central in this debate (see Tomlinson, 1999).

On the other hand, in the Greek school the 'class' dimension of knowledge and of students is secondary to the assumed 'national identity' promoted by the Curriculum. The presumption that all or most state schools in Greece are more or less 'mixed' in relation to students' class background and that they provide the necessary 'equal opportunities' for students to reach higher education and thus class mobility, is reinforced by the importance of the 'national' dimension of education that is based on a 'homogeneous' perception of the school population.

For example, the ultimate 'honour' for the best students of each school is to be the flag bearer or the flag attendants in the National celebration¹⁰⁸. In 1999 a fifteen-year-old student wheel-chair user was entitled to be the flag-bearer of his school but he was not allowed due to a Decree stating that flag bearers should be able-bodied (in fact the Decree stated that they should be of able-bodied 'appearance'). With the immediate intervention of the Ministry of Education after the case was exposed in the media, the Decree changed.

¹⁰⁸ In Greece two events are celebrated nationally –the beginning of the War of Independence and the beginning of the Italian-Greek war in 1940 (some areas have their regional celebrations). In these two days in each city, town and in many villages students' parades take place.

The following year in another secondary school, an Albanian student was entitled to be the flag-bearer. Again a Decree restricted the positions of flag bearers, flag attendants and persons laying a wreath at a monument to students that are Greek citizens or of Greek ethnicity. The previous year the student had participated irregularly as a flag attendant, but the school decided that he could not be a flag bearer. The Ministry of Education again intervened and stated that the Decree¹⁰⁹ was going to change and his participation was permitted. Some of the members of the school parents' association and local community disagreed and the student handed the flag to the next student entitled for the position before the students' parade. In this case, even the President of the Republic intervened quoting the Classic Greek writer Isocratis who stated "Greeks are all taking part in Greek Education".

Habermas (1994) claims that "nationalism is the term for a specifically modern phenomenon of cultural integration" (p. 22). Greek-ness and education have been historically inseparable bringing together in an assumed unity, society, state and the nation¹¹⁰. While in the first case of the disabled student, there was overall support for the student and a sense that the educational system progresses and responds more appropriately to 'difference', in the second case of the Albanian

¹⁰⁹ The new Decree states that students that have been in Greek education for at least two years can be flag-bearers, flag-attendants, and so on (ΦΕΚ Β' 277 16-3-2001 Αριθ. Γ1/219). The reason behind the two-year condition is not explained.

¹¹⁰ The relation between education and nationalism in the cases of national celebrations becomes public, and moves outside the school. In parades in different cities where students from ethnic minority groups were either flag bearers or flag attendants in the same year, incidents between people supporting and against this practice took place. The adaptation and resistance of education to the changes in the composition of school population takes place within and outside the school (see for example, Fragoudaki and Dragona, 1997; Freiderikou and Folerou-Tserouli, 1991, for a discussion of the teachers perceptions of their role).

student, there was no consent; progressive and traditional views about education and national identity conflicted.

In the English school 'Englishness' or 'British-ness' are implicit in the class dimension of the Knowledge discourse (see, Cubitt, 1998). The 'homogeneity' of the school, with a large majority of White British students coming from an area that is considered to be predominately working class, defines the school knowledge discourse. In this context 'Englishness' is implicit and uncontested, but it is also 'class' specific.

It is easy to make assumptions about the two curricula. For me, the English Curriculum seemed refreshing in comparison to the 'rigidity' of the Greek. It seemed to take into account, to some extent at least, aspects of young people's 'cultures'. It was difficult for me, however, to explore the assumptions underlining young people's culture in the school. Is Roald Dahl's *Matilda* closer to students' culture than *Romeo and Juliet*? and is *Matilda* less 'middle-class' than *Romeo and Juliet*? are questions that I can answer only from my own personal understanding.

The only time that students' culture or 'popular' culture was mentioned in the Greek context in relation to school life, was when one student described something good that happened:

The celebration we had and a group of students played some music, but that displeased some of the teachers...because the music was not what they listen to. It was music of our times, Papakonstantinou [mainstream 'rock' Greek singer that has produced music since the 1970s] and things like that...it was for [celebrating] Polytechnio [see Appendix III] and...it wasn't right to do it in this occasion...

(Girl, Year C', 2nd Greek School)

What is assumed to be ‘popular’ and/or young people’s culture, and therefore closer to the experiences of the students, and how it becomes part of the school knowledge and gains educational validity or not, is an interesting question, albeit one that I do not think was explored sufficiently in this study.

To sum up, these different discourses of defining what school knowledge is, and how to transmit and evaluate it, influence not only what students learn and how they learn it, but also their student identity. What a student *is*, is defined in relation to what a student *does* (or should do) in the school context. Inclusion/exclusion therefore is defined within the specific school knowledge discourse. I tried to present some aspects of the school knowledge and to relate them to inclusion/exclusion. As Walkerdine (1989) argues

Practices provide systems of signs which are at once both systems of classification, regulation and normalisation. These produce systematic differences which are then used as classification of children in the class.

(Walkerdine, 1989, p. 271)

The above discussion brought together ‘class’ and ‘national identity’ to discuss how the Curriculum becomes inclusive/exclusive and how it promotes specific knowledge discourses. In a comparative study between England and France Sharpe et al. (1997) argue that “national identity is not the same thing in the minds of English and French pupils. Indeed it is possible to argue more broadly that education itself is not the same thing in the two countries” (Sharpe et al., 1997, p. 16). How education promotes specific school knowledge and how this

knowledge is legitimated in relation to class, ethnicity, gender and so on, affects the meaning of inclusion/exclusion.

Students' identities in and out of school: Support and homework

Two examples of how the different knowledge discourses affect students' identities are 'support' and homework.

'Support' is defined as any structured or casual provision that students use in order to facilitate their learning. This definition expands the remit of support to include not only teachers and support staff, but also other students, and people outside schools such as family, friends, and use of the system of para-education.

In Table 11.1 a number of different support methods in the English school are given, while in the Greek school there is only one type of support. These are the structured in-class support mechanisms. The vast majority of students said that they ask for 'help when they do not understand something', and most of them reported that they ask 'teachers' (as a generic term, including support staff in the English context).

A small number of students (mainly girls) in the Greek schools said that they tend not to ask for 'help'. The main reason for avoiding asking is that they are afraid that what they are asking for help with may not be a 'valid' request:

I.S. Do you ask teachers for help?

Girl: Rarely because I am embarrassed.

I.S.: Why are you embarrassed?

Girl: Because they may laugh at my question.

I.S.: Does this happen or is it...

Girl: It's me that believes [it may happen]. It has happened at times some kid to ask something and they laugh.

(Girl, Year C', 2nd Greek School)

Another student describes the extremity of the feeling of not knowing something as, "I feel ill [with anxiety]" (Girl, Year C', 1st Greek School).

In the English school, most students ask for help when they are stuck. The strategy that most students described is to try to 'work it out' themselves and then ask teachers for help. For some students there is another stage in-between, where they ask friends (usually the person next to them) first, before asking teachers. For most students there is no difference between 'proper teachers' and 'helpers' and they ask 'any' available adult since 'it's the same'. However, some students distinguished between the two.

Students preferring 'proper teachers' justified this in terms of knowledge: "[Teachers] because they know that they are talking about in the lesson" (Girl, Year 8, English School). Students that prefer 'helpers' justified that in relation to availability: "Helpers do help me, but teachers are always busy helping other people" (Boy, Year 9, English School).

Only a very small minority of students 'spelled out' the other 'difference' between teachers and support staff¹¹¹, i.e. that the latter work with students with special educational needs. As one student said: "[They are here] just to help Peter [student with statement] because it's one teacher and about thirty children and it's difficult, 'cos my mum is a teacher and I know" (Girl, Year 8, English School).

For students receiving support on a regular basis however, things are more complicated. Some of the students see support staff as a point of reference:

Girl: I ask Miss S. [support assistant].

I.S.: If Miss S. is not there?

¹¹¹ For the role of classroom assistants see Margerison, 1997; Lovey, 1995.

Girl: I ask Miss P. [Teacher].

I.S.: And in music?

Girl: Miss K. [Support assistant].

(Girl, Year 9, English School)

In relation to support provided in a small group withdrawn from the classroom, it is difficult to have a clear view because it happened on a regular basis only in one lesson that I observed. However, the few students that referred to this type of support perceived it in a positive way:

[Small Group] It's better than a big group...because it's not quite as loud.

(Girl, Year 8, English School)

[Small Group] We can like...discuss things and find things out. If it a story writing we have more time to write the story.

(Boy, Year 8, English School).

I like to work in groups [...] you know what to do better and you got more help.

(Girl, Year 8, English School).

However, the majority of the students receiving support on a regular basis did not focus on this aspect of their school experience in their interview accounts. Even students that regularly have an adult sat next to them in lessons did not elaborate on that. Support and its resulted differentiation –that can be seen both as inclusive and exclusive at times- are given and ‘natural’ as a student said: “Miss S. [support assistant] asks me [to provide support to the student] all the time” (Girl, Year 7, English School).

The process of becoming the recipient of differentiated support has started for many of the students before their transition to secondary school. To some extent this is a topic that it was not sufficiently explored in the interviews, mainly because the students themselves did not bring it up. The difference between

asking for support or being given support (and in some cases, being dependent on support) is something that students did not include in their constructions of their identity.

In the Greek context 'support' is more straightforward. Students usually do not ask for 'help' as such, but rather for 'clarifications' if they don't understand something. In addition, the stages that students may ask for help in are different from those of the English students. While English students ask for support as they are doing their work during lessons, Greek students ask either for clarifications during the 'transmission' of the new knowledge: "I ask [the teacher] to repeat something that he said" (Boy, Year B', 2nd Greek school), or after they have studied the new lesson at home. The majority of students, when asked from whom they ask for help, referred to teachers, students and people outside school (especially family members):

I ask for help mainly from my sister because from the teachers, even if we ask them we are not going to understand it... they'll explain it, but we don't understand it again.

(Girl, Year C', 2nd Greek school)

A small number of students, however, referred to 'additional support' that they receive in the school:

The teachers are very good, they help a lot the foreigners [students]...even the kids that they do not know... I have a friend that she doesn't know Greek, she doesn't write in the Greek Language and Literature lesson and other [lessons], but she gives oral exams. Even this effort that the teachers do for the foreigners [students] is very good.

(Girl, Year C', 2nd Greek School)

However this is the lengthiest and more positive example of this ‘additional support’ for students that are new to the Greek educational system. In the above extract the ‘formal’ differentiation of oral exams instead of written is not distinguished from the ‘informal’ additional support that some teachers provide:

Boy: To be honest I didn’t have any help because my parents didn’t know the language...they learn it now...well...I learned the language alone.

I.S.: And from your teachers in this and primary school did you have any support?

Boy: No.

(Boy, Year B’, 2nd Greek School)

In both systems students ask for help and support from other students and especially their friends. Even though other students may not have the same knowledge as teachers and may ‘give a wrong answer’, they are more available and willing than teachers, and in the Greek context it is seen as less ‘stigmatising’ than asking the teacher:

[I don’t ask] the teachers always, because sometimes they don’t give specific answers...but I ask some fellow students who are good in Ancient Greek.

(Boy, Year B’, 2nd Greek School)

I ask my friend who sits next to me but sometimes he does not understand it as well and I ask teacher.

(Boy, Year 9, English School)

Sometimes inclusion –especially inclusion of students with special educational needs- is seen as giving the ‘other’ students an opportunity to learn about being ‘helpful’, which also relates to the presumed ‘dependency’ of students with special educational needs to other students in order to be ‘included’.

However, I find, both these approaches problematic because they do not take into account the relations of inter-dependency and mutual support that students form

in schools. I am not suggesting that all students form equally 'successful' 'support groups', or that students' support groups cannot be exclusive, but rather that they are central in the social and educational –if it is possible to separate them- inclusion/exclusion of all students (see for instance, Allan 1999; Priestley, 1999; Vlachou, 1997). When a student describes the best thing about school as "people being for you when you need them" (Girl, Year 7, English School), or when another student says that "[good students] they don't fight with you at all and...they're just good friends" (Boy, Year 7, English School), describe the importance of inter-dependency between students, for all students.

In relation to homework, there are very significant differences between the two schools as a result of the two different knowledge discourses. Homework is the activity that extends students' identity (and learning) outside school. It is an activity that enhances students' learning and creates a learning and 'work' ethos for them. In addition, homework is an activity that is initiated and regulated by teachers, but at the same time students are predominantly responsible for its completion.

The content and significance of homework is different in the two contexts. With very few exceptions (four students in the English school and two in the Greek schools), all students said that they are –more or less- doing their homework.

In the English school homework comprises mainly tasks that students are given to complete at home. Students also need to revise before a big test or before exams (e.g. SATs), but when students refer to homework, they refer mainly to homework tasks. Homework is given periodically, which means that students do

not get it in all lessons of a subject. Three times per week (ranging from 'when I remember it' to 'every day') for approximately half-an-hour (ranging from ten minutes to an hour) for each subject, is the average amount of homework, and all but four students said that they hand in their homework (answers included 'always', 'most of the time', 'sometimes', 'when I don't forget it'). All but three students said that they had someone that could help them with their homework (mother, father, (older) siblings, cousins, older friends).

Most students take 'homework' for granted. However, a small minority of students questioned its role: "I don't think you (should) have to do homework after school when you come to school to do your work" (Boy, Year 7, English School). For these students school should be 'limited' to the time they spend in school.

Greek students, on the other hand, refer to homework as 'studying' (διαβάζω). Homework comprises the 'study' of the new knowledge they learned in each lesson and tasks given to apply this knowledge. Both these aspects of homework are given in almost every lesson. All but two students said that they do their homework. The time of 'studying' varies from one-and-a-half hour to four hours (a few students said up to seven hours) per day:

It depends, if I have too many lessons [to prepare], I study a lot, two-three hours. If I don't have lots, up to two hours and if I have a test the next day I may study until three o'clock in the morning.

(Boy, Year C', 1st English School)

Students mentioned a number of different types of support that they seek in relation to their homework. Family is the first point of reference. Some students mentioned the practice of studying with one parent (usually their mother), as

opposed to asking for help when needed: "My mother helps me a lot. We study together, I read [the lesson], and she tests me [to make sure that I know it]" (Boy, Year C', 1st Greek School). In a few cases this collective effort between students and parents is encompassed in the use of the pronoun 'we': "I remember once that I got a very good grade in Odyssey [...] and my mum and I we were very happy because we had studied very hard" (Boy, Year A', 2nd Greek school).

Most students from ethnic minorities mentioned that their parents could not help them because they do not know the language well. These students seek alternative forms of support:

My father and mother don't know Greek well and my siblings are younger...there is someone who lives close by and he helps us.

(Boy, Year A', 1st Greek School)

If I haven't understood something I call her [a student] and she comes home and we discuss it...She is from my class and she tries to help me with what I don't know.

(Girl, Year C', 2nd Greek School)

Furthermore, a number of students (twelve) use the system of para-education, either 'crammer schools' or private tutors for subjects such as maths, physics or Ancient Greek. Even more students expressed the view that in non-compulsory secondary education, 'crammer schools' are a necessity.

In relation to other 'educational' activities that students do outside school, students in both contexts made references to in-school ones (e.g. choir, sport teams) and out-of-school ones (e.g. football clubs' youth teams). Again the two contexts differ, with the English school providing a wide range of activities (for some activities students have to pay, for example music lessons).

The Greek school provided a narrower range of activities and students took most of their out-of-lessons activities outside the school environment. Greek students in addition refer to more out-of-school activities. For example, all students but four learn English outside school (mainly in private modern languages schools). In some cases the students' out-of-school activities create an impressive list: "I am going to English, French, Music School for piano, fencing, gym and the scouts" (Boy, Year C', 1st Greek School).

Conclusion

To sum up, it can be argued that there are qualitative and quantitative differences in the ways that a student's identity is constructed in the two contexts and is extended to life outside school in relation to specific knowledge discourses. These differences are very important when one defines school inclusion/exclusion.

It can be argued that the English school uses a 'wider' definition of 'education' than that of the Greek school. This needs to be seen in relation to the purposes of the two educational systems, the overall aims of the two (Welfare) states, and how students' education is defined as a shared school-family responsibility (for comparative discussion of Social Policy see, for example, Clasen, 1999; Hantrais, 1995, Lorenz, 1994). The English school with the array of out-of-lesson activities and the different models for providing support to students (in-class support, in-class and out-of-class differentiation, individualised programmes, homework clubs, mentoring schemes, and so on) is perceived as the main provider of

'education' for students. The Greek school on the other hand, provides mainly formal learning in a uniform way, and fewer out-of-lessons activities. Students' 'education' is seen as a shared responsibility between school and family. As Tsiganou et al. (1999) argue

"Childcentererness", with children becoming the center of concern and expenditure, the almost exclusive emotional and financial family investment hold still a prime aspect of raising children philosophy in Greece.

(Tsiganou et al., 1999, p. 31)

A student that has experienced both educational systems describes these 'differences' as follow:

I.S.: Do you like school?

Girl: No, not really.

I.S.: Why?

Girl: Because they give us too much work for home, too much. Like in England they didn't give us any work, I was amazed [by the amount of work in the Greek school].

I.S.: Did you go to a school in England?

Girl: Three years.

I.S.: In primary school?

Girl: 1, 2 and 3 year and there they gave us nothing for home, only five-six words, and that was it.

I.S.: Are any other differences between English and Greek schools?

Girl: In England they did the lesson in the school in such a way that you could understand it...and they give you to understand it. While here very few teachers they do the lesson in the class and give you less for home...so you can understand the lesson in the class and...then you need only a bit of practice [studying]...Eh...and you have too many lessons, too many.

I.S.: Comparing the two systems, which one you prefer?

Girl: The English one.

I.S.: Would you like to continue there?

Girl: I'd like to have this system here, in Greece, because I don't like the life there [laughs].

(Girl, Year C', 2nd Greek School)

The above comparative approach to the two educational systems supports many of the points made in this and previous chapters. However, one must be very

careful in drawing comparative conclusions about whether one or the other system is 'better' or 'worse', more inclusive or more exclusive.

Chapter Twelve

Students' Identities and Discipline Discourses

Discipline/Behaviour into context

In the previous chapter knowledge/ability was seen in relation to differentiation and uniformity. When one tries to explore discipline/behaviour, the English and Greek schools seem to converge. In both systems discipline/behaviour is seen in relation to a generally applicable set of explicit and implicit rules that students need to follow collectively and individually. 'Good' behaviour in both systems is praised and rewarded and 'bad' behaviour is 'punished' and perceived as a problem.

There are some differences however in the two contexts. In the English school there is a clear category of special educational needs used for students assessed as having 'emotional and behaviour difficulties'. Most of the teachers and support assistants interviewed in the school consider 'behavioural problems' as part of their special educational needs definition:

Special educational needs for me means that a child has some needs over and above the norm, in terms of reaching their academic

potential. That might mean that they might have particularly learning difficulties that need support, they might have emotional difficulties that might be preventing them from performing. Those emotional difficulties may present themselves as behavioural problems that they do not contribute to their learning. But equally we have some bright, very bright children in the school who need particular attention in order for them to reach their full potential. So, in a way it's a very broad spectrum, special educational needs.

(Head Teacher, English School)

[SEN] It's children with learning difficulties whether it is the behaviour of someone and then there is the emotional side of it, the mental side of it...

(Support Assistant, English School)

[SEN] I don't see it simply as something...as being something that affects students that aren't academic. I think, you know, the behavioural side of special needs is very important.

(English Teacher, English School)

In the Greek school a 'formal label' of 'behaviour difficulties' is not evident. Of the 19 Greek teachers that filled in the questionnaire in the second Greek school, twelve consider 'behaviour problems' as 'special educational needs'. However, only four stated that students with 'behavioural problems' exist in the school. An additional four answers may be considered as falling into this category: "[difficulties] of comprehension, participation, acceptance", "conscious understanding of the wider role of school", "learning (μαθησιακές) and social adaptation", "shyness, fear [hesitation] in speech". As to whether there are students in the school whose educational needs are not met completely, none of the teachers mentioned 'behavioural difficulties' (one teacher stated "time of adaptation and spiritual encouragement" and another teacher stated that "most [educational needs]" exist in the school). The Greek teachers focused their answers on the 'learning' aspect of 'special educational needs', with the emphasis

on 'intellectual (νοητικές) difficulties' (five), students from ethnic minorities (with insufficient knowledge of the language) (five), dyslexia (four), and physical difficulties (one). Additional answers were "understanding, learning (μάθησης) [difficulties]", "[students] that are 'behind' in lessons and need to start again".

It is possible that the wording of the questions that included 'special *educational* needs' may have affected to some extent teachers' answers, encouraging them to focus on the educational/learning aspect of 'special needs'. However, it is clear from the above that in the Greek context the relation between 'special needs' and 'behaviour' is not straightforward¹¹².

Furthermore, both contexts have formal processes in relation to discipline. In the English school a system of disciplinary action exists which comprises *initial action* e.g. telling off and warnings (e.g. move student in a different desk); *punishment* (give students a disciplinary slip, withdrawal from the class, ('cooling off'), send student to the duty room, sanctions such as extra work, litter cleaning, loss of freedom (e.g. not allowed in the dining-room), detention, send letter home, call parents in, exclusion, expulsion); and students' *behaviour management* (being on report, agreed action between school, parents and students).

This system involves a number of different people, especially when an incident is not resolved within the classroom; form tutors, year tutors, senior teachers, school governors (in case of indefinite exclusions or expulsion), and LEA (in

¹¹² For studies exploring Greek primary school teachers' perceptions of emotional and behaviour problems, see Didaskalou and Millward, 2001; Poulou and Norwich, 2000; Gavrilidou et al., 1993.

cases where parents appeal against decisions of exclusion) may be involved, as well as educational psychologists, welfare officers, and parents. Disciplinary action and any follow up decisions are recorded.

In the Greek school, the disciplinary system comprises *initial action* (telling off, warnings, moving a student to a different desk), *punishment* (withdrawal from the class for a short-period, sending student out for the duration of the lesson and recording the student as 'absent' for that lesson, sanctions such as keeping the student in-class for a break, or more homework, calling parents in, short term exclusion, and expulsion). A formal system for behaviour management does not exist; however informally teachers and students may arrange for the student to sit alone in order to concentrate more. In the second Greek school many students in one form mentioned that the seating arrangements had changed in order to improve class discipline. Disciplinary action is recorded in a 'sanction-book' (ποινολόγιο) when students are excluded.

In the case of long-term exclusions and expulsions, the school committee (with students' committee representation) is involved. Exclusions (for an hour, a day or longer) are accompanied by 'absences' that affect students' attendance and in some cases may contribute to students getting 'unsatisfactory' attendance at the end of the year.

Students' constructions of discipline/behaviour

Students on the other hand, do not employ the official discipline discourse in its entirety. They refer mainly to 'naughty' or 'misbehaving' students, and although

this –locates the ‘problem’ within the student, it is a less static category, and does not rely (at least explicitly) on a ‘psychological’ assessment. Only one student is singled out (in the English school) as having behaviour that is seen as outside the ‘normal’ range of behaviour:

Girl: He [Peter] is really naughty in classroom when, you know, we are in a small group he gets really naughty and when he gets sent out he starts crying and jumps up and down and sometimes screams.

(Girl, Year 8, English School)

This student, who is assessed as having moderate learning difficulties, is mentioned in a number of students’ interviews and in many of the teachers’ interviews. His ‘naughtiness’ is seen in relation to ‘inappropriate’ behaviour (e.g. crying, screaming, kissing girls, taking his top off), which is seen as part of his general ‘immaturity’. It is interesting how in the context of secondary education, behaviour such as fighting, bullying, cheating in lessons –although unacceptable and punishable- is seen as ‘normal’ and ‘appropriate’.

Students, however, give to ‘naughty’ students a degree of fluidity and flexibility, and ‘naughtiness’ is seen in a number of ways. ‘Good behaviour’ or ‘misbehaviour’ is seen always in relation to the students’ perceptions of school:

Boy: [I have had problems] with two-three students that for me are not for school, they shouldn’t belong to school.

I.S.: For what reason?

Boy: Clearly for [their] behaviour.

I.S.: And you think...

Boy: They shouldn’t be in the school.

I.S.: Why? Do they disturb the...

Boy: Not only disturb the class, they disturb other students and me personally. They are not for school. I don’t believe they belong to school...because they don’t come to learn...they come just to mess about.

(Boy, Year C’, 2nd Greek School)

For the majority of students, students *become* 'naughty' at school, in their interaction with other students and teachers. 'Naughtiness' is constructed in the school context:

Boy: [I prefer primary school] 'cos teachers weren't like that. They were quite ok with me...I don't know...I wasn't in trouble all the time.
(Boy, Year 7, English School)

The construction of 'naughtiness' has two aspects. Firstly, it relates to the schoolwork and the content of knowledge:

Girl: Sometimes, like, work is too hard and they [students] just mess about, and other times I think they are too clever for what they are doing and get bored.
I.S.: Are you ever bored?
Girl: I am sometimes but other people just mess about when bored whilst I don't.
I.S: What are you doing when bored?
Girl: I don't know...I just chat quietly.
(Girl, Year 8, English School)

The other aspect of 'naughtiness' refers to 'fairness'. Either the teachers interpret in different ways the 'rules' of the school or teachers make 'unjust' decisions:

Boy: When a child deserves to be excluded, then he/she should get excluded, but when one child is not at fault...Lots of times teachers are unfair. Like yesterday something happened and they excluded a child and [he or she] wasn't at fault...
(Boy, Year B', 1st Greek school)

Finally, students are *collectively* naughty. This aspect of 'naughtiness' moves away from the individual to the group:

Girl: [Follow the rules] Yes...because I am not really a bad person...some boys in our class...they like...bring our class down...being immature.
(Girl, Year 7, English School)

Well, this is the syndrome of our class [to talk in lessons]. We need to talk a bit, well as much as we can. It depends on the lesson, because

we don't pay as much attention in all lessons and sometimes we mess about, sometimes we don't.

(Girl, Year C', 1st Greek School)

Collective, organised 'naughtiness' in the Greek school is exemplified in the practice of 'form truancy' (ομαδική κοπάνα):

Girl: [The best thing this year] on Saturday...it was good because all our class, we did...how to say it...we left...

I.S.: You skived.

Girl: Yes, and we didn't leave through the central gate. We left through the back door that was left open. And we went through the other school [in the complex].

I.S.: And where did you go?

Girl: Just hang around for the time to pass.

I.S.: Did they say anything?

Girl: We didn't come back. We left the last three hours.

I.S.: Did everybody come?

Girl: Three kids didn't. One girl that was poorly, the register-keeper that said she couldn't leave the register, and another girl that didn't want to.

I.S.: Someone told me that you tried last week as well and you failed.

Girl: [laughing] They didn't let us from the [main] door, we couldn't go.

I.S.: What did the teachers say?

Girl: They didn't to us, they did to year C' [that did the same].

(Girl, Year B', 1st Greek School)

The majority of students, however, have not had experience of the whole process of disciplinary action. For them 'being told off' in a lesson is the start and end of their direct experience of discipline. A minority of students have been through most of the process:

Boy: I was sent [to the duty room] once last year and twice this year...for talking and not getting on with my work.

(Boy, Year 9', English School)

Girl: I've been excluded. Not this year, last year. I was well...more naughty...I am more mature this year.

(Girl, Year C', 2nd Greek School)

Yet, all students in all schools are aware of the process of disciplinary action. For many of the students the full disciplinary action is something that happens to the 'few', the 'regulars', students that teachers have 'singled out'.

An interesting point is that in the two Greek schools, eight students mentioned as their worst memory/thing that happened this year the fact that students from their form were excluded or expelled. None of the students in the English school mentioned something similar, although they mentioned other things that happened to their friends (falling out with friends, friends being unhappy or being bullied):

Girl: [Something bad] That some kids left from school without reason.

I.S.: You mean they left, interrupted their schooling or were expelled?

Girl: They got excluded and then they were expelled.

I.S.: And for what reason?

Girl: I don't know. I don't think...well, I don't know because I haven't asked them and from previous years they were, like...didn't follow the laws, the rules of the school.

I.S.: You said that you don't follow them as well, but...

Girl: The difference is that they reacted as well. Like they told them 'don't talk' and they replied 'No, I'll talk', like that. Fair enough...they were right to expel them, but...

(Girl, Year C', 1st Greek School)

Girl: [Something bad] Well, there is a kid that they give him exclusions, one-two days...but he's got used to.

(Girl, Year B', 1st Greek School)

Girl: [Something bad] It was break...no, we had a 'free' lesson [the teacher wasn't there] and one kid brought some small fireworks [δυναμιτάκια] and he threw them down [in the schoolyard] and...for this incident...Sir, the head teacher, punished the whole class...well he didn't but he put us in the black list, he said. But, we were all in the wrong...because we didn't want to give away the kid...but he [the student] went alone [at the office]. And this in some ways we liked it...but we didn't like what the head teacher did.

I.S.: Was the kid excluded?

Girl: For two days, I think.

(Girl, Year C', 2nd Greek School)

A quantitative comparative analysis of disciplinary action in the two contexts is difficult to make. Almost half the Greek students mentioned that they had received at least one 'absence' for disciplinary reasons and almost a quarter of the English students mentioned disciplinary action beyond the class (i.e. disciplinary slip, duty room, detention, exclusion). However, it is very difficult to interpret this information since the meaning and the consequences of sanctions in the two contexts are different. For example, exclusion in England (see for instance, Vulliamy, 2001; Cooper et al. 2000; Blyth and Milner, 1996) is a central issue of education policy, while in Greece it is a non-issue. While in England exclusion is seen in relation to 'cost', cost to individual students, schools, cost of finding alternative placements, and cost to society since exclusion is related to criminal activity, in Greece exclusion is a school issue affecting mainly the excluded student and his/her family.

There is a clear gender distinction in relation to discipline, especially when one concentrates on the students that reported repeated sanctions. All but two in both the English and Greek schools are boys. The a-gender construction of 'good'/'bad' student presented in the previous chapter, becomes a gendered one when it comes to discipline/behaviour. However, when one sees discipline/behaviour in relation to school knowledge, as students do in their accounts, 'gender' becomes more complicated:

Girl: I am not very talkative person I am quite quiet in the class so...I don't think I am doing very well in Geography... I speak [answer questions]...he [the teacher] said that I am confident *for a girl*.

I.S.: Do you think that it's different, what he said that you are confident for a girl...do you think that it's different for girls and boys?

Girl: Well...the boys usually speak up more because they are, like, not as quiet as girls. The girls, most of my friends, they are quiet...they answer some of the questions...but if they don't know a question...even if they know a question...they don't...they just whisper it...

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

Most of the students (and teachers) do not refer explicitly to gender. Gender, in the same way as class, is implicit in their accounts. However, 'gender' appropriate behaviour and response to learning and school rules are evident in the different experiences of disciplinary action of boys and girls. 'Gender' is seen differently in the two schools and it is closely related to the knowledge discourse. The English school with its long periods where students work individually 'in silence' creates a different context where in-class 'misbehaviour' can take place, unlike in the Greek school where all students work, to a great extent verbally, together with the teacher. The 'performative' expectations of these two learning environments are different, as is the gender differentiation of students. A 'good' girl student in the Greek context cannot '*whisper*', she has to '*speak out*', but she still has to negotiate her behaviour as a 'good' student in a gendered way.

Negotiating behaviour and notions of 'ownership'

Furthermore, in the same way that students do not reject the school knowledge in total but rather focus on specific subjects that they find 'boring', 'not interesting', 'hard', and 'useless', they do not reject the need for school discipline and rules, but rather specific rules or how discipline is enforced. Discipline –the existence of rules- is seen as necessary for 'order' and to protect students from harm. None

of the students, even the ones that think that rules are 'strict', proposed an alternative discipline system (for children's perceptions on punishment see Sparks et al., 2002, Sparks et al., 2000). The only student that challenged aspects of the system was unable to propose an alternative:

Boy: [Like the least] Detention, Duty Room should be done!

I.S.: And how you'd enforce the rules?

Boy: Tell them to behave, and if they don't...exclude them from school.

(Boy, Year 8, English School)

'Uniform' and 'chewing in class' are the main rules that the students find problematic in the English school. On the other hand, 'not be able to stay in class during break time' is the rule that Greek students (in the 1st Greek school) find more problematic. In all three schools restrictions in relation to where students can play football were mentioned, especially by boys.

Enforcing uniform in the English school was an everyday affair. Students that did not have the proper uniform could not enter the dining room and a member of staff on duty made sure that people with the 'wrong' shoes, trousers or top weren't allowed in. Persistent 'offenders' were sent to the duty room and letters were sent home. Students in the Greek school do not have a uniform, but there is an informal 'dress code' of appropriate appearance. Only two students (both girls) mentioned this code:

Girl: I think [school rules] are very, very unfair and strict. Because...well, in other schools, you know, the teachers do not have a problem with a kid's clothes, with appearance in general, if the kid has make up on, earrings on, and things like that. Here, everything is banned.

I.S.: Does the office [teachers] ban these things?

Girl: In relation to...make up, earrings, some very tight trousers are banned.

(Girl, Year C', 2nd Greek School)

The rules about 'discreet' make-up and jewellery exist in the English school, but the students did not mention them, since they focused on uniform. Students said that they have a uniform for a number of reasons: for people to know from which school they come from; to make school look good; to minimise 'showing off' of expensive clothes and trainers; and to save 'washing' (see Yates, 2001):

Boy: I don't know...I know...I've got new clothes but I don't get a chance to wear them 'cos I've got a uniform. It's only Mondays and Saturdays...Saturdays and Sundays...that I can wear my new clothes.

I.S.: Why do you think you have a uniform?

Boy: To save washing! And when you've got new clothes and you wear them in a school like this, you show off.

(Boy, Year 7, English School)

Girl: I just like coming and wear my clothes.

I.S.: What's the worst bit of the uniform, top, trousers, or the shoes?

Girl: ...Top, trousers and shoes.

(Girl, Year 8, English School)

Girl: I always wear the uniform because my mother is a governor at this school...yes normally...

I.S.: Why do you think you have a uniform?

Girl: Like...two girls went to [name of shopping centre] and they got caught and they had the uniform on and they knew which school they were from.

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

Boy: Because uniform sucks really...you should be able to wear anything you want...if kids are poorer or whatever and they come to school in...like...crap clothes and that...they get picked...but you can tell anyway by...looking at my stuff anyway.

I.S.: Is the uniform about being proud of the school?

Boy: I don't think that many people are proud of the school.

(Boy, Year 8, English School)

In the 1st Greek school students are not allowed to stay in the class during break times¹¹³. In Greek schools, there is a rota system of ‘prefects’ (επιμελητής) that stay in the class and make sure that students’ belongings are safe, and the classroom is aired and ready for the next lesson. Students are not allowed in the class for reasons of ‘safety’ and better/easier supervision during breaks, and because students need to ‘go out’ between lessons. Many students see the fact that they were barred from the classroom during break times as ‘unfair’:

I.S. Do you follow the rules of the school?

Girl: Yes, even though some of them do not suit me, I have to.

I.S.: Like which?

Girl: Like, you know, to leave the class *each* break, even if it’s hot or cold [outside].

(Girl, Year C’, 1st Greek School)

Girl: I think they [school rules] are ok, but...‘cos they don’t let us to go up [to the classrooms] in breaks, whilst in primary school, they did, now we don’t like it be down [in the school yard] all the time...

(Girl, Year A’, 1st Greek School)

Girl: Well...they get us down [to the school yard] very often...because many times, ‘cos we are in this floor and teachers’ office is in this floor, they get us down...The days that’s cold, we don’t want to go out and we argue...

(Girl, Year C’, 1st Greek School)

In all three schools restrictions about when and where students can play football are in place. The majority of students referring to these are boys:

Boy: Some [rules] are strict.

I.S.: Which one?

Boy: Like...not to play football.

I.S.: Why is that?

Boy: Because last year a kid got hurt with the ball and since that day they don’t allow us.

(Boy, Year C’, 2nd Greek School)

¹¹³ The second Greek school also has this rule, but it seemed from what students said that it was not enforced very strictly.

Boy: but sometimes [I'm late] after breaks when we play football.

I.S.: Do you mess about?

Boy: Sometimes, playing football.

(Boy, Year 8, English School)

Boy: We just sit around [in breaks]... 'cos we can't play football...not to break the windows.

(Boy, Year C', 1st Greek School)

Uniform, 'to leave the classroom in breaks' and football restrictions can be seen as rules that aim to 'regulate' students in different ways. Uniform regulates students' appearance, 'to leave the classroom' regulates students' space and football restrictions regulate students' activities outside classroom.

In all three cases students felt that they wanted more control in something that they perceived as their own (see Chapter Nine for a discussion of classroom ownership in the Greek school). Their body, their space and their school 'free' time are contested in these rules. One may argue that for the students that mentioned these rules, they are rules that contradict their 'rights' as young people and students.

In relation to uniform in the English school, I think that in addition to the long tradition that uniform has (a tradition that in Greece was interrupted in the last twenty years, see Chapter Two), it is another way that uniformity and differentiation come together. In the same way that learning differentiation (e.g. settings, in-class support, assessment) does not become overt in an openly comparative evaluation of students' 'performance', sustaining a 'uniformity' based on the individual learning and progress of each student, 'uniform' creates a 'uniformity' of appearance, gender (since the uniform is the same for both sexes,

with the difference that girls can wear skirts as well as trousers) and -as students argue- of economic background.

In the Greek schools, on the other hand, which are characterised by 'uniformity' of learning which results in overt differentiation of individual students' 'performance', individual's appearance is regulated covertly by a number of stated and non-stated rules and regulations and especially by the 'fear' that deviation from what is appropriate or allowed, may affect students' 'performance' (see Gordon et al., 2000, pp. 165-175 for a discussion of appearance in English and Finnish schools).

Finally there is an 'impossible' rule that none (except one student in the second Greek school) of the sample said that they followed; not talking in the classroom. As one student said, to follow this rule "it's not that easy" (Girl, Year C', 2nd Greek School). The 'ideal type' of a good/bad student as one that *never* talks/*always* talks in the classroom becomes redundant in practice.

On the other hand, how students negotiate this rule defines whether they are 'good' or 'bad'. This rule that almost all students 'break', relates to most of their time in school, specifically 'formal' learning time, spent under the constant supervision of adults. Students' interpretation of the rule is 'to know *when* and *how* to talk in the classroom'. In this negotiation their 'status' as students, their perception of teachers, and of specific school knowledge (subjects), come together.

I.S.: Do you mess about?

Girl: Sometimes.

I.S.: In what way?

Girl: talking.

I.S.: Have you ever been in trouble for that?

Girl: Sometimes.

I.S.: And what happened?

Girl: Teacher told me to stop and...I carried on.

I.S.: And then?

Girl: Teacher told us off again and we stopped this time.

(Girl, Year 9, English School)

Girl: Sometimes I talk in the class [laughs].

I.S.: Have you ever been told off?

Girl: No, and I am doing it without being noticed.

(Girl, Year C', 1st Greek School)

'Talking' in the classroom defines not only students, but also teachers and subjects. The 'softy', 'strict' and 'boring' teachers, the teachers that can take a 'joke', that can impose 'discipline', that 'understand' students, and so on, were mentioned in relation to 'talking' (for Greek students' perceptions of teachers, see Kaila, 1999; Katerelos, 1999; Leondari and Kyridis, 1999). 'Easy' and 'difficult' and 'boring' lessons are categorised accordingly. This is the 'when to talk' part of the equation.

On the other hand, students negotiate how to talk. 'Not when teachers talk', and 'quietly while doing their work' is what English students mentioned as appropriate ways of 'talking'. 'Not to interrupt teacher', and 'quietly' are mentioned by Greek students. One can even argue that talking in class is a very precise 'art'; the distinction between 'talking' and 'messaging about', between following and not following the rule, is very fine:

I.S.: What do you think about the school rules?

Boy: Depends on the kids.

I.S.: What do you mean?

Boy: If there is someone that can mess about all the time, he's not interested about school; they [teachers] are very strict with the rules.

On the other hand, if someone is studious, the ‘swot’ [φουτό] as they call him, everything is fine.

(Boy, Year C’, 1st Greek School)

Falling out, fighting, bullying, and racism

In the previous section discipline/behaviour was seen mainly in the class and between students and teachers. However, school is a social place for students, a place in which they can meet their friends. The majority of students in all schools said that they like school because they ‘meet their friends’ in school.

One of the most difficult answers to deal with is when a student said in the interview that he/she does not have any friends. The four students (two in the English school and two in the second Greek school) who said that don’t have any friends may be easily seen as exceptional cases.

However, ‘isolation’ in the schools may be greater than that reported, and I do not have a clear idea about what students meant when they said that they don’t have any friends. For example, one student said that “I have my *friend*, the one who came before me, I ask her and she helps me” and later she said:

I.S.: With whom do you spend time with at break time?

Girl: To be honest, with nobody...I don’t have any *friends*.

I.S.: Is it because of...the language or...

Girl: No, I’ve learned a bit [Greek], I understand more, but I don’t know...from last year...because I didn’t know [Greek] at all...and it stayed like that.

(Girl, Year C’, 2nd Greek School)

In the English school, a student describes how he spends lunchtime:

Boy: On my own.

I.S.: And what are you doing?

Boy: Play football.

I.S.: So...you are not alone...

Boy: Yes...I am just walking about.

(Boy, Year 7, English School)

'Feeling alone' while being surrounded constantly by people and being in a position in which one feels that one has not formed important relations with others, is a reality that students probably found difficult to share in the interviews. However, the majority of students refer to 'friends' from their forms, other forms, and other years and a substantial number of students in all schools meet their school friends outside schools.

Many students reported falling out with their friends as their worst experience in school. A number of students elaborated on these incidents. However, I call these descriptions the 'someone said to someone something about something', because students describe these incidents in an abstract way. These descriptions highlight the complex relations between students, but at the same time the extent that students –in the interview process - want to protect their 'private' social life from an adult that they do not really know:

Girl: [Problems with students] With a child in school? Yes, they said that I asked a boy and he misunderstood it...because some others told him, and something like that...but we sorted it out.

(Girl, Year C', 1st Greek School)

Boy: Sometimes I had problems with some kids in school...then I hadn't because we don't argue now...we used to.

I.S.: What things did you argue about?

Boy: Because someone said something and the other didn't listen...

I.S.: When you played?

Boy: Yes.

I.S.: Did you argue seriously, like to have to separate you...?

No, we didn't do anything like that, but we argued... we stopped talking [to each other] something like that, but after a while, well, we made up.

(Boy, Year B', 1st Greek School)

Girl: My best friend is Liz but I used to sit with Sam but now we are not friends anymore because she is in a different class.

I.S.: What happened with Sam?

Girl: With Sam...it were...Liz was off one week and we ended up being friends with Sam and after about four weeks being friends we fell out, because she was bossing me around and I didn't like it.

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

Girl: Sam started it...she started calling me names. And she rung me up and me mum pinch it up and gave a good shout at her.

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

The complexity of some of these incidents can be seen in the following account:

Girl: [Problems with students] Some times it appears that way...twice only.

I.S.: And what did you do about it?

Girl: Nothing, simply I went to the head teacher's office the first time because another little girl hit me without reason and I complained, because I wasn't wrong...at all. And another time because a friend of mine, a very good friend of mine thought that I took...something from her, an object, whilst it wasn't true.

I.S.: And...did the office [head teacher] help you?

Girl: No, well...I was ready even to pay...100 drachmas is nothing and I could give the money...Simply, the girl, because she thought that I did it...says that I did...I show off the packet to her, while we had the same, any way...and she didn't accept [the money]...[she said] that the gesture counted and things like that...

I.S.: And did you sort it out?

Girl: Well, after the exams, this year we started speaking to each other, she needed time to think...

(Girl, Year C', 2nd Greek School)

More girls than boys refer to 'falling out' incidents. Boys, on the other hand, refer more to 'fighting' incidents (either with their friends or with other students):

Boy: [Something bad] When I fought with someone from my class.

I.S.: For what reason?

Boy: Because he was swearing at me and he kicked me.

I.S.: And what happened?

Boy: He really, really hit me...All my friends were there and he really, hit me...he just hit me.

(Boy, Year 7, English School)

Boy: When I was sitting down there, he started calling me names and then I hit him and he hit me back and then I went and told Miss, and we both got...we weren't sent to the Duty Room.

(Boy, Year 7, English School)

Boy: Yes, I had...they pick on me, they fall on me, they want to fight.

I.S. And what are you doing?

Boy: Well...I told them that I'll bring my brother and they told me 'ok'.

[...]

I.S. And what happened?

Boy: I met them at the basketball [course], outside school and we had a ball and they wanted the ball and they started swearing at us, and...they swore about my mother!

I.S.: Did you get angry?

Boy: Very.

I.S.: And did you fight?

Boy: No, we just pushed each other.

(Boy, Year B' 1st Greek School)

Fighting is defined by its 'physical' violence. Usually fighting is presented as an escalating incident with 'calling names', 'pushing' (see Chapter Seven) coming before the actual act of 'fighting' (e.g. hitting, beating). None of the students referring to 'fighting' said that they were wrong in being involved or that they were the ones at fault. 'Fighting', when reported in the interviews, is something that someone else starts. Finally, in all cases fighting is public, since there are other people present. The most severe sanctions are given for fights, which are seen in all schools as inappropriate behaviour.

A number of students said that they have been 'called names' and been 'picked on'. These are activities that can be seen as 'bullying' (see for instance, Glover et al., 2000). However, in the Greek context a distinct category of 'bullying' –as a school discourse- does not exist. The Greek schools have clear rules about the behaviour of students in relation to other students, and students need to be 'nice'

to each other. Teachers deal with incidents in which students 'make fun' of other students or 'call them names', especially when it is a persistent occurrence. However, a discourse of 'bullying' as a systematic activity that in some cases can escalate and that affects the 'victim' of bullying is not evident in the Greek schools. In the English school there is a clear anti-bullying policy and when bullying is reported teachers should take it seriously and deal with it.

English students refer to bullying as a separate category of incidents:

I.S.: Do you think that there is bullying around the school?

Boy: Yea.

I.S.: Is it a serious problem?

Boy: Serious...it happens all the time.

I.S.: What kind of bullying?

Boy: People make fun of other students and push them around...people like Peter.

(Boy, Year 8, English School)

Girl: [Something bad in school] I don't like when there is bullying about because usually it goes to the people that are done nothing to them...but in this schools there isn't any.

(Girl, Year 9, English School)

Greek students also categorise these incidents as a separate 'category' from 'falling out' with friends or 'messing about' with people they know. Yet, there is no generic name that encompasses all 'bullying' behaviour. This means that in the Greek context 'bullies' and 'bullied' students are not distinguished, but rather students that 'have had problems with other students' and students that 'create problems to other students' are described. Only one Greek student gave a description that comes very close to a bullying discourse:

Girl: The rules are good and the head teacher is very good...eh...there isn't so much discipline, of course, for the kids of Year C' that mess about the most in the school...because they pick on Year A' and B'. The head teacher shouts at them, but they don't listen.

I.S.: Do they pick a lot on the younger ones?

Girl: Yes they come upstairs and they bully (κάνουν τσαμπουκά) the young ones.

(Girl, Year A', 2nd Greek School)

None of the students in all three schools described themselves in a way that can be perceived as being a 'bully' or a person that causes 'trouble' to others. 'Bullying' is something that others always do. Only one student refers to the interplay between being a bully and being bullied:

Girl: I've got a sister in Year 7 now and she always talks about it...*she bullies people, people bullying her*...I think that it does happen more in Year 7 because you are new to the school and when you get to Year 8 and Year 9, you realise that you're growing up and it stops.

(Girl, Year 9, English School, emphasis added)

The English students that reported (especially without being asked a specific question about bullying) that they have been bullied present accounts of bullying that are lengthier than anything else in their interviews:

I.S.: What does a bad student do in school?

Boy: Throw things.

I.S.: Yes...

Boy: Punch people...beat people up.

I.S.: Can you say that again?

Boy: Beat people up.

I.S. Anything else?

Boy: Throw bricks.

I.S.: Throw bricks?

Boy: Yes.

I.S.: Are people in the school doing these things?

Boy: Yes.

I.S.: Have you seen any?

Boy: Yea.

[Interruption. Someone opened and closed the door]

I.S.: And...have you seen people in the schools punching other people?

Boy: Yea.

I.S.: Has it ever happened to you?

Boy: Sometimes.

I.S.: What do you do when it happens?

Boy: Tell teacher.

I.S.: And do they sort it out?

Boy: Yea...

I.S. Do you feel safe in the school?

Boy: Yea...

I.S.: Do you want...to say something else about it?

Boy: No.

(Boy, Year 7, English School)

The difference in tone of this extract from the overall interview cannot be easily reproduced. This was a long interview lasting approximately 35 minutes, which unfortunately was interrupted three times by people entering the classroom where it took place. In addition we stopped the tape-recorder twice for the student to have a break. I asked the student if he wanted to continue with the interview, after each interruption and he was positive. When transcribing the interview the disparity between the student utterances and mine became even more obvious. The student contributed 174 words in the whole interview and 22 of those (approximately 12%) are in the above extract.

'Bullying' changes the flow of a number of the interviews, especially when the students initiate it as a topic. This is the case for both English and Greek students. This change in the interviews can be seen as a change of identity. While most of what comes before and after in the interview is about the interviewees' student identity, bullying goes beyond that, to their identity as a person:

Girl: Yes, many times I had problems. Especially with some boys that try to be clever and they mess with others that way...and I can't stand them.

I.S.: has it been something serious that you needed to go, to talk to someone, to a teacher?

Girl: No, not to me, nothing serious has happened...but to other kids.

I.S: And in this case, can teachers help?

Girl: I personally think that if you go to a teacher, to the head teacher, things get worse, because he [the student] keeps it, he hates you...There is this kid that picks on me all the time, and he picks on everybody, he hits us and things like that...but I don't have a problem...to go at the office, because you know...

(Girl, Year B', 1st Greek School)

Girl: I don't like bullying...I used sometimes to be...like with smoking, you see people around smoking and they make you...like smoking.

I.S.: Do people make you smoke?

Girl: Not making...offer me but if you say no they call you names.

I.S.: Do you think there is a problem with bullying in school?

Girl: Not really...it depends if you tell the teacher straight away. If you tell the teacher straight away they're going to do something about it. If you leave it, it's get worse.

I.S.: Is it like older kids?

Girl: Older...like if you are coming through the corridor, they just push you and they don't even say "excuse-me"...they push pass you.

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

Boy: When I first came, last year...lots of kids went against me, but we made up.

I.S.: Older kids or from your class?

Boy: And older and from my class.

I.S.: And for what reason?

Boy: The older just to make fun of us, and I didn't like that, and the younger because I was better and they spoilt me...I was behaving in the class, but some kids that were messing about, they drawn me into being naughty.

I.S.: And did you ever go to the teachers?

Boy: I've never done that and I believe that I won't do it...because I don't like it at all. They'll wait for me somewhere [to beat me up]...I discussed it with my parents and my brother heard it and he found them outside school and he told them not to pick on the young ones [Year A'], he didn't say my name...and since then every time they meet us they say 'hello'.

(Boy, Year B', 2nd Greek School)

Girl: [Something bad] Being picked up.

I.S.: When?

Girl: I don't know.

I.S.: Does it happen very often?

Girl: Yes.

I.S.: How it happened?

Girl: ...About my face and all.

I.S.: Did you tell teacher?

Girl: Yes.

I.S.: But it happened again?

Girl: Yes.

I.S.: And how do you feel about it?

Girl: Shocked.

I.S.: And what do you want to do about it?

Girl: Try to ignore it.

(Girl, Year 9, English School)

Boy: Sometimes I do [have problems]...people acting clever and bullying us, so I fight them.

I.S.: Is there a problem with bullying in the school?

Boy: There is a lot of bullying.

I.S.: Do you tell teachers?

Boy: Sometimes I don't...If they trouble me too much, I can't tell teacher and teacher won't do naught, I can't do nothing...I beat them up, fine.

I.S.: Are any teachers that do something?

Boy: Some teachers do...once Miss...that...head teacher on the other building...that lady...she listens to me...but most of the teachers just say to sort it out.

(Boy, Year 9, English School)

Girl: But I got bullied when I first came. I got really upset about that.

I.S.: What happened?

Girl: I got really bullied...she...she called me names and she pushed me to the wall and...I sprained my knee.

I.S.: Was someone older than you?

Girl: I think she was about fifteen.

I.S.: And did you tell teachers?

Girl: I did.

I.S.: Did the teacher sort it out?

Girl: Miss F. at first and then I went to see Miss G. and she went...“right”...and she said “I know about her and that girl scares me”, Miss G. said. Miss G. is a very nice teacher...and as soon as that stopped, I thought “Thanks God for that”...because I was worried about it, and everything...and I didn't want to come to school because I was scared of her.

I.S.: Do you feel safe now?

Girl: Yes.

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

Presenting all these different students' experiences of 'bullying' together is not the result of analytical laziness, but an attempt to give just a glimpse of the diversity of 'bullying', of the different ways of dealing with it and of presenting it.

'Bullying' exemplifies difference. It is different if students have or have not a 'bullying' discourse to relate their experiences to; it relates to age, gender, difference of appearance or 'acting'; it is different if one has a 'support group' within and outside school, for instance if one sees teachers as possible 'support'. In addition, how students deal with 'bullying –for instance 'take the role of bully', see themselves as 'powerless' and 'victims', 'ignore' it, and so on- affect their students' identities.

Many of the students who did not see bullying as a problem that affects them personally describe it as something that happens to students that are 'different', mainly younger, or 'smaller'. In the English school two students with Moderate Learning Difficulties were mentioned by name.

For students that do not see themselves as 'different', accepting that they are the subjects of bullying can be problematic because they move to a category of 'otherness' in the students' perception of bullying.

Although in Greek schools there is not a 'bullying' discourse, there is a racist one. Students referring to racism do not see it as a sub-category of something more general, but rather as something separate and specific. In the English school racism was not an issue. The 'homogeneity' of the large majority of students, the fact that most of the very small number of ethnic minority or mixed-race students were not living in the immediate area and appeared to be well integrated into the

school¹¹⁴, may be some of the reasons for the lack of references to 'racism'. Only one student referred to racism:

Girl: They [students that bully] are not people...like racists...but they are some disabled people in the school and sometimes they pick on them.

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

Only one student in the Greek schools gave a general anti-racist statement:

Boy: Well, you see, I spend time in breaks with everybody ...because I believe that we shouldn't discriminate with whom we are friends...and not to have racisms (sic) in relation to colour or religion...And I spend time with all kids, regardless if he is white or he is black...

(Boy, Year C', 2nd Greek School)

The rest of the students referring to racism did not see it as an issue of principle but rather as a practice. Some of the references to racism were in relation to teachers that are seen as racists and as discriminating between students:

Boy: [Something bad] In a lesson, a kid put up his hand and he isn't very good student and then he got up [to answer the question] and Miss [told him] "No, do not say it, let's someone say it that knows better".

I.S.: And why did she say that?

Boy: Because...I think she single out [ξεχωρίζει] Albanians.

I.S: Has she done that to you?

Boy: Yes, and I've got up and left the classroom.

I.S.: And what happened after?

Boy: Another time, before I left, Miss asked me, and I told her that she single out Albanians and she got crossed and she told me that she doesn't.

(Boy, Year C', 1st Greek School)

Boy: And a second thing [I would like to change] is racism.

I.S.: Do you think that exists?

Boy: Yes, in many schools it happens.

I.S: In this school?

¹¹⁴ Only one student in the sample of students that was observed and interviewed was from an ethnic minority background. The only racist comments that I observed during the fieldwork in the English school took place outside school, on the bus that some students took after school. On three occasions students made comments that can be considered as 'racist'. On one occasion, one student said in relation to a Chinese take-away shop that reopened that "someone should burn it down again".

Boy: I don't think so.

I.S.: Have you seen it happening to kids?

Boy: In one school, primary school, there was a teacher and a kid came from Albania and he put his hand up to say the lesson and she told him "Don't speak!" and things like that.

I.S.: So you mean racism from the teachers.

Boy: Yes.

I.S.: What about between students?

Boy: No.

(Boy, Year C' 1st Greek School)

What these students refer to is institutional racism. The comments of teachers in the second Greek school that students from ethnic minorities have special educational needs that cannot be met in the school need to be seen in this context¹¹⁵. The student's 'protest' and at the same time 'misbehaviour' to leave the classroom as a response to the teacher's 'racism' is an act of self-definition in a context that demands that students that are 'ethnically different' should be assimilated.

The same student reported another incident that can be seen as a 'copy-cat' of the teacher's behaviour:

Boy: I had problems with one kid...because he/she told me as well...because I put my hand up and he/she told me "Don't put your hand up because you don't know".

(Boy, Year C', 1st Greek School)

¹¹⁵ Dragona et al. (1997) report that 51% of primary school teachers in their study believe that students with foreign parents should be educated in separated schools. In the same research teachers report more negative experiences and perceptions for Albanians immigrants.

Other students also reported ‘problems’ with students. Although students from different ethnic groups were represented in the sample, all the students reporting ‘racism’ are students coming from Albania¹¹⁶:

Girl: Something that upset me, I’ll tell you...I came here this year and the kids here are different. They try to be tough and clever...and I don’t...this upsets me very much.

I.S.: Did you have problems with other kids?

Girl, Eh, yes...

I.S.: Is it because of your ethnicity or for other reasons?

Girl: Because of my ethnicity [hesitantly].

I.S.: And what did you do?

Girl, I’ll tell you... Once we were playing volleyball and I said a word, I said ‘mad’ (τρελή), but he didn’t hear ‘mad’ (τρελή), he heard ‘mat’ (τελή)...And I said to him “Why are you make fun of me?” and he said “But ‘cos you said ‘mat’ (τελή), you didn’t say ‘mad’ (τρελή). “I said mad!” I said again, and he started swearing at me and I gave him one [blow] and after...I said sorry and he said sorry as well and he said he won’t do it again and he won’t make fun of me...

(Girl, Year C’, 1st Greek School)

Boy: [problems with other students] Yes, yes...Because I have Albanian citizenship, there is a kid –well he now changed form- and he has some peculiarities [ιδιαιτερότητες] with foreigners...you can even say that he is a racist...I don’t know...I don’t think so...Anyway, he has picked on me, he picks on me...

I.S.: And have you discussed it with someone in the office?

Boy: No, only with my parents I discussed it.

I.S.: Have you come to a confrontation, have you argued, or...

Boy: He picked on me, well...he told me “you are Albanian” and other things...once in a Maths lesson, he was behind me...He picked on me before...he put chalk on my chair and I sat on it [reserved laugh].

I.S.: In general is there a problem in school with racism?

Boy: No, only him...

(Boy, Year B’, 2nd Greek School)

These students are very careful to minimise the ‘racist’ dimension of the incidents they describe. In these incidents participants are described as ‘students’

¹¹⁶ A large number of immigrants in Greece in the last ten years originated from Albania. Historically relations between Greece and Albanians have been difficult and a Greek minority exists in Albania. However, ‘Albanians’ as a category is used in the media and public discourse to epitomise xenophobic perceptions of the ‘other’ and especially of illegal immigrants that threaten the stability of the country, for instance with increasing unemployment and crime. For a comparative discussion of British and Greek perspectives on migration, see Lyons and Stathopoulos, 2001.

and not as members of a 'majority'/'minority' with different 'power' positions. Both these accounts as they unfold, become less serious and emotive and they conclude as 'anecdotes'.

It is interesting how an incident between students is described by a student from a 'majority' perspective:

I.S.: Can you describe something good that happened this year?

Boy: A good thing was that two of my fellow students started fighting and me...we went and we separated them, *all the kids of the class*. Well...one of them was Albanian, but *he also wasn't a good student* and, so...this was the cause...*he doesn't know how to fight, neither to speak good Greek...*and the *other* was hitting him and his face got all beaten up. But we...it would have got more...if we haven't separated them.

I.S.: Did that happened in the school?

Boy: In the school, in the classroom, at break time.

I.S.: And you separated and what happened then?

Boy: Then *we* tried to make them friends, but the *other* didn't want to and the next day *we made them friends again*.

(Boy, Year A', 2nd Greek School, emphasis added)

This account brings a number of the issues discussed in this and previous chapters together. The 'collectiveness' of Greek students (that in this case enforces 'order'), the relation between ability and behaviour, 'difference' and so on are present in this account. The different ways that 'I', 'us', 'other' (i.e. the Albanian student as 'other', and the 'other' student who is not described) change in this account, give some indications of the complexity of 'racism'/'ethnic relations in the Greek schools'¹¹⁷.

¹¹⁷ In a recent Unicef (2002) research on racism and xenophobia in Greek schools, students seem to have less xenophobic views than their parents and teachers.

Conclusion

This chapter has tried to explore 'discipline/behaviour' as presented in the students' accounts. As has been argued students talk about discipline/behaviour - theirs and others- sometimes even more than they talk about 'knowledge'. School, for students, is not simply a place where they 'learn', it is a place where their behaviour is regulated, their behaviour affects others, and others' behaviour affects themselves. Students see discipline/behaviour as specific to the school context and sometimes as the result of the school context. Students see 'bad behaviour' as socially constructed in schools. On the other hand, students avoid giving 'explanations' to particular behaviours; they do not explain why someone is a 'bully' or 'racist'.

Finally, implicit in the students' accounts are inclusive/exclusive practices which most of the time, they perceived that they are in a position to actively negotiate. Being 'excluded', however, is a very important part of students' accounts of discipline/behaviour. 'Exclusion' as a sanction, as bullying, as racism, as isolation, as not being able to form a space in the school for themselves in relation to others (students and teachers), and exclusion from the majority of well-behaved students, are some of the types of exclusion that students describe.

Chapter Thirteen:

Frameworks of Competence

Introduction

The previous two chapters tried to explore students' understandings of knowledge/discipline discourses in the school context. The aim was to present 'students' as they define themselves in the interviews. For that reason students are not identified as 'individuals' in different extracts in the two chapters. What I tried to avoid was to present a student with Moderate Learning Difficulties talking about being successful in a lesson, or an otherwise 'good' student being bullied, and so on. Avoiding using labels can be seen as 'underplaying' their significance; this however, is not the intention since they are extremely important in defining specific inclusive/exclusive spaces for students. The reason for avoiding using 'labels' is because structures and practices are seen as defining the inclusive/exclusive spaces of students more than their individual 'labels', and 'labels' are seen as part of these structures and practices.

None of the students entered the interview process stating how they are 'labelled' in the school. All of them however, at different points in the interviews defined themselves using different categories and even 'labels'. Students see themselves in different positions, in different 'spaces' (e.g. the school, the form, the class, settings, in the playground, and outside school), and different roles (e.g. student, young person, friend). Students' accounts are characterised both by continuity and fragmentation. The only 'labels' that I used consistently are gender and 'school age'. At some point I thought that even these were not necessary and in most cases 'gender' and 'school age' when significant in the accounts, are evident in the extracts. However, students brought with them 'school age' and 'gender' into the interview room. In addition, a draft of Chapter Eleven without any information about the students seemed to me 'unsettling' and difficult to 'analyse' (i.e. to put my arguments forward). 'Gender' and 'school age' become the two stable axes for the analysis and in this process their significance as socially constructed exclusive/inclusive determinants may have been 'neutralised'.

In prioritising students' perceptions, inevitably teachers' and support staff's perceptions become secondary, and in some cases I tried to silence my own ethnographic 'knowledge'. I avoided in some cases 'challenging' students' accounts, for example when some students in the English school talked nonchalantly about the existence of 'bullying', while they are seen by other students or members of staff as 'bullies'. The reason for that is that the interview process was seen as the context where students' accounts were created. This does not mean that the 'interviews' happened outside the 'reality' of school, but rather

that they gave an opportunity for interpreting and presenting this reality in different ways.

One student said that “the questions were ok, but for them to have meaning you need to say the truth” (Girl, Year C’, 1st Greek School). Another student said:

Boy: [Questions] some were difficult some were easy.

I.S.: Which ones were difficult?

Boy: When you said...a lesson that you don’t understand and that lot...‘cos when people asking me that, I don’t know if I should answer.

I.S.: What do you mean?

Boy: Like...when people asking me questions...I am always thinking that...them, teachers are going to find out, if I don’t like...and all that. I always said to teachers I like it, but to make them think that I understand...but sometimes I don’t like it.

I.S.: And did you find the questions interesting, boring, ok?

Boy: Boring.

(Boy, Year 9, English School)

What was presented in the last two chapters is not the ‘truth’; or rather it is one ‘truth’, as it was constructed in the interviews and during the process of analysis and writing.

This chapter aims to take the students’ identity constructions in relation to knowledge/ability and discipline/behaviour a step further, focusing on students’ perceptions of education and how a small number of students challenge dominant perceptions of education and schooling in their accounts. In order to do that, the concept of frameworks of competence is used.

Frameworks of competence and inclusion/exclusion

If one aims to move away from explorations of inclusion/exclusion as an individualistic concern related to the specific ‘difficulties’ of individual students,

an alternative may be to explore how particular school knowledge/discipline discourses demand that students develop specific frameworks of 'competence' within schools.

Jenkins, (1998) describes 'competence' as "the capacity for adequate functioning-in-context as a socialised human" (p. 1) and he argues "in order to transcend the limitations of Western diagnostic categories, it is necessary to document *local* models" (p. 4). In order to do that

We need a comparative approach that does not presume an 'objective', quantitative model of deficit (although the realities of impairment cannot be ignored either). Finally, our starting point should be 'competence' –culturally defined and context-dependent- no less than 'incompetence'. [...] Hence the notion of (in)competence, to denote classificatory fields which necessarily encompass both competence and incompetence.

(Jenkins, 1998, p. 4-5)

'Frameworks of competence' do not come with students in the school (in the way that sometimes it is assumed that ability and behaviour do) but they are constructed and negotiated within schools.

Frameworks of competence bring together the purposes of education and the 'rhetoric' of what school is about; the knowledge discourses, learning methods, and assessment procedures used; the ways of defining discipline; and how students (and teachers) negotiate all the above in their everyday interaction. In that sense, students are active in constructing and negotiating frameworks of competence (as students themselves argued in defining 'good'/'bad' students), but within the boundaries of specific knowledge/discipline discourses of

educational systems with specific aims in specific societies. As Corbett (1998) argues

Special educational needs are not just about what happens in schools and classrooms, about procedures, practices and assessments. They are about our cultures, the societies we create and the relationships we form between people, systems, hierarchies and global economies: about our ways of *being* in the world.

(Corbett, 1998, p. 6)

When students appraise education and schooling, they see them as inseparable from their lives; students to some extent negotiate education and school within a 'schooled child' general framework. In order to explore students' frameworks of competence, it is necessary to see how students perceive the context in which they perform; what for students is the role and purpose of school.

Is school important?

Two questions in the interview schedule explored the role of education and schooling: *Do you like school?* and *Is school important for you?* The striking majority of students in all schools like school. Whether it is an unconditional 'yes', 'most of the time', 'sometimes', 'a bit', 'it's all right' (in the English school), and 'yes', 'yes and no', 'not that much' (in the Greek schools), the majority of students gave an answer to this question that is to different extents, positive. Five students in the English school and three students in the Greek schools (one in the first school and two in the second) said that they don't like

school. In addition, all but three students (all of them in the English school) said that school is important for them¹¹⁸.

There are similarities and differences in how students in the two contexts articulate their views about school. Some examples of English students' views are the following:

Girl: [Like school] When you are on your own you get bored and you don't get bored at school.

I.S.: Do you think that school is important?

Girl: Yes.

I.S.: For what reason?

Girl: You get to learn, get to college and get a job.

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

I.S.: Can you describe something that happened this year and was bad?

Boy: Missing school.

I.S.: Missing school...when?

Boy: When I am sick.

I.S.: So do you like school?

Boy: Ye, most of the time.

I.S.: What is the thing that you don't like about school?

Boy: It's boring.

I.S.: What's boring?

Boy: When teachers are talking and you must be silent.

I.S.: Do you think that school is important for you?

Boy: Yes.

I.S.: For what reason?

Boy: So I can get a good job.

(Boy, Year 8, English School)

Boy:[Like school] No, not really.

I.S.: For what reason?

Boy: It's just...It's just I can think of better stuff to do than school.

I.S.: Like what?

Boy: Meeting with my friends, playing football, basketball.

I.S.: Do you think that school is important for you?

Boy: Yea.

I.S.: For what reason?

¹¹⁸ A Year Seven girl said while we were going to the room where the interview took place that "school is crap", but she didn't repeat that during the interview which is one example of the 'power' of the tape-recorder and of the extent that students were aware that what they say becomes a formal and somehow 'permanent' account.

Boy: Education and get a better job when older, and stuff.
(Boy, Year 9, English School)

Girl: [Like school] It's a break...you can meet with your friends.

I.S.: Is school important for you?

Girl: Yes.

I.S.: For what reason?

Girl: Like you can get a job when you are older.

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

Boy: [Like school] Sometimes I don't, sometimes I do...it gets on my nerves sometimes.

I.S.: Why?

Boy: Why I don't like it? It's bullying and all that. That's I don't like it and...I like it because I have lots of friends in this school.

I.S.: Do you think school is important for you?

Boy: Ye.

I.S.: For what reason?

Boy: For education...it helps you find a job and helps you get more brainier.

(Boy, Year 9, English School)

A clear pattern is evident in the above examples. Students more or less like school, and a very important reason is because they meet their friends. Even when lessons are boring, or there is bullying around, 'friends' are seen as a stable point of reference. The social aspect of school can easily be seen as children/young people 'playing' with their friends in school. However, being with their 'friends' for students means something more. The prevalence of 'friends' in all aspects of school life discussed in the previous two chapters gives some insight in how 'friends' refers to the social 'public' domain of students' life.

Furthermore, the importance of school is closely related to 'getting a job'. School is a step in fulfilling an important condition of being an adult (and to some extent a citizen), to have a job: "[Importance] Yes, because if you don't go to school

you don't get the qualifications for a job when you get older" (Girl, Year 7, English School).

Only three students did not include 'getting a job' in their answers. A Year Nine student said that school is important for her but she didn't know for what reason, another student said that "without education we'd be in medieval times again" (Girl, Year 7, English School), and a student gave a more personal reason:

I.S.: Why do you come to school?

Boy: To learn.

I.S.: Is that important to you?

Boy: Ye.

I.S.: For what reason?

Boy: So I'll get better than my dad who used to drink...I want to be better than him.

(Boy, Year 7, English School)

However, school according to students is only a step in getting a job. Most students mentioned exams, college and university as steps that follow school in order to get a job. 'Education' for students does not end at sixteen when they leave school.

When I was listening to English students describing education in relation mainly to 'getting a job', I found this pattern peculiar because this is a different education discourse from the one that I was coming from. My own personal identity was formed in an education discourse, which to some extent I was taking for granted as the 'norm'. This discourse is presented by the Greek students in the following way:

Girl: [Reason to come to school] To learn things, to be a good person in society.

(Girl, Year C', 1st Greek School)

Boy: [Importance] Knowledge to go out well in society.

(Boy, Year C', 1st Greek School)

Boy: [What school offers] Apart from the things I learn, the knowledge I get that's the most important, there is the communication I've got... 'cos now my social life is with my teachers, my fellow students, my friends.

(Boy, Year C', 1st Greek School)

Boy: I like school, but sometimes...I get bored.

I.S.: With the lessons?

Boy: No, no, to wake up in the morning.

I.S.: And do you think that school is important for you?

Boy: Yes, for our studies and everything, all our life depends on school.

(Boy, Year A', 2nd Greek School)

Greek students have a more 'complex' discourse of schooling. School again for the majority of students is a place where they meet their friends; it is their social public domain where they can interact with others. For a few students even this aspect is seen as a learning experience, since they learn to 'co-operate' and to 'communicate' with others. School in addition, is important because it provides 'education'. However, 'education' is not seen strictly as the means to get a job, i.e. to become a competent citizen in relation to self-sufficiency and financial independence. 'Education' and schooling prepares students to become competent citizens as members of a society. Very few students (mainly in the 2nd Greek school) restricted their view of education to 'getting a job':

I.S.: Do you like school?

Boy: A bit.

I.S.: Do you think that it is important for you?

Boy: Yes.

I.S.: For what reason?

Boy: When I grow up to find a proper job, to earn good money.

(Boy, Year C', 2nd Greek School)

Girl: Basically, I see it as the stage that I have to go through to go to the Lyceum and then to reach University.

(Girl, Year C', 2nd Greek School)

A number of students used the expression 'learn (letters)' (μαθαίνω γράμματα) as the main thing that school offers them. When I tried to translate this expression, I realised that I know what it means but I cannot express it, I cannot translate it to something equivalent in English. 'To learn (letters)' is part of the Greek education tradition. A folk song that includes this expression is possibly the most enduring 'school song' in Greece. This song also relates to the national identity promoted by education since it was one of the attributes used to construct the 'myth' of the 'hidden school' of the years before Greek independence, when children supposedly went to (church) schools at night because Greek schools were not allowed. This expression may also be connected, for a large part of the history of the Greek educational system, to the different (official) language that students were learning in school. 'Learning letters' meant to learn a 'language' that the family was not providing to students. The Greek 'diglossia' (i.e. an official language used in public life and taught in schools called *katharevousa* [pure language] and an everyday 'natural' language, called *dimotiki*) ended in the 1970s, and is not part of these students' experiences (Fragoudaki, 1993). However, to 'learn letters', I believe, sees school knowledge as wider than 'subject knowledge'. Even students that 'don't like school', acknowledge the importance of 'learning (letters):

I.S.: Do you like school?

Boy: Not that much.

I.S.: What you don't like?

Boy: That we spend half our day here.

I.S.: What would you like to do?

Boy: To have more time with my parents, and my parents are working, and to be able to do the sports I like.

[...]

I.S.: Do you think that school is important for you?

Boy: Yes, very important.

I.S.: For what reason?

Boy: Because if I grow up and I don't know [ξέρω γράμματα], I won't be able to do anything.

(Boy, Year B', 2nd Greek School)

Greek students' views on school mirror the 'humanitarian' values of Greek teachers presented in Chapter Nine. However, students do not present an a-critical view of school, they are very aware of its failing to provide what they consider as 'education':

I.S.: Do you like school?

Boy: Eh yes, I like it, of course I wouldn't say no to a bank holiday, but I like school.

I.S.: Do you think that school is important for you?

Boy: I consider it the most important thing...Eh...after family. And ok, with my recreation I consider it for me the most important thing.

I.S.: And what does school offer you?

Boy: It offers me knowledge, to spend time with other people that are in the school...eh...recreation; it is one way [for recreation]...it is the most important means, with family, to be integrated in society.

I.S.: And if you could change something in school, to make it better?

Boy: It'd be more activities, out-of-lesson activities, and mainly...like...open spaces, where we could play football, in general to be able to communicate with the outside world, not, like, a school that's like a block of flats with bars all over, so kids can't go out.

(Boy, Year C', 2nd Greek School)

I.S.: Do you like school?

Girl: Yes, I like that we are many kids, but as an environment, not that much.

I.S.: When you say environment?

Girl: Environment...like the space, the classrooms and the teachers, they aren't the best.

I.S.: In relation to knowledge or to behaviour?

Girl: Both...well, they have the knowledge, it's mainly behaviour. At the University they should have a psychology module, to understand our needs...they do not behave well to us.

I.S.: Which is the main reason that you like school?

Girl: I like that I meet the kids, that I see the school full of kids, voices.

I.S.: And for what reason is school important to you?

Girl: For education [smiles].

I.S.: What do you mean...

Girl: To become proper [individuals], following the rules of the school, although that doesn't happen, but to learn some stuff as well.

I.S.: And are you happy with the knowledge that you get in school?

Girl: No, I wouldn't say that...it's the books that aren't written properly.

(Girl, Year C', 1st Greek School)

Furthermore, students are very aware of how the 'competitiveness' of the Greek educational system, which 'excludes' a large number of students from reaching higher education, affects their aspirations. Many students refer to their grades in relation to the decision to continue in a 'proper' Unified Lyceum or go to a Technical and Vocational Educational School, which is seen as having less 'status', but more direct access to employment. Students also express their worries about the new system of non-compulsory education. Some students even refer to the needs of the Market and how it affects their decisions: "I like Philology [Greek Language and Literature] but there is no work, there is lots of unemployment" (Girl, Year C', 1st Greek School). The relation between education/schooling and para-education is also evident in students' account:

Girl: Basically and without the crammer schools, we don't care that much [about school], more about the Lyceum [we care]. Now I don't know how it's going to change [with the new system], but as the kids of the last year of the Lyceum say even if they didn't come, it'd be the same, because they go to the crammer school. Well...it [school] teaches us, and it introduces us to society, we learn to cooperate and to communicate and all this stuff.

(Girl, Year C', 1st Greek School)

To sum up, this section has tried to explore the ways that students present 'education' and 'schooling' in their accounts, which are seen as the framework in which 'competence', individually and collectively, is constructed. Although I started from the English students' views, I spent more time discussing those of

the Greek students. To some extent discussing Greek students' views is an 'easier' task for me, because I 'know' what students talk about. On the other hand, it is more 'difficult' because in order to see their views in a 'comparative' way, in relation to these of the English students, I needed to question the 'familiarity' of the known, to challenge my own 'student' identity.

English students do not see 'education' as the means for integration/inclusion into society. This however, does not mean that English students see education just for 'getting a job'. I think that English students talk about schooling as a way of being 'included' in a 'community', which they define mainly as their 'friends'. In the English students' account the 'community' of friends represents the present, while employment represents the future and thus it is related more explicitly to 'citizenship' as adults.

On the other hand, Greek students distinguish in the same way the present of their 'school community' integration from the future of employment, but they see both of them as part of a 'citizenship' discourse. Since Greek schools belong in a 'society', rather than a 'community' (see Chapter Nine), students see education/schooling as the means to be included in this society as competent citizens.

These two different views of education/schooling (see for instance Osborn, 2001, for a cross-national comparison of students' school perceptions) affect how young people construct their student identities and what they see as the frameworks of competence in which they actively locate themselves.

Challenging frameworks of competence

This section aims to give an indication of the ways that students challenge schools' frameworks of competence. A small number of students in the interview process challenged the schools' frameworks of competence. More English students can be seen as belonging in this category. This may be the result of the extended fieldwork and the different relationships between interviewer/interviewees in this school. Students knew that I knew to some extent what they were talking about.

The majority of students that challenge schools' frameworks of competence see knowledge and behaviour together. Only one student in the English school focuses specifically on knowledge. In the English school more 'structured' methods of teaching were introduced. The SENCO in the school said that he would "rather see mixed-ability as a social integration and to go as far as we could with differentiation and adaptation" (SENCO, English School). However, the pressure of the National Curriculum and to improve school's results has had implications for the teaching approaches of the school.

In Year Seven Maths¹¹⁹ students were following the same curriculum but they had different textbooks with different exercises. In addition, for half of a period in one lesson, students were using an individualised computer software programme that allowed students to progress at their own pace. This was used as

¹¹⁹ In Year Seven, students were in mixed-ability groups for maths and in Year Eight they were separated in ability settings. Maths was one of the subjects that the special needs department preferred to use special teachers instead of support assistants. This is an indication of the 'status' of maths in the curriculum.

an opportunity for the teacher to do separate work with the remaining students in the class depending on their level¹²⁰.

However, in addition to these 'differentiation' practices, a short weekly period of mental arithmetic that was a pilot programme was introduced. This was an attempt to improve students' skills in this area and it can be seen as part of a more general policy concern with the teaching of 'basics' and the introduction of the literacy and numeracy hour in primary schools. In this short period, the teacher asked questions to all the students in the class. Since mental arithmetic was seen as loosely connected to the Curriculum, the teacher was able to differentiate the questions asked according to the perceived level and knowledge of each student. One student said in the interview that sometimes she likes and sometimes she does not like maths:

I.S.: So sometimes you like and sometimes you don't like maths?

Girl: Yea.

I.S.: So when do you like maths?

Girl: I don't know, I can't think...sometimes I get a bit upset about maths.

I.S.: You get upset...when you write, when you have to answer a question?

Girl: When...answer a question.

I.S.: Why?

Girl: 'Cos it's getting me very upset and I feel I want to go home.

Later this student said that the worst thing that happened in school is maths:

Girl: I don't feel very good...because miss asks me questions, Miss C., I don't like doing that, I don't like sums...when she asks...I feel afraid to answer them.

(Girl, Year 7, English School)

¹²⁰ Different types of 'withdrawal' were used as opportunities for differentiation, for example when students following the recovery reading programme were out of a lesson, some times teachers used this as an opportunity for differentiated teaching to the rest of the group.

For this student the introduction of a different learning approach from the one that she felt that she could more or less competently manage, was a very upsetting experience. To perform verbally in front of the whole class and to answer a question seems to be for this student more of an issue than her ability or inability to add five and four. This student's understanding of competence relates to the knowledge context.

The overall situation of mental arithmetic challenged to different degrees the participants' frameworks of knowledge. Students had to negotiate their roles in this context, for instance, whether to express their competitiveness and put their hand up when another student could not answer a question, or to make fun of a 'wrong question'. The teacher on the other hand, needed to find ways to 'include' the different students' abilities in the process, to find a balance between appropriate 'differentiation' and 'differentiation' that made evident to the class the 'in-competence' of some students even if they answered correctly an answer (i.e. too 'easy' question in comparison with the other questions asked), and to impose discipline in this new context. Another student describes the new context as the following:

Boy: I like [mental arithmetic] 'cos it's not like you have to work on your book it's like talk and answer questions...some people are not as good in maths than other people...you get a lot of help and support.

I.S: Is it easier to see the difference between people with mental arithmetic?

Boy: The teachers have said not to take...not to offend them, if they get it wrong. If they, like, get it really, really wrong you can help them...things like that.

(Boy, Year 7, English School)

How 'upsetting' was it for this girl to 'answer questions' in maths can be seen in relation to her 'special educational needs'. However, this girl does not see the

problem as part of her special educational needs, but rather as being ‘asked questions’, a practice that in this structured way, I think, was outside her existing framework of competence.

The rest of the students that challenged schools’ frameworks of competence brought together knowledge and behaviour. In their accounts students’ personal knowledge/behaviour and school’s knowledge/behaviour do not ‘match’:

I.S.: Do you follow the rules of the school?

Boy: On and off, isn’t?

I.S.: When you don’t behave well, why are you doing that?

Boy: Because I am bored and...lack of interest...in what we’re doing.

I.S.: Do you think that this affects the way that teachers see you?

Boy: Yes...because...like...if in R.E. for instance, I walk through the door, they’re probably thinking “Oh, no! What he’s going to do?” or “he’s going to behave today or I have to send him to the Duty Room” or whatever...

I.S.: And when someone, a teacher talks to you, tries to find what the problem is, do you think that it works?

Boy: Sometimes they listen, sometimes they don’t...

I.S.: Are any teachers that you respect and you don’t want to disrupt in their lessons?

Boy: Mr. W, science teacher, and French teacher, he’s all right, I am not bothered about any others.

(Boy, Year 8, English School)

This student does not see his behaviour (e.g. being excluded five times in a year) as his ‘problem’, but rather as school’s ‘problem’. However, as Mac an Ghail (1989) comments “the dominant sociological conception of student responses in terms of the dichotomous anti-school/pro-school orientations is inadequate” (p. 277) and this becomes clear from how this student describes the importance of school:

Boy: It depends if you have quite ill prospects after school...I’ve got a trying for a professional football team and if...doesn’t work, I want to go to the Army...so...still is important to go to school and learn what

you can...but work hard all time...is not paying...if you just take, because you don't need, you know, like...a GCSE in maths, you need to learn algebra and stuff...but if you get a job like other than a maths teacher or a banker, why would you need that? It's algebra knowledge and all this...you won't need it...if...I don't know you work like...whatever...manual and all that...why you need algebra? it's lot's of rubbish...why doing it... 'cos you never use it.

I.S.: Do you think that the problem is what you learn in school?

Boy: Not problem...the thing is you learn in school things that probably never use it in you lifetime.

I.S.: But in PE...you play football and rugby and I don't know...and you may not use them...but you like them...

Boy: But if I like these things that you learn...and [if] you don't like, you don't like them, you don't need them, so what the point? But...you don't need football, you don't need cricket but if you like them you may as well do them...

I.S.: So do you think that school is important for you personally?

Boy: Eh...if I find it important? Yes...lack of interest...It's boring, innit?

I.S.: Do you think that you put teachers sometimes in a...difficult position?

Boy: Sometimes.

I.S.: Does it make it more interesting?

Boy: Yea...

I.S.: Is that a problem?

Boy: I don't think it's a problem...the others like it.

I.S.: But they are not doing the same.

Boy: The thing is that they like it...but they are scared they get done.

I.S.: So you are not scared?

Boy: At the end of the day they can't beat you and all that, can they?

(Boy, Year 8, English School)

This student does not reject school, but rather 'uses' school for his own ends. I think that he knows how to demonstrate behaviour that the school considers 'inappropriate' and at the same time, manage to stay in school and learn the knowledge that he considers 'useful' and 'interesting'. Although he accepts responsibility for his behaviour, what he refuses to do is to accept a 'pathological' label. However, the 'label', in this case Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, can be seen as 'protective', as 'explaining' and even 'justifying' to some extent the student's behaviour and increasing his chances of continuing to

be included (for a discussion of 'protection' in relation to 'needs' see, Thomas and Loxley, 2001, pp. 52-58). Finally, this student perceives himself as competent both in relation to knowledge and behaviour; what he challenges is school's competence.

A few students however, do present a 'pathological' 'label' of their ability/behaviour:

I.S.: Do you like school?

Boy: When I'm in a...when it's a good day, yes...but when I am in a bad day...when I have a bad day it's not good.

I.S.: What is a bad day?

Boy: When I get into trouble...when I say something and I said it wrong and I'm done for that.

(Boy, Year 9, English School)

This student describes a behaviour that is, more or less, out of his control:

Boy: Like...I try to get on with teachers...then they start saying things to me and I get mad and I get done for that. I don't mind it when I don't get mad...I just try...

[...]

I.S.: When you're moody as you said, do you think that the teachers are fair to you?

Boy: Some of the teachers when I am in a bad mood they know that I just need to cool off a bit so...some they understand...when I calm down...I get on really well with them.

(Boy, Year 9, English School)

For this student teachers' management of his behaviour is central, both in avoiding triggering off his 'bad' behaviour and not letting it escalate. In-class behaviour incidents management in the English school perplexed me for a long time, until a special needs assistant mentioned in the interview that she thinks that some teachers try to avoid confrontation. Although as a teacher I never perceived myself as a strict disciplinarian, my perception was based on a specific cultural context in which teachers' authority is accepted (and challenged) in a different

way. To be more specific, in a number of cases I recorded teachers saying 'thank you' to students after stopping a particular act of 'misbehaviour' (e.g. stop talking, or return to their seats). I could not imagine myself 'thanking' someone for doing something that I –as a teacher- would have decided that they should not had done in the first place. Although these 'thank you's ranged from the sincere to the sarcastic, it can be argued that the 'politeness' discourse between teachers and students in the two contexts are different. Politeness of course is culture specific and thus 'class' and 'status specific. However, in the two contexts, I think that 'politeness' as an educational tool is used in different ways.

Two of the Greek students give a 'pathological' description of their behaviour/ability. In both cases this description is presented not in relation to what they 'have', but what they would like to 'have' (see Mylonas et al., 1997; Leondari, 1993):

I.S.: If you could change something in school, to make it better, what would that be? Imagine that you are the Minister of Education for one day.

Boy: The conduct.

I.S.: Your conduct?

Boy: Yes, to be much better.

I.S.: And why do you think that it's like that?

Boy: Because...well...I don't listen sometimes to my parents, and I do things, small things though, not big [things]...and I fight very easily.

(Boy, Year B', 2nd Greek School)

I.S.: And if you could change something in school, what would that be?

Boy: The mind.

I.S.: Whose mind?

Boy: Me to have a better mind.

(Boy, Year B', 2nd Greek School)

The second student provided in his interview a clear description of how students' 'minds' differ:

Boy: And Miss [in Ancient Greek]...gave us some worksheets to do over Christmas and I left them for last minute, Saturday and Sunday...and on Monday we had school...and she did some [verb] tenses [in the lesson] that [we needed] three-four days to do them...in one day to listen [learn] them, well how [it's possible] not to miss something? I can't understand, we are not register-keepers or the best students.

I.S.: So some teachers do the lesson with the best students?

Boy: No, they want all students to...to be the best, as if they don't know that all people are not...educated. Why do they try? So they try for some kids...to put them down and put [knowledge] in their mind [head] for them to learn it properly...while they [students] can't. In one day to learn it, she will ask me to stand up [to answer questions]...it's very difficult. She asks me to stand up and she makes fun of me if I don't know it. You, well, you were a good student, but if you didn't know something, would you accept the insult.

I.S.: No.

Boy: I accept it and I do nothing.

(Boy, Year B', 2nd Greek School)

This student who is in the verge of failing the year has been excluded a number of times, is considered 'naughty' and the head teacher said that he and four others from their form may be banned from going on a three-day trip; spends time with students from his form, but does not have 'friends'; other students make fun of him because he is close to his sister, presents an account of 'hope' and 'despair'. He describes a number of 'strategies' that he uses to improve his position in the school, from cheating in tests, crammer school, copying from his sister's old books, making her do his homework, to lying to teachers. However, all his strategies, according to his account, fail: "[...] with the stress I had in Geography [test]...some kids left the class and I asked them "what is the length of the Carpathian [Mountains]?" and he said 2000, I heard it and I wrote 200.000".

In contrast to other students that believe that they can change their 'attitude' or 'position' as students: "I have a goal now to do very well, I didn't have good grades...in the other school I failed the year [...] I had goal for better

grades...but when you fail, you can't go from nine and eight to 15, 16...well, now I am at 12, 13, there 11, 10" (Girl, Year B', 2nd Greek School), this student seems trapped in in-competence.

He describes his own in-competence (his 'mind') and school's (e.g. to support him to cover his 'gaps', and to stop seeing him as a 'bad', 'naughty' student). However, the uniformity of Greek schools and the use of 'soft labelling' (see Chapter Six) keep this student competing with the 'register-keepers and good students' in unequal terms.

Conclusion: The boundaries of frameworks of competence

All the above students define their own and school's framework of competence in different ways. However, none of these students reject school. Only one student in this study rejected school:

Girl: I was in the Duty Room 'cos I wasn't coming to school...for about five-six months...I didn't come to my lessons...I was there all day.

I.S.: Why was that?

Girl: I don't know...I just don't like school.

[...]

I.S.: If you don't come, what happens?

Girl: Eh...me dad drags me out of bed and me mum walks me down when she goes to work.

[...]

I.S.: You don't like school, but do you think that school is important for you?

Girl: My mum says it is, and me dad.

I.S.: Why?

Girl: Because I've got to...learn, and that's it.

I.S.: What do you think yourself?

Girl: That I don't have to come.

I.S.: Why do they think you have to learn?

Girl: Because I'm not very good at reading, or spelling.

I.S.: Do you like to learn things like that, reading, spelling, or is it too difficult?

Girl: Too difficult...I used to be very good at reading...Do you know these books [name of series of primary school reading books]...I used to sit and read them.

I.S.: What happened then?

Girl: I don't know...I can't read...the school just bores me every bit.

[...]

Girl: I can go [leave school] in fifteen because my birthday is in August...I am only twelve.

(Girl, Year 8, English School)

This study presents the views and perspectives of students that attend school. In the English school a number of students did not have regular attendance. In the Greek schools, with the attendance restrictions, students cannot have interrupted attendance. However, in Greece a number of students leave school without finishing compulsory education. Despite regulations about compulsory education, usually schools do not pursue parents that decide to interrupt their children's education and/or accept their children's decision to interrupt their education. The English school puts a lot of effort in improving students' attendance and its differentiation allows for alternative arrangements (e.g. student being in school, but not in-class with other students) to take place.

However, when one sees inclusion in relation to young people's rights and citizenship, one is forced to ask the question whether this girl that rejects school has the 'right' to decide to stay away from school, to take a 'risk' about her future as a person and as a citizen (see Edwards and Glover, 2001, for the relation amongst risk, citizenship and welfare). Schooling is a right and an entitlement and at the same time, an obligation. Students in both contexts are aware that their 'employability' is closely related to a 'good' education and even then, it is not

guaranteed¹²¹. Students are prepared to spend more years in education in order to become active citizens. Extended education, on the other hand, “may be regarded politically as a convenient ‘parking place’ for young people when insufficient new jobs opportunities are arising” (Hill, 1996, pp. 221-222).

The frameworks of competence discussed above are defined in relation to students’ acceptance of the role and purposes of schooling in their life. Inclusion/exclusion necessitates that students in mainstream schools acknowledge their ‘schooled’ identity, an identity that in principle allows them access to ‘knowledge’, ‘education’ and future employment and citizen status.

¹²¹ For a comparative study on ‘work’ and ‘culture’ in relation to (in)competence in Greece and Wales, see van Maastricht (1998). Van Maastricht’s study took place in a rural area in Greece and the context that she describes is to some extent different from the one in this text, especially in relation to ‘informality’ of provision and opportunity.

Chapter Fourteen

Conclusion: The Many Faces of Inclusion and Exclusion

Language and comparative ethnographic research

In the first chapter of this text it was argued that both the story of the topic of this study and the story of how this study/text was constructed would be presented. A number of 'themes' and 'issues' were introduced that were seen as central to a comparative ethnographic understanding of inclusion/exclusion. Coming to the end of this text, it becomes obvious that these two stories have not always been treated equally and in different chapters one or the other dominated the text or even disappeared. However, the 'themes' and 'issues' connecting the two stories were present throughout the text giving it hopefully a degree of 'internal validity'.

Language was the main 'topic' discussed in the introductory chapter where it was problematised in many ways; it was seen as 'culture', as defining and expressing the culture of the participants in the study and as expressing an academic writing culture with specific 'conventions'. Language was also seen as theoretically and

methodologically important to understanding in a comparative/ethnographic way different inclusion/exclusion discourses, and of course as fundamental to the construction of these different inclusion/exclusion discourses.

One can compare 'comparative' research to 'translation' since both try to create a context of common understanding for phenomena or texts that belong in different contexts. However, both comparative research and translation relate to specific conventions and norms (see for instance for translation Bassnett and Trivedi, 1999; von Flotow, 1997). Venuti argues that

Perhaps the most important factor in the current marginality of translation is its offence against the prevailing concept of authorship. Whereas authorship is generally defined as originality, self-expression in a unique text, translation is derivative, neither self-expression nor unique...

(Venuti, 1998, p. 31)

In the process of translating and comparing between and across languages, this text's authorship (mine and of the participants in the study) can be seen as 'self-expression' into context.

Schutte (1998) argues that "when we translate [...] we associate one word with another, one situation with another, one way of seeing with another way of seeing" (p. 35). Throughout this text I have tried to present my 'uneasiness' in relation to this research and to the knowledge that it produced. Even when I assumed an authoritative 'voice' presenting countries, cultures, schools, knowledge discourses, as if I 'know' them, I think that I tried to also present the limitations of my 'knowledge' by giving some indications of how I came to that knowledge. I tried to give examples of how 'knowing' relates to experiences, perception, feelings, assumptions and values and I presented to some extent how

my 'insider' knowledge is not necessarily more 'true' than this that I have had as an 'outsider'. In this way I hope that I manage to keep my own 'voice' instead of assuming a 'writer's voice'.

In relation to the participants' 'voices' (and languages), it can be argued that I was not completely successful in including them in this text. Teachers' accounts were to some extent 'silenced'. This was a 'practical' decision, to fit the study into the limits of the text. In order to do that, teachers' accounts become part of the description. Their 'voices' are missing from the text and make the 'story' less complete.

Students' accounts are presented more; they are part of the 'story', as it was constructed through the analysis. Students, for instance, talked much more about their friends than it has been presented in this text. To some extent I failed to represent the 'enjoyment' of being a student to the same extent that, for instance, bullying was presented.

In relation to students' language, I tried to 'respect' it as much as possible. I tried in analysing the interviews, not to look only for the 'interesting', and the 'exceptional', but, for instance, to include the simplicity and power of utterances like 'yes', 'no', 'I don't know'. How students' language was represented in this text is however more complicated. Chang (1992) who conducted an ethnographic study in an American High School, describes how her language, coming from a Korean background, influenced the representations' of the participants' language. She states that "my advisor, Harry Wolcott, noted that in fieldnotes my American teenagers 'all seemed to be speaking Korean English'" (Chang, 1992, p. 200). In this text the opposite has been my concern. All the 'problems' I had with

'understanding' English students' language during the fieldwork and in transcribing the interview tapes, could be hidden behind students' competence as native speakers in the text.

However, I had to translate Greek students' language into English. To find a balance between the language of 'origin' and the 'target' language, represent a shared students' language, and keep the individual language of each student, and to highlight equivalence, similarity and different, and express the 'familiar' and 'strange' in the translation of the students' accounts was a difficult 'analytical' task.

I tried to keep close to students' language and in that sense the translation of students' language is not completely in 'natural' English. In some cases I kept the Greek expressions, as in the case of 'learn (letters)' (μαθαίνω γράμματα). In other cases, a greater degree of equivalence was assumed. For instance, I translated the expression 'κάνω φασαρία' with the phrasal verb 'mess about'; although its literal translation would have been 'make noise'. However, 'make noise' does not describe the aspects of this expression that do not relate to 'sound' and can be confused with 'make funny noises' or 'being noisy'. 'Κάνω φασαρία' and 'mess about' do not mean exactly the same thing, but rather they have a number of common elements, yet defined in different contexts. In general, I used a number of phrasal words and as Newmark (1993) argues

English phrasal verbs show up semantic gaps in most foreign languages and therefore they are invaluable to a translator into English and frustrating to a translator from English.

(Newmark, 1993, p. 30)

The aim was not make the Greek students sound like English students. I think that in most extracts from students' accounts included in this text, it is easy to find out if there is an English or a Greek student talking by the combination of what students say and how they say it. The 'English school', 'Greek school' attribute that follows each extract is different from 'school age' and 'gender', in the sense that the context in which these accounts were constructed is evident most of the times in what it is said. It is important to mention that 'English/Greek students' refers to students in English/Greek schools, but not necessarily to ethnicity. The use of phrasal verbs could reproduce the 'informality' and 'ambiguity' of Greek expressions and to some extent compensate for the lack of translatability of other expressions.

Smyth and Hattam argue (2001)

We tried to open up spaces for young people to tell their accounts, even if those accounts appeared to us to be non-linear, partial, fragmentary and possibly being told for the first time to another human being. The 'data' was quite literally being created, rather than collected.

(Smyth and Hattam, 2001, p. 404)

In this study the actual translation of the Greek students' accounts and the constant exchange of language and analysis across languages, has extended the partiality and fragmentation of these accounts long after the interviews were conducted.

Finally, constructing a shared space of understanding between the two contexts, languages, and cultures means to find a fragile balance between the specific to each context and the general that goes across contexts. I think students' constructions of 'ideal types' of good/bad students, is an example of that.

Students' types are generic in the sense that they transcend the context in which they operate, and they may be applicable to a number of other contexts. At the same time, they are context-specific and they present the 'reality' of this context. What a good/bad student does in English and Greek schools may sound similar, but at the same time it is very different because 'student' and 'school' are different.

Inclusion and Exclusion

This study explored inclusion and exclusion in mainstream schools. Inclusion/exclusion is not seen as something that affects a small number of students in schools, but rather as affecting and at the same time as constructed by all students and other participants.

None of the participants in this study sees education and schooling as 'totally' inclusive or exclusive –although for some it should be 'inclusive' in principle– but rather as 'conditionally' inclusive or exclusive. I think that the importance of 'conditionality' of 'reality' for perceiving inclusion/exclusion at present and in future is described in Marcuse's (1968) statement that "the freedom of imagination disappears to the extent that real freedom becomes a real possibility" (p. 154).

Popkewitz (2000) argues for focusing "on the problem of inclusion/exclusion as a single concept (inclusion/exclusion) related to the problem of knowledge and the social administration of the "self"" (p. 22) and Corbett (1997) argues that "equality and inclusion without consideration of differences is meaningless" (p.

58). This text has tried to explore how 'inclusion/exclusion' and 'difference' are mutually dependent, how inclusion and exclusion create the discursive space in which the 'individual', the 'collective', the personal and common good, education, society, the state, and the nation are contested in relation to 'difference' in and outside schools.

In order to do that this text has moved across different 'levels' of the educational apparatus. A number of analytical concepts were used to do that, for example 'uniformity' and 'differentiation'. Furthermore, inclusion/exclusion has been seen as integral to the educational systems and to the ways that systems 'change'. The concept of marketisation of education was used to explore the ways that inclusion/exclusion is defined and negotiated in relation to the historical conditions of the systems, their present and their proposed (and desired) future.

This presentation aimed to avoid seeing 'special education' and/or any other 'additional provision' in schools as distinct from the 'general', 'mainstream' provision, not assuming that there is necessarily within mainstream schools a specific type of provision exclusively for the 'majority' of students. Skrtic (1991, see also Skrtic, 1995) argues that

special education is not rationally conceived, because historically it has served as a myth and a legitimating device for school organizations to cope with the stifling value demands of their institutionalized environments.

(Skrtic, 1991, p. 181)

However, in this text it was argued that the 'selective' nature of schools is defined in relation to different knowledge/ability and discipline/behaviour discourses. These discourses affect who is included/excluded, for what reasons and, how inclusion/exclusion takes place. These discourses legitimise

inclusion/exclusion and define them in (school) 'reality' –usually seen as resources, time, and target/purposes constraints- in that sense inclusion and exclusion are 'rational', although at the same time they are contradictory, ambivalent and conflicting.

The interaction between what Norwich and Lewis (2001) call the 'unique *differences* position' (p. 324) in relation to a special education pedagogy, and the constant reappraisal of 'general', and 'special' education (see Adams et al., 2000) moving the boundaries of the dichotomy but without challenging the dichotomy itself, influence the ways that the 'uniformity' of categories of groups of children and on the other hand, the 'differentiation' of their 'uniqueness' (for instance of 'needs) are created.

Furthermore, in this text it was argued that *any* inclusion is not necessarily 'good'. As Tomlinson (1982) argues "it certainly will be cheaper to educate children with special needs in ordinary rather than special schools" (p. 174). For students struggling with their inclusion/exclusion in mainstream schools, the values and ideologies underlying their inclusion/exclusions become the focus of their struggle. Allan (1999) argues that "transgression allows individuals to peer over the edge of their limits, but also confirms the impossibility of removing them" (p. 48). To restrict however, students' struggle for participation within the school, to see them only as 'schooled children' diminishes the significance of their struggle. Students see themselves both as 'schooled children' and persons at present and at the same time see themselves as in the process of constructing a future 'full citizen identity'.

Frameworks of competence and education for democracy

Fulcher (1989) argues that “integration is basically about discipline and control: it’s not about disability” (p. 276). Fulcher sees a discourse on disability as deflecting attention

...from the fact that it is failure in the educational apparatus by those whose concern it should be, to provide an inclusive curriculum, and to provide teachers with a sense of competence in such a curriculum, which constructs the politics of integration.

(Fulcher, 1989, p. 276)

Schools provide frameworks of competence for all participants. In these frameworks of competence the “atomisation of the body-politic into what are called ‘individuals’” (Poulantzas, 1978, p. 63) takes place in relation to knowledge and discipline, which define schools ‘power’ over participants (both teachers and students). The different ways that students are ‘labelled’ in different special educational needs discourses, the different ways that entitlement and equal opportunities are defined and negotiated in practice and in the transmission of school knowledge, the purposes and aims of schooling in ‘educating’ future citizens in relation to different meanings of citizenship are some of the things defining schools’ frameworks of competence.

However, students do not operate passively in these frameworks. They are active social actors that engage with them in different ways in constructing their own frameworks of competence. In that sense students contest not only their own limits, but also the limits of other frameworks of competence (e.g. schools, teachers, parents, society).

Giroux (1996) talks about a radical pedagogy based on the hope of a “democracy to come” (p. 134). Students take a pragmatic view in relation to this, they give

glimpses of how they envisage a more 'democratic school', accepting however, most of the time, the limitations of 'schools'. Students in the fragmentation of their accounts present both 'hope' and 'despair'. However, students do not see themselves as overwhelmed by others' 'power' (the main source of their 'despair'), but rather they critically engage with their own 'power' in defining their student identities, and thus, they present what can be called a 'hope of action'.

In concluding this text, I would like to return to social cartography and the mapping of inclusion/exclusion. This text tried to map different understandings of the concept and phenomenon of inclusion in a comparative way. However, it did not aim to capture 'reality' in its totality. What this text presented is a sketchy map that just gives an outline of how the 'topic' was framed. However, I hope that it gives a readable map and an indication of the variety of the landscape. Students said at the end of the interviews when asked if the interview covered most aspects of school life, that 'more or less' or 'just about' the main things were covered. I hope that this text 'just about' did most of the things that it claimed to do.

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Appendix I

Breakdown of the Sample: Students

	Male (total)	Female (total)	Total	Male (interviewed)	Female (interviewed)	Total
Students (English School)						
(3 forms)	43	45	88	31	28	59
Students in special needs register	28	17	45	21	13	34
Students with statements	9	4	13	9	4	13
Students (1st Greek School)						
Students (3 forms)	N/K	N/K	70 (estimate)	11	11	22
Students (2nd Greek School)						
Students (3 forms)	39	28	67	21	16	37
				Total (Three Schools)		
				63	55	118

Appendix II

Staff Interview Schedule and Questionnaire

This appendix includes the interview schedule that was used with members of staff in the English school and the teachers' questionnaire (translated in English and in Greek) used in the 2nd Greek school.

Staff interview schedule in English school

General Background information
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Role in the school<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Years of teaching• Years of teaching in this school• SEN qualifications, in-service training• Responsibilities in the school
Philosophy and values of the school
<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. What are the main values that underpin education at this school?<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How are these values translated into practice?
Understanding of Special Educational Needs
<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. What is your understanding of the term 'special educational needs'?4. [What is the meaning of the term 'inclusive schooling' for you?]5. Are there pupils for whom you think this school would be inappropriate, and why?
Organisation of the school and everyday practice
<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. How are special educational needs met in the school?<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What policies are relevant?7. Do you think that you have a sufficient knowledge of the needs of individual children?<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which are your sources of information?8. How do you organise your teaching in relation to the requirements of the National Curriculum and the educational needs of individual pupils?
Function of the support system
<ol style="list-style-type: none">9. How do you use the available support in your teaching? (Question for teachers)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do you think that the available support is used in lessons? (Question for support assistants)

Questionnaire for teachers in the Greek school (English translation)

This questionnaire is part of my Ph.D. research project entitled "Inclusion of students with special educational needs in secondary education, England and Greece".

The questionnaire is anonymous and confidential, as they are all the data of this study. The Pedagogic Institute and the Ministry of National Education and Religion Affairs approved the research project.

Your contribution is essential, necessary and decisive for the completion of the study.

I would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation,

Ilektra Spandagou

QUESTIONNAIRE

Gender Male Female

Title of degree and Speciality.....

Years of teaching

Years of teaching in this school.....

Have you participated in any seminars about special education and *έντραξη*?

.....
.....

1. Which according to your view are the values underpinning Greek education?

.....
.....
.....

2. Do you believe that these values are realised into practice?

.....
.....
.....

3. What do you want to change in education in relation to your role?

.....
.....
.....

4. Do you believe that the terms 'special needs' and 'special educational needs' have the same meaning?

Yes No

5. Which of the following do you consider as special educational needs?

- a. Deafness
- b. Blindness
- c. Physical disabilities
- d. Learning Difficulties
- e. Autism
- f. Dyslexia
- g. Ethnic Minorities
- h. Children with Behaviour Problems

6. Do you know what 'ένταξη' means?

Yes No

7. What is your personal understanding of 'ένταξη'?

.....
.....
.....

8. Which of the following do you think that are necessary preconditions for successful 'ένταξη' in the Greek school?

- Material and technical substructure
- Special teachers
- Psychologists and other specialists
- Cooperation with parents
- Educational Reform
- Other.....

9. Do you know any cases of children with disabilities educated in mainstream schools?

Yes No

10. What kind of disabilities?

.....
.....

11. Are in your school children that have educational difficulties?

Yes No

12. What kind of educational difficulties?

.....
.....

13. What are you doing in order to deal with any possible educational difficulties of your students?

.....
.....
.....

14. Have you ever contacted any of the following in relation to the special needs of specific students?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Special Educator | Other teacher |
| Consultant of general education | Assessment centre |
| Consultant of special education | Psychologist |
| Medical doctor | Speech therapist |
| Head Teacher | Other |

15. Which of the following are according to you 'ένταξη' of children with special needs in mainstream school?

- Classes of additional/supporting teaching
- Parallel classes
- Class with support teacher apart from the main teacher
- Reception classes

16. Would you accept in your class a student with special needs?

- Yes No Perhaps

17. Students with special needs should be educated in special schools?

- Yes No Depending to the individual case

For what reason?

.....
.....

18. Are in your school any students that you think that their particular educational needs are not fully met?

- Yes No

19 What kind are the needs of these students?

.....
.....
.....

Any comments about the questionnaire and the questions:

.....
.....

Questionnaire for the Greek teachers (Greek original)

Το ερωτηματολόγιο αυτό έχει δημιουργηθεί στα πλαίσια της διδακτορικής μου εργασίας με θέμα την ένταξη παιδιών με ειδικές εκπαιδευτικές ανάγκες στη δευτεροβάθμια εκπαίδευση, στην Ελλάδα και την Αγγλία.

Το ερωτηματολόγιο αυτό είναι ανώνυμο και εμπιστευτικό, όπως και τα υπόλοιπα δεδομένα της έρευνας αυτής.

Η έρευνα έχει εγκριθεί από το Παιδαγωγικό Ινστιτούτο και το Υπουργείο Εθνικής Παιδείας και Θρησκευμάτων.

Η συμβολή σας είναι αναγκαία, απαραίτητη και καθοριστική για την ολοκλήρωση της έρευνας.

Σας ευχαριστώ εκ των προτέρων για τη συνεργασία σας,

Ηλέκτρα Σπανδάγου

ΕΡΩΤΗΜΑΤΟΛΟΓΙΟ

Άνδρας

Γυναίκα

Τίτλος Σπουδών και ειδικότητα.....

Χρόνια
εργασίας.....

Χρόνια εργασίας στο συγκεκριμένο σχολείο

.....

Έχετε παρακολουθήσει κάποια επιμορφωτικά σεμινάρια σχετικά με την ειδική αγωγή και την ένταξη;

.....
.....

1. Ποιες κατά τη γνώμη σας είναι οι αξίες που διέπουν την ελληνική εκπαίδευση;

.....
.....
.....

2. Θεωρείτε ότι οι αξίες αυτές εφαρμόζονται στην πράξη;

.....
.....
.....

3. Τι θα θέλατε να αλλάξει στην εκπαίδευση ως προς το δικό σας ρόλο;

.....
.....
.....

4. Πιστεύετε ότι οι όροι ειδικές ανάγκες και ειδικές εκπαιδευτικές ανάγκες είναι ταυτόσημοι;

Ναι

Όχι

5. Ποιες από τις παρακάτω περιπτώσεις θεωρείτε ως ειδικές εκπαιδευτικές ανάγκες;

A. Κωφοί

E. Αυτιστικοί

B. Τυφλοί

Στ. Δυσλεκτικοί

Γ. Κινητικά ανάπηροι

H. Εθνικές μειονότητες

Δ. Νοητικά Καθυστερημένοι

Θ. Παιδιά με προβλήματα

Συμπεριφοράς

6. Γνωρίζετε τι σημαίνει ένταξη;

Ναι

Όχι

7. Τι σημαίνει ένταξη για σας;

.....
.....
.....

8. Ποιες από τις παρακάτω νομίζετε ότι είναι απαραίτητες προϋποθέσεις για να επιτύχει η ένταξη στο ελληνικό σχολείο

Υλικοτεχνική υποδομή

Συνεργασία με γονείς

Ειδικοί εκπαιδευτικοί

Εκπαιδευτική μεταρρύθμιση

Ψυχολόγοι και άλλοι ειδικοί

Άλλο.....

9. Έχετε υπόψη σας περιπτώσεις παιδιών με αναπηρίες που παρακολουθούν σχολεία γενικής εκπαίδευσης;

Ναι

Όχι

10 Τι είδους αναπηρίες;

.....
.....

11. Υπάρχουν στο σχολείο σας παιδιά που αντιμετωπίζουν κάποιες εκπαιδευτικές δυσκολίες;

Ναι

Όχι

12. Τι είδους εκπαιδευτικές δυσκολίες;

.....
.....

13. Τι κάνετε ως εκπαιδευτικοί για να αντιμετωπίσετε τυχόν εκπαιδευτικές δυσκολίες των μαθητών σας;

.....
.....
.....

14. Έχετε απευθυνθεί ποτέ σε κάποιον από τους παρακάτω σχετικά με εκπαιδευτικές ανάγκες συγκεκριμένων μαθητών σας;

Ειδικό παιδαγωγό	Συνάδερφο
Σύμβουλο γενικής εκπαίδευσης	Διαγνωστικό κέντρο
Σύμβουλο ειδικής εκπαίδευσης	Ψυχολόγο
Γιατρό	Λογοθεραπευτή
Διευθυντή	Άλλο.....

15. Ποια από τα παρακάτω παραδείγματα σημαίνουν για σας ένταξη παιδιών με ειδικές ανάγκες στο γενικό σχολείο;

Τάξεις Ενισχυτικής Διδασκαλίας
Παράλληλες Τάξεις
Τάξη με ενισχυτή εκπαιδευτικό εκτός του μόνιμου
Τάξεις Υποδοχής

16. Θα δεχόσασταν στην τάξη σας ένα μαθητή με ειδικές ανάγκες;

Ναι Όχι Ίσως

17. Οι μαθητές με ειδικές ανάγκες πρέπει να εκπαιδεύονται σε ειδικό σχολείο;

Ναι Όχι Ανάλογα την περίπτωση

Για ποιο λόγο;

.....
.....

18. Υπάρχουν μαθητές στο σχολείο σας για τους οποίους πιστεύετε ότι οι ιδιαίτερες εκπαιδευτικές ανάγκες τους δεν καλύπτονται πλήρως;

Ναι Όχι

19. Τι είδους είναι οι ανάγκες των παραπάνω μαθητών;

.....
.....

Τυχόν παρατηρήσεις σχετικά με το ερωτηματολόγιο και τις ερωτήσεις:

.....
.....

Appendix III

A Chronicle of the Greek Student Movement (1998-2000)

The following table presents selected events during the unrest that followed the introduction of the Law 2525/1997. It focuses on the students' movement of the year 1998-1999 and it also includes the events of 1999-2000. Therefore the events of the school year 1997-1998 in which teachers and university students, and to a lesser extent school students, were the main actors are not included. Another reason that these events are not included in this presentation is because during that year I was not in Greece and was not able to follow the events as closely as I did the following two years.

A number of different sources were used for the compilation of the following chronology¹²². These sources use different implicit definitions of the student movement. For example, in some cases minor terrorist attacks-mainly explosive mechanisms left outside buildings or offices doors- are not seen as part of the student movement. In other accounts the student movement and the teachers' movement come together under the umbrella 'struggle for education' and in others they are kept separate. In the following accounts, the focus is on events that students are directly involved in, or which are directly related to the students' movement.

¹²² The main sources used in this chronology are: National newspapers of that period and especially 'Eleutherotypia' (Ελευθεροτυπία) and 'To Vima tis Kyriakis' (Το Βήμα της Κυριακής), an account of the events in the educational journal 'Ta antitetrada tis Ekpaideysis' (Kavvadias and Fatourou, 1998), an account of the students' movement 1990-1999 published by the Anarchist group "OTANIS" (2000) (Αναρχική Ομάδα «ΟΤΑΝΙΣ»), and my notes from that period.

A generic understanding of the student movement is used in this discussion and the following table presents the events using as a starting point the students' participation in them. Alternative accounts of that period may focus on the role of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, the role of different political parties, or the role of teachers and their unions.

Table 10.1 is a chronological one. In each time period events that are related to the whole period are given first and then specific events of this time period follow.

Period of time	Events
1997-1998 School Year	
22/06/1997	<i>Submission to the Greek Parliament of Plan of Law for Education by G. Arsenis, the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs.</i>
23/09/1997	<i>The Law 25225/1997 is published in the Gazette of the Government.</i>
1997-1998 School year	<i>Teachers' unrest.</i> The teachers' movement started in 15/01/1997 with a long-term strike of teachers and it ended with a week of incidents and riots during the period in which the first exams for teachers' selection took place in June 1998.
1998-1999 School Year	
29/09/1998	Teachers and students demonstrate in the city centre of Athens.
26/10-01/11	<i>First 'shut-downs' of schools in Thessalonica.</i>
02/11-08/11	04/11 Students' demonstration in Athens.
09/11-15/11	11/11 Demonstration in Athens (estimations of up to 8,000 protesters, depending on the source).
16/11-22/11	<i>280 non-compulsory secondary schools (Lyceum) are closed.</i> 17/11 Demonstration with participation of students to mark the day of 'Polytechnio' (The peak of Students' activism during the Colonels' Dictatorship). 147 Arrests after clashes between protesters' groups and the police. 20/11 Hackers leave the message "Arsenis, the Modern Herod" in the website of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs. The group "Internet struggle" (Δικτυακή Πάλη) acknowledged responsibility.
23/11-29/11	<i>370 schools are closed.</i> <i>University students close a number of Departments.</i> <i>Mr. Arsenis, Minister of Education, starts a round of visits to schools to discuss the new Law with students. The Ministry of Education suggests that students are ill informed about the implications of the Law.</i> 26/11 Demonstration in Athens (estimations between 8.000 and 15.000 protesters). Demonstrations in other 30 cities.
30/11-06/12	<i>The Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs claims that the Reform is now the Law of the State and cannot be changed.</i> <i>OLME gives data that around of 1.000 out of 3.300 schools</i>

	<p><i>are closed.</i></p> <p><i>Piraeus Prosecutor's Office produce guidelines proposing that parents with child members of the 15member school committees are to submit statements that they do not agree with their children's actions in order to minimise the possibility of parents' future prosecution in case of school damages.</i></p> <p>01/12 Students from the EPL (multi-branch non-compulsory secondary school) in Filadelfia close the 'National Highway' (Εθνική Οδό).</p> <p>03/12 More 'blockings' of roads with students bringing school desks and chairs out of schools as barricades.</p> <p>04/12 A parent in Larissa brings charges against students for the shut down of the 30th Lyceum of the city.</p>
07/12-13/12	<p><i>1,606 Schools out of 3,534 are closed.</i></p> <p>07/12 Mr Arsenis meets head teachers. Vandalism and damages at the 4th gymnasium of Ioannina are reported.</p> <p>09/12 One-day teachers' strike. Demonstration in Athens (15,000 protesters estimated) with riots, damages, and arrests. Demonstrations in 46 other cities.</p> <p>10/12 Road blocks in Thessalonica. Eleven people are brought to the Public Prosecutor facing charges.</p> <p>11/12 Cancellation of event in Peristeri in which Mr Arsenis was invited due to the fear of incidents. Students throw pots of yoghurt at the Mayor of Peristeri.</p> <p>13/12 Arson in the teachers' office at the 3rd Gymnasium in Kallithea.</p>
14/12-20/12	<p><i>Roadblocks are everyday events. Some newspapers print maps of closed roads.</i></p> <p>15/12 Workers' demonstration in Athens with students' participation. Demonstrations in other cities.</p> <p>16/12 Damages in a school complex in Patra. A group attacks the 2nd Lyceum, which is closed, in Toumba, Thessalonica. Extensive damages.</p> <p>17/12 Live debates on the television between the Minister of Education and representatives of students in the current affairs programme 'black box' (Μαύρο κουτί) at Mega, a private television channel.</p> <p>18/12 A two-month suspended sentence is given to a sixteen-year-old student for damages to a school.</p>

	<p>19/12 Demonstration in Athens.</p> <p>20/12 Explosion of a makeshift mechanism at the office of the candidate mayor for Athens supported by KKE (Greek Communist Party). The group "Children of November" (Τα Παιδιά του Νοέμβρη) take responsibility claiming that it is an act of protest against the position of the KKE in the student movement.</p>
21/12-27/12	<p><i>The Minister of Education proposes some slight, short-term (for this and next year) changes in the implementation of the Law. The central one is that the grade of the second year of the non-compulsory level is included in the total grade –which defines entrance to university- only if it is better than that of the third year.</i></p> <p><i>Representatives of the students do not accept these changes.</i></p> <p>23/12 Two arrests in a school in Thessalonica.</p> <p>24/12 Explosion at the ex-office of the Deputy Minister of Education, G. Anthopoulos.</p>
28/12/1998-03/01/1999	<p><i>Christmas Holidays</i></p> <p><i>In many schools the shutdowns continue during the holidays.</i></p>
03/01-10/01	<p><i>Renewal of roadblocks after New Year.</i></p> <p><i>Parents try to reclaim schools and in some cases succeed. Incidents between parents supporting and opposing the shut downs become common events.</i></p> <p>07/01 Plain clothed police officers enter the school complex of Grava in Galatsi and make two arrests. Later the arrested students are let free.</p> <p>10/01 Four arrests in the TEL (Technical non-compulsory secondary school) in Kalamata after charges are brought in by the Head of Office of Secondary Education due to breach of peace.</p>
11/01-17/01	<p><i>Due to the duration of the schools' closures students in some schools are faced with the possibility of repeating the school year because of unsatisfactory attendance and incomplete teaching of the syllabus.</i></p> <p><i>Roadblocks.</i></p> <p>11/01 Arson at the offices of the 1st Lyceum in Metamorphosis.</p> <p>Arson at the offices of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, G. Papandreou (ex-Minister of Education). Responsibility taken by "The Children of November".</p> <p>14/01 Incident in which a driver threatens students with a rifle in a closed road in Ioannina. He is arrested.</p> <p>15/01 Demonstrations in many cities. In Athens riots, damages, and arrests.</p>

18/01-24/01	<p><i>The number of closed schools is lower than before the holidays and varies from day to day, e.g. on the 19th 622 schools are closed and 83 more are open but students do not take part in lessons, on the 24th the numbers are 687 and 62 respectively (numbers given by the police).</i></p> <p>18/01 A student is knocked down by a car in a road closure in Athens. She is not seriously hurt.</p> <p>19/01 A student is hurt when she is knocked down by a car in Rhodes. The driver does not stop.</p> <p>Cases of students who arrange to be transferred to schools that are open are reported.</p> <p>20/01 A student supporting the shut down in his school in Voula is hurt when the father of another student hit him with a baseball bat while groups of parents for and against the shut-down are gathered outside the school.</p> <p>The Confederation of Police employees make an appeal for the peaceful termination of the unrest.</p> <p>23/01 Meeting between the Minister of Education and representatives of 15 member school committees.</p> <p>24/01 A one-day strike of secondary school teachers and a three-hour strike of primary school teachers.</p> <p>Change in the hard line of the Ministry of Education, that no dialogue can proceed while schools are closed.</p> <p>Demonstration in Athens. 26 people are arrested.</p> <p>A riot police officer cuts the hair (the ponytail) of a sixteen-year-old Albanian student in year A' of the Lyceum. Later the student is let free without charges and charges are brought against the police officer.</p>
25/01-31/01	<p><i>Continuation of roadblocks.</i></p> <p><i>On the 28th 510 schools are closed and 55 open but with no lessons (police numbers).</i></p> <p><i>From the 17th of November until the 29th of January, 200 people were arrested in demonstrations in Athens (147 of them in the 17/11 demonstration). From the remaining 53, twenty-one were minors.</i></p> <p>25/01 Meeting of the Minister of Education and OLME (Secondary school teachers' union).</p> <p>Driver threatens students with an axe in a roadblock. He is arrested.</p> <p>26/01 Incidents in schools in a number of cities amongst parents, or parents and students when parents and students try to open schools.</p> <p>27/01 The police find hashish, a dog and a rifle in the ELP of Volos. A student is arrested for drug possession for the second time since the beginning of the unrest.</p>

	<p>28/01 48-hour teachers' strike. Demonstration in Athens with riots. 30-31/01 Weekend of meetings between the Minister of Education and OLME. Students declare that they are not going back to school unless the exams in year B' are abolished.</p>
01/02-07/02	<p><i>The countdown of students return to schools has started. On the 1st the Police claim 432 schools are closed and students claim that more than 800 are still closed. On the 3rd 207 schools are still closed and 26 are not doing lessons. The Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs announces plans for making up for the lost lessons. Despite the fact that the repeat of the school year has been used as a 'threat' to students, no school is going to have to repeat the school year. School Committees (i.e. head teacher, teachers, and students' representatives) need to decide the best way for making up the missed lessons (i.e. extended day, Saturdays, instead of excursions/trips, Easter holidays, and as a last resort extension of the school year). Plans for each school should be submitted at the Ministry by the 10th of February. 14 schools (all of them lyceum) have between 34 and 38 lost days, which is considered by the Ministry as the 'red line', the critical point for repeating the year.</i></p> <p>01/02 The Prosecutor's Office of Piraeus rules that members of the 15-member school committee can be named in preliminary investigations of vandalism in schools, even in the case that those responsible for the vandalism are people outside the school population. They also can be considered as accomplices in any criminal act.</p> <p>03/02 When most schools reopen, the students of the Special school for the deaf and hearing impaired in Thessalonica decide to shut down their school as an act of protest for the Ministry's delay in dealing with issues of special education.</p>
08/02-14/02	<i>The majority of schools are open.</i>
1999-2000 School Year	
October 1999	06/10 Demonstration in Athens followed by riots between small groups and the police.
November 1999	11/11 Demonstrations in many cities.
December 1999	<p><i>200 schools are closed.</i></p> <p>03/12 The Ministers' Council orders the intervention of Public Prosecutors in closed schools where damages have occurred. 5/12 Public Prosecutors, police and fire brigade start opening closed schools. In some cases students re-close them. This practice will continue for the whole of the month.</p>

	<p>9/12 Incident in a school in Patra between police and students when the Public Prosecutor tries to reopen the school.</p> <p>10/12 Twenty students are arrested in Rhodes. A demonstration with riots follows.</p> <p>15/12 More incidents in schools.</p> <p>16/12 Demonstrations in a number of cities.</p> <p>A student is beaten by other students because they suspected that he had informed the police about the shut down of their school</p>
January 2000	<p>14/01 Demonstration in Athens followed by riots.</p> <p>At the second part of January the number of closed schools has declined.</p> <p>The early intervention by Public Prosecutors and head teachers and the 'fatigue' and disappointment of the previous year minimised the duration and impact of the student movement.</p>