Mapping discriminatory landscapes in a divided educational system: the case of Cyprus

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Abstract
This paper examines the way in which the Cyprus educational system, primarily concentrating on the Greek-Cypriot side, reproduces discriminatory patterns via an outmoded and ethnically divided educational model, in spite of some efforts to introduce multi-cultural elements of local level. Existing literature and a number of studies and reports on immigrant and minority students illustrate the need for further research on the subject, so that a comprehensive reform of the educational system can take place to move from an ethnocentric model towards a more critically orientated humanistic education based on tolerance and understanding – a matter of urgency if Cyprus is to meet the challenges of a state acceding to the EU and above all a society that overcomes the current ethnic and nationalistic divide, be it in the form of barbed wire or ideological and mental barriers in the minds of the people.

Introduction
If the question of education in society is extremely important for society, the question of discrimination in education becomes even more important, given the role of education in reflecting, shaping and reshaping individuals, social institutions and society itself. This paper is a first attempt at the issue of ‘racial’ discrimination in the Cypriot education system, concentrating primarily on the Greek-Cypriot side. Of course what is required is an overall assessment of both the Greek-Cypriot as well as the Turkish-Cypriot education systems as they historically evolved. The paper is part of wider study on institutional ‘racial’ discrimination and does include the Turkish-Cypriot system, to be published in the future.

This paper is written primarily as a basis for further research, not as an exhaustive analysis of the methodology and research on the subject, but attempts to draw on existing research on the subject to point to the direction of future research on the matter. From the evidence available (studies, reports, media coverage, incidents reported) it is apparent that the issue of racial, ethnic and religious discrimination in education needs to be put high on the research agenda so that a proper picture of the subject emerges to assist policy to combat this discrimination.

A Classical Debate continuing
Education is attributed with an immense role in shaping individuals, institutions, even society itself. Moreover, the importance of education in the production and reproduction of discriminatory patterns, ideas, discourses, practices and structures is well recognised. Nevertheless, ‘education’, schooling and vocational training ought not to be seen in isolation from the rest of society, rather educational processes should
be analysed, as an integrated part, and in a constant process of re-negotiation, re-articulation, part in conflict and part in conformity with other social structures processes and practices in society. Education, together with the labour market, is among the most important areas in which inclusion, exclusion, belongingness and discrimination can best be located and appreciated.

The sociology of education has a long tradition since the establishment of the modern educational system. Education seized a central place in modernization theories, such as those of Weber, Durkheim, Parsons, etc. One of the most important theoretical developments was the Durkheimian theory of education. Durkheim considered the modern education as the gate for secondary and the most important forms of socialization. It was a process by which the individual becomes a full member of society; the education ‘offers’ the necessary social and vocational skills, including the knowledge of norms and rules for living in a society. Even later post structuralist scholars, such as Foucault (1972) recognizes the importance of education as one of the most important means of preparing the individual for living in society, although he calls education as a process of disciplining society.

However, this paper does not intend to explore the sociology of education, but as part of that which is related to discrimination of ‘the other’. Furthermore, this paper is about ‘racial’ discrimination, not about general inequality in society; nor is it about ethnocentrisms; nevertheless to ignore the wider issues that contribute to the systematic discrimination of what is referred to as racialised groups in society would fail to appreciate the complex interrelation between discrimination and social inequality. In fact the very principle of non-discrimination derives from the principle of equality; to be (unlawfully or unjustly) discriminated against means not to be treated equally when one should have been treated so or, to be treated (formally) equally when one should have been treated differently (due to circumstances, social positions, knowledge, status etc). The debates in the sociology of education over the nature, purpose and meaning of education, the notion of the ‘hidden’ and declared curriculum, the issues of access, denial, selection, the role of parents, parental education and interest, social capital, attainment, chances and barriers (Bourdieu and Passeron, J.-C , 1977, Bowles and Gintis, 1976, Halsey, Heath and Ridge 1980) must be modified and directed accordingly towards the issue of belonging and exclusion of migrants and racialised groups in society. Also such debates must be linked with the questions of citizenship, integration and multicultural and plural society within the context of the European integration process. Nonetheless, this is a long-term research agenda well beyond the scope of this paper.

The fundamental question here is whether education in an emancipatory means of human development, whether at an individual or collective level or whether in fact it is itself a mechanism or tool in which discrimination and inequality is reproduced and maintained. From the days of Aristotle (384-322 BC) education was valued as a necessary ‘ethical virtue’ that ought to be properly implemented for the benefit of society and the individual. Aristotle in book Ten of his Ethics (1955: 310) writes: Like a piece of land, which has to be prepared for the seed to grow there, the mind of the pupil has to be prepared for inculcation of good habits, if it is to like and dislike the things it ought.
Aristotle can be seen as one of the first proponents of the virtue of education in its own right: to become virtuous one must possess a suitable nature, rightly directed by habit and education. Nevertheless, the key to a moral and ethical dimension of education is that it is capable of providing the necessary tools and skills of correctly discriminating between ‘good’ from ‘bad’. ‘Discrimination’, i.e. differentiating an idea, matter, practice, person, from another and ‘valuing’ it, prioritising and, preferring or rejecting it, goes at the heart of Aristotelian *ethical* education. For education is seen as a means of overcoming being “passions slave” and mastering passions on the basis of logic (Aristotle 1953: 310 – 311). Aristotle’s seminal observations have filtered through popular knowledge to such an extent that they are now taken for granted as ‘common sense’. In spite the role of the dark ages, whereby the most interpretation of ‘education’ was more or less equated with dogma, as imposed by the most reactionary interpretations of Christian faith, the notion of education as virtue in fact survived via the very institutes of church – state oppression in the monasteries’ libraries: hence unveiling the inherent contradictions entailed within the very heart of the educational process in that ‘knowledge’ and ‘truth’ can never be guarded against or controlled no matter how have those in power try. The Orwellian *Big Brothers* and the various *Jorhe* (Eco’s *The Name of the Rose*) can do nothing about it, but they will of their out most to control, direct and use it for their benefit.

Education was taken up passionately by the Enlightenment and given a critical twist in the emancipatory project for saving, advancing and progressing humanity. Now education assumes an all-powerful role of emancipating the whole of humanity. It is no coincidence that Saint-Simon allegedly professes that,

> Our education achieved its purpose: it made us revolutionaries

(Hamilton 1995: 48)

Education became indeed a liberal ideal via which all members of a (democratic) society have the opportunity and capacity to evolve, develop and attain their roles, jobs and positions in society. The Parsonian world preserved a special function for education in the socialization of members of society via the *meritocratic ideal*. It serves also as a ‘vehicle’, a mechanism for belonging, and all western liberal democracies invent heavily in education: education is a good in its own right: The Marshallian citizens (and their children) can participate in civic life through education and the working class, as well as migrant communities and ethnic minorities would therefore ‘belong’ to the wider societal community; at least this is how theory has it (Marshall 1953).

Before focusing on discrimination and education in Cyprus this paper briefly examines by way of introduction the problem of racism in Cyprus society.

**Cyprus and the problem of Racism**

If one is to understand “racial” discrimination in Cyprus, one must appreciate the fine linguistic and cultural issues relating to the meaning of the key terms and the extent to which they are considered to be morally, politically and socially deplorable or repugnant. The concept of *φυλή* (Greek for “race”) is not redundant in public discourses not even in the so-called ‘politically correct’ media world. In any case, in Cyprus there is little sense of political correctness in the media language and society
The term “race” can be and is being used without the inverted commas in spite of the fact that Cyprus has signed and ratified all the UN and other international instruments which totally reject the pseudo-scientific theories of race and consider the term itself to be totally discredited and therefore abandoned (see National Report of the Republic of Cyprus on the Conclusions of the European and World Conference against Racism 2002). Racism, in Greek ῥατσισμός or φοβισμός, is certainly deplorable, unacceptable and morally reprehensible as a phenomenon for Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots alike and it would be fair to say that for the vast majority of Cypriots racism is considered to be a serious offence. Nonetheless, the dominant view, as shown in a variety of surveys as well as public discourses (as it will be shown further down) is that this “bad” practice either happens elsewhere or if it is brought home it is Cypriots who are the victims of racism: Cypriots have suffered in the hands of colonialism; Cypriot migrants have suffered from the racism of the indigenous populations (e.g., in the UK, USA and Australia). More importantly the slogans of the nationalists in Cyprus who oppose a federal solution of the Cyprus problem are that any federal system that relies on the notion of ethnicity is inherently racist, as were the London Zurich Accords in Cyprus. Racist was considered to be the Turkish policy in Cyprus as the continued occupation of the Northern part of Cyprus expelled and excludes 200,000 Greek Cypriot refugees from their homes and, following Yugoslavia where the term “ethnic cleansing” was discovered by the media, Turkey is accused of having followed a racist policy that ethnically “cleansed” the north of Cyprus from the Greek-Cypriots and has demographically altered the population by bringing settlers to replace them.

Whilst there is no doubt that the Greek-Cypriots expelled from the occupied territories by the Turkish army in 1974 were victims of a policy that racially discriminated against them, unable to return to and enjoy their homes, this argument is by and large used to undervalue and underestimate the historical context and nationalist politics of both communities, the role of Greece and Turkey and international politics. Nationalist discourse which has been generalized as a state ideology through schooling and media coverage of national anniversary celebrations and national heroes, ignores the fact that between 1964-1974 Turkish-Cypriots had also been the victims of violence, sectarian massacres in the hands of army and paramilitary groups, of generalized ethno-racial discrimination and were forced to withdraw into enclaves. There is literature examining the politics of memory, memorials and museums from ethnographic and anthropological perspectives; hardly surprising in a conflict-ridden island such as Cyprus, where historiography essentially mirrored the nationalist perceptions of history by both communities (see Papadakis 1993).

The issue of racism against migrant workers was up until very recently dismissed as ‘isolated incidents’ by the authorities, a matter that attracted serious criticisms of institutional racism or at least government inaction. The racism debate with migrants at the receiving end and Greek-Cypriots as the perpetrators did not ‘fit in’ the national story of victimisation of Greek-Cypriots. Of course not all Greek-Cypriots are perpetrators and not all migrants are victims, but the power structure puts migrants at the receiving end.

A careful reading of the Second Report on Cyprus of ECRI may lead to the conclusion that what we have is institutional racism, underlying the whole legal and administrative system, that is responsible for the employment and general
implementation of the framework of entry and stay in Cyprus. The Report falls short of using the term ‘institutional racism’, but a careful reading reveals a resemblance with the kind of structural practices associated with the what Lord Macpherson called ‘institutional racism’ (Macpherson 1999). As defined in his Report, point 6.17:

“Unwitting racism can arise because of lack of understanding, ignorance or mistaken beliefs. It can arise from well intentioned but patronising words or actions. It can arise from unfamiliarity with the behaviour or cultural traditions of people or families from minority ethnic communities. It can arise from racist stereotyping of black people as potential criminals or troublemakers. Often this arises out of uncritical self-understanding born out of an inflexible police ethos of the “traditional” way of doing things. Furthermore such attitudes can thrive in a tightly knit community, so that there can be a collective failure to detect and to outlaw this breed of racism.”

For Cyprus then in all but name the picture painted by the report is particularly gloomy, the underlying policy effect that are indeed discriminatory as the ECRI report note with concern. The inadequacy of remedies in some situations is mentioned in the executive summary:

Problems of racism, xenophobia and discrimination persist, however, and immigrants appear to be in a particularly vulnerable position in this respect. The rights of immigrant workers, notably domestic employees, are often not respected and the remedies available in these cases are not always effective”

In fact the issue of ‘excessive violence by the police’ is noted in the executive summary:

Of serious concern are reports of use of excessive force by the police against aliens who enter or stay in Cyprus illegally and the detention of this category of persons for long periods of time pending deportation.”

The report refers to immigration officers who require training on human rights; to public figures, whose remarks may lead to a xenophobic climate all of which cause the ‘vulnerable position of migrants’. Also ECRI notes that “foreigners account for almost 30% of the total prison population of Cyprus” and that in most cases, they are detained for offences linked to their right to stay in the country and very rarely for violent crimes. ECRI encourages the Cypriot authorities to carry out research on the causes of the disproportionate representation of foreigners in Cypriot prisons.

Migrant workers themselves regularly complaint about the treatment they get from the police and other authorities, such as social workers, for mistreatment and racial discrimination. The most effective means of screening has proved to be the Commissioner for Administration or Ombudsman, as noted also by the ECRI Report. As with the previous year most complaints about human rights violations came from migrant workers: Out of 1999 complaints 156 were from migrants, mostly migrant workers (Ombudsman Annual Report 2002: 35) and the tendency is for the complaints to rise every year. For the years 2000 and 2001 most complaints by migrant workers were against the Immigration Office and Police (Immigration Section). The Report notes that the sharp rise of 52.94% in comparison to the year 2000, is the result of the tougher line of the administration to exercise control on
immigration; the increase in the cases of violent abuse or violation of human rights against migrants and the creation of support institutions to inform them and assist migrants.

The Ombudsman Annual Report (2002) for the year 2001 is illuminating on the kind of practices followed by the administration ranging from failure to remedy situations of maltreatment to policies without due process to extreme harshness. Characteristically the Report (2002: 41) notes “the administration exhausts all the reserves of strictness” when it comes to implementing legal provisions as regards deportation of any migrant worker who loses his/her job, which is the polite way of saying that the authorities are harsh. Furthermore, the Report refers to the prejudicial situation migrant workers are, in a very unequal employment relationship with their employers, and is critical of the practice whereby the employers use the Police to get rid of their former migrant employee so that they can obtain permit to bring a new one, leaving no opportunity for migrant employee to complain or put his/her case. “The possibility of recourse to the Labour Tribunal the Supreme Court is in most cases a theoretical one”, the Report notes (2002: 41).

It is on this basis that a reading of the ECRI report on Cyprus, by taking all the information available that leads to the conclusion that institutional racism is structurally embedded in the legal and administrative system that racialises migrant workers. However, a great deal needs to be researched in the different areas of policy formulation so that any underlying patterns of structural discrimination is revealed and tackled.

The Cypriot Educational System: ‘Communal’ Education and the ‘National problem’
The recent debates that were sparked off in Greece, over the refusal of the school authorities to allow an excellent pupil of non-Greek descent, Odysseas Tsenai, to be the prestigious ‘flag barer’ in the annual parade, a convention that requires that the student of excellence carries the Greek flag, due to her ethnic origin, is a reminder of how ethnocentric education can be a major societal problem. Such issues are not confined to countries of the periphery such as Greece, but similar sort of ‘debates’ have occurred in Britain over the Salman Rushdie affair and in France over the issue of the head scurf in France. However, these matters are not far distant phenomena from Cyprus, as a Tsenai phenomenon may well be repeated in Cyprus.

Given the importance of education in the production, and particularly reproduction in the shaping and the reshaping of ‘national’ sentiments, prejudice, racial stereotypes, myths, discourses and attitudes about ethnic minorities, migrants and the ‘other’, whatever shape such education takes, it is remarkable that so little empirical and theoretical research has taken place in Cyprus. Recently however some important initiatives have been made and research has been conducted as a result of the growth in influence of the peace and bi-communal movement in Cyprus, the presence of migrant workers for a decade now and the processes of accession to the EU. An important development is the appointment by the Ministry of Education of a commission of academics and experts with a mandate to explore educational reform in Cyprus and interesting debates are at last beginning to emerge. Nonetheless, the material available is still fragmentary and research is at a very early stage. The
importance of the ‘historical’ context of education in Cyprus is that it is ever-present: the structure of the educational system determines the current basis of educational policy, the content of education (through the syllabi) and the structural links between religion, national belonging, racial exclusion and structural discrimination.

The specific historical setting of Cyprus has been dominated by the ethnic relations between the two constitutionally recognised communities, the Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, as well as the role of foreign forces, something also reflected in the research agenda on Cyprus. The result is that this has somehow led to neglect in initiating studies on the various grounds of discrimination. Indeed, tackling discrimination on grounds other than ethnic or racial origin was somehow subsumed in the ‘national question’; even there the emphasis has been to study the relations between the two communities, undervaluing discrimination as such or looking at the treatment of the smaller minorities.

The problems in the relations of the two communities started right after the establishment of the newly formed Republic in 1960; in fact the first inter-communal incidents had begun from 1957. The constitution imposed was extremely rigid and complicated and it quickly led to conflict between the two communities, as the Report of the UN special envoy Mr Galo Plaza makes clear. The social life of the two communities, including the question of discrimination, was inevitably shaped by the turbulent political history of the island that brought the two communities into conflict. There has been very little research on the question of discrimination as such, given the apparent dominance of the political question and widespread ethnic violence. The Plaza Report refers to the underlying ethnic divisions and the fact that individual human rights, including the right not be discriminated against, was deficient between the years 1960-65. Under the heading “The protection of individual and minority rights”, Mr. Plaza notes the difficulty in applying the principle of equality of treatment and human rights without discrimination due to “the fact that the population of the island continues to consist of two principal ethnic communities, the further fact that they are unequal in numbers and finally the gravity of the conflict which has developed between them”. The same Report noted the difficulty involved in the task of rebuilding a “progressive re-birth of confidence and the re-establishment of social peace”, as the obstacles “are no less psychological than political”1. The way forward in Cyprus according to the Report is “the establishment of the most rigorous guarantees of human rights and safeguards against discrimination”, which goes to illustrate, if in an indirect manner, the prevalence of discriminatory practices that inevitably go hand-in-hand with the ethnic conflict and turbulence that existed, particularly during the period 1963-67, but also throughout the short life of the Cyprus Republic.

According to the Cyprus constitution educational matters are classified as ‘personal laws’ and are thus left to each of the communities to regulate under the Communal

1 The Report notes: “The violent sharpening of “national” sentiments over the months of crisis will for some time make it extremely difficult for officials at all levels to impose or even exercise strict impartiality towards all the citizens of the country, and without that impartiality and understanding there will be a constant risk for acts of discrimination, even if laws are respected in the formal sense. Furthermore, there are personal hatreds, which will last beyond any political settlement.”
Chambers. In fact education had been divided under the British colonial rule, which took over and “modernised” the Ottoman *millet* system, which allowed separate education on the basis of religion, under the leadership of the Orthodox Church. The Church or the ‘Ethnarchy’ was a traditional political leader, whose head, the Archbishop, led the flock under the millet system. During British colonialism, ‘liberal’ educational policies on the one hand and ultimate authoritarianism entailed in the colonial system on the other, created the conditions for the growth and evolution of nationalism and the subsequent clash of Greek and Turkish nationalisms in Cyprus, the conflicting national projects of *Enosis* and *Taksim* (Attalides 1979). In any case it is well documented that the educational system was crucial in the spreading of nationalism (Anthias and Ayres 1983; Grecos 1991), due to the segregated schooling as well as the fact that personnel and school literature were imported from the ‘mother-countries’, i.e. mainland Greece and Turkey (Anthias 1992: 43).

The term ‘Community’ is rigidly defined in Article 2 of the Cyprus Constitution, leaving little room for ambiguity and choice for that matter. There are two *communities* in Cyprus the Greek and the Turkish communities. Art. 2(1) provides:

“The Greek community comprises of all citizens of the Republic who are of Greek origin and whose mother tongue is Greek or who share the Greek cultural traditions or who are members of the Greek-orthodox Church.”

Article 2(2) defines the Turkish Cypriot community:

“The Turkish community comprises of all citizens of the Republic who are of Turkish origin and whose mother tongue is Turkish or who share the Turkish cultural traditions or who are Moslems.”

The rigidity of the Constitution fixes ethnic identity in such a way that the two communities must be kept apart. Anyone not belonging to either of the two categories, such as members of smaller “religious groups”, falls under the category defined by Art. 2(3) and includes Maronites, Latins and Armenians, who must opt to belong to either of the two main communities and be subject to the ‘Communal Chamber’. The term ‘community’ is rare in constitutional texts but it is not unique in the Cyprus constitution. From the other minorities in Cyprus, who enjoyed certain minority rights, particularly religious rights, but were forced in 1960 to choose with which of the two main communities they would want to be part of. Maronites, Armenians and Latins chose to be part of the Greek-Cypriot community, although still retaining their religious representatives in the House of Parliament, albeit with a mere observer and consultancy status (see Grecos 1990: 390-396). The few Cypriot Jews are said to have also chosen to be part of the Greek-Cypriot community (Dickstein 2001 / see also Pantelides 2003). The Rroma population of Cyprus, which is said to have been over a thousand, have chosen in 1960 to be part of Turkish-Cypriot community due to their Muslim faith (Williams 2000; Kyrris 1969, 1985). A future federal arrangement can accommodate for different ethnic groups, women and “minorities within minorities” by utilising the experiences and regimes developed elsewhere, without of course dogmatically ‘importing’ regimes that do not account for the conditions of the island. The problem of ethno-centric education, particularly of the communal type as the one opted for in the case of Cyprus, becomes even more complicated with the introduction of the migrant communities, who themselves are entitled to their own cultural rights.
The turbulent political history inevitably shaped the social life of Cyprus and as such the question of ethnic/ racial discrimination during the period of independence up until 1974 is best viewed in this light. It is not surprising that the political question and widespread ethnic violence has overwhelmed the research agenda leaving little research interest for issues such as racial discrimination. When it comes to racism, racial discrimination, structural or ideological, the case of Cyprus is a peculiar one, as the problem of racism must be somehow linked to one of a long-drawn conflict, which took the form of ‘ethnic conflict’ since the 1950s, what Azar (1986) termed as “protracted social conflict”. The ‘Cyprus problem’ must be connected to the attitudes, practices and discourses in the daily life of ordinary persons, not just today, but also viewed in a historical perspective. It does not take a genius to realise that underlying the historical so-called ‘ethnic conflict’ lays the politics of ethno-racial segregation. It is experienced in the ‘everyday life’ of individuals of the two communities who happen to ‘cross over’ in their daily exchanges as some form of discrimination, ranging from prejudice to abuse, even to violence and murder by extremists of both sides. However, there is strong evidence illustrating chronic discriminatory practices from the early days of the Republic (see Plaza 1965). The difficulty is that the ‘Cyprus problem’ is primarily a problem of nationalism and state/ethnic conflict and one ought not conflate ‘racism’ into ‘nationalism’ and vice-a-versa, retaining the analytical categories that describe connected but separate phenomena.

As one observer noted, the history of the Greek-Cypriot education is a strong case of “using education for political ends”, in other words the legitimisation of Hellenocentric education (Persianis 1996: 26). Turkish-Cypriot education mirrored this. The Ministry of Education and Culture came about only after the constitutional crisis of 1963; even today its existence is based on the “doctrine of necessity”, due to the withdrawal of the Turkish-Cypriots from the administration, in 1963, as required by the Constitution (see Persianis 1996). At the heart of Cypriot education lies the ethnocentric model, a major structural problem and a barrier in properly tackling discrimination in education particularly against migrants and minority groups. The second major structural barrier is the social position of (subaltern) migrants and other marginalized groups, as noted in one study (Trimikliniotis 2001a: 17-50). Social position refers to the combined effect of the way these groups are being stratified in society (economic, class, ‘racial’, cultural and legal status), all of which are matters of this study.

In the territory under the control of the Cyprus Republic (south) there are no schools, even though there are a couple of hundred Turkish-Cypriots living there (see Kyle 1997; ECRI 2001). However, there are Turkish-Cypriot children in the south, particularly in the Turkish sector of Lemesos, some of whom are attending Greek schools; other Turkish-Cypriot children, who arrived very recently from the occupied territories in the north and do not speak Greek do not attend the school. Apparently for the last year there has been an approved budget of about 11,000 euros for elementary schooling of Turkish-Cypriots in the south but this is yet to materialise.
Literature Review on Cypriot Communal Education: The Basis for Ethnic Discrimination?

The ethnocentrism of the Cypriot education system is well documented, as well as the influence of divisive separate educational structures along ethnic communal lines. This paper will not embark on a full – brown review on the literature on the matter, since our subject is not ethnocentrism but discrimination – even though there is a strong link between the two: ethnocentrism is itself a source of discriminatory practices and ideologies and this empirically – and theoretically well established. Instead, this paper offers an indicative literature, review so as to locate both the “gaps” of knowledge as well as the “bridges” upon which the knowledge around education discrimination is to be built.

One of the most important research by Karagiorges (1986), who points out from the outset that

“The dominant features in educational terms of the period immediately following independence were the exacerbation of the separation – along communal lines resulting in the organization of education under Greek and Turkish communal Chambers.”

Karagiorges splendid historical study charts the development of education in Cyprus – the resistance of the establishment to setting up a university and the influence of the conflict in Cyprus between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots political elites over ‘Enosis’ and ‘Taksim’. The fact that the separate education structures “under which the education system of the newly born republic functioned, looked towards their respective mother countries for educational policies, objectives and orientation” lead him to the critical conclusion:

“It would not perhaps be an exaggeration if one maintained that education not only did not support but it undermined the very existence of the State which it was meant to serve” (1986: 152)

Karagiorges looks towards the future policy so that Cyprus may be able to overcome the reproduction of national Chauvinism via education and avoid copying everything from Athens:

“Chauvinism and intolerance in education proved to be destructive for the island as a state and for all its communities. Education must support the existence of the state an independent sovereign state and cultivate tolerance, acceptance and democratic procedures and responsibility” (1986: 155)

In contrast with Karagiorges another Greek Cypriot educationalist, more in line with the nationalist thinking is Maratheftis (1992), who is keen to bring out the Greek virtues and his problematic is quite different the so-called Hellenic – Christian ideals. Under the hading ‘The National Mission of the Cypriot teacher’, the then Director of the Pedagogical Academy of Cyprus. Mr. Maratheftis is of the view that:

“Even though the teacher is a product of the society to whom he belongs, society itself requires that the teacher to be distinguished in term of moral and national consciousness. Irrespective of any ethos society has, society requires that the teacher is the articulator (εκφραστής) of the virtue and a fighter of the preservation of its national and cultural traditions”. (Maratheftis, 1992: 142)
Interestingly, the Director compares the “easy task” of “implanting to the students the love for Greece and the passion for Enosis” (1992: 193) to the current situation, which is much harder as “the national task of education is implant the idea of unified and independent Cypriot Republic. Castigating the fact that “politics divide”, he strongly supports “national issues unite”, following the usual tune of “national unity” and criticising indifference. Another interesting feature is the complete absence of the Turkish Cypriots from the process; whilst the Turkish occupying forces are there the points of reference are Hellenism and Christianity.

There are of course plenty of Greek books written on the subject of education and its relation to ‘national’ and ‘ethnic’ processes. The role of education (Greek education) in mystifying the social relations and conflict in society and ‘national reproduction’ (see Milios 1984) as well as the processes of homogenization of the Hellenic ‘social formation’ (Milios 2000). These works are mentioned due to the need to examine critically the Greek education system and content and see the influence of Greek Cypriot education. Frangoudaki and Dragona’s work “What is our Country” – a study of ethnocentrism in education (Frangoudaki and Dragona and Associates, 1997) is a seminal work which examines the national curricula and its role in cultivating “patriotism” by empirically investigating the processes and means vial ‘national identity’ is being reproduced though historical and reified perception of time, history and social evolution of “Greekness” in textbooks, historical paradigms and the representation of the ‘self’ and the ‘other’. It is in fact a major study on Greek ethnocentricism that applies also to Cyprus, as most of the books are Greek imported and education is Helleno-centric. Of course some modifications are required to relate these ideas to the Cypriot context but overall the analysis in equality applicable to Cyprus.

Nevertheless, the question of (ethnic) discrimination is quite distinct and warrants separate analysis: Discrimination as such, derived from ethnocentrism, or from the ethnic or social structures and ideology has never been a subject of study in Cyprus.
1. Structural Racism and Schooling in Cyprus

The second ECRI Report on Cyprus (2001) makes a number of recommendations that derive from an assessment of the current situation in Cyprus in the area of education, which provide a good starting point of analysis, not only in the direction of policy-making to remedy the situation, but in order to properly analyse the current state of affairs. The ECRI Report, under the heading G. Education and awareness raising recommends that the Cypriot authorities promote human rights awareness in schools and devote particular attention to the fight against racial prejudice, respect for difference and promotion of tolerance as well as to extending the curricula of all school children to include education in human rights. Furthermore, considering the increasingly multicultural composition of the student population in Cypriot schools, ECRI urges the Cypriot authorities first, to ensure that all teachers are properly trained to teach in a multicultural environment and secondly, to react to any manifestations of racism or discriminatory attitudes in schools. Moreover, ECRI stresses the importance of initiatives in the field of education specifically aimed at facilitating better understanding between the Greek-Cypriot and the Turkish-Cypriot communities and supporting bi-communal events involving both students and adults.

Under the heading “I. Access to public services - Access to education” ECRI “encourages the authorities to ensure that the provision of Greek as a second language meets the demands of the immigrant community and that teachers are properly trained in this respect”, considering “the increasing numbers of immigrant children in Cypriot schools”. Furthermore, it urges the authorities to consider introducing “teaching in languages other than Greek for students of non-Greek mother tongue in parallel with education in Greek to facilitate the process of learning for these students” (see point 27 ECRI Report 2001).

The following tables are indicative of the numbers of minority, non-Greek. They do not cover ethnic background as such but do provide a good basis for analysis.

**Table 6 Primary Schools by Town where children whose native language is not Greek, year 2001-2002**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>No. of Children</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lefkosia</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemesos</td>
<td>Over 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larnaca-Ammohostos</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pafos</td>
<td>568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Over 935</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[source: Ministry of Education, collected by Maria Rousou. Total no. of students 63,800]

**Table 7 List of Elementary Education Schools with foreign language speaking children**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>No. of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. NICOSIA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Phaneromeni</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ayios Dhometios B´ (KΑ´ + KΒ´)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### B. LIMASSOL

1. Β’ Elementary School
   - More than 10 foreign language speaking
2. Στ’ Elementary School
   - these schools
3. ΙΓ’ Elementary School
4. Α’ Elementary School
5. Ε’ Elementary School

### C. LARNACA - FAMAGUSTA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kalogerias Elementary School (KA’ + KB’)</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayia Napa</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralimni Α’</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### D. PAFOS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pafos A’</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pafos B’</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ΙΠ’</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pafos Δ’</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pafos Ε’</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Παφος ΣΤ’</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pafos Z’</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Παφος Η’</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Παφος Θ’</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Παφος Ι’</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Παφος ΙΑ’</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Data collected by Dr. Maria Roussou. These tables and data demonstrate the size of the minority groups of the various communities in Cyprus.*

### Table 8 Children from the Religious Groups, by level and public/private schooling for year 2000-2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>PRIMARY</th>
<th>SECONDARY</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latins</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maronites</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenians</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Total number of pupils: 63,800. Source: Framework Convention for the Protection of national Minorities pursuant to Article 25, January 2000.]
The Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (2001) considers that the method of recording national minorities is inadequate as “there is a possibility that the census data do not reflect the number of persons belonging to national minorities” (point 27). The insistence that groups such as the Maronites and the Latins be considered as a religious group and nothing more, rather than a national minority, has been criticized by the Opinion of the Committee. The Advisory Committee is not convinced by the governmental submissions that a set of legal provisions would be superfluous, as there appears to be no cases of discrimination. The Committee encourages the government to make such legislation, enforcement structures and procedures that would protect all persons from discrimination on the grounds of language, culture, ethnicity and religion.

Multiculturalism Or Institutional Racism?

Even before the ECRI Report, Cypriot authorities responded to the presence of non-Greek speakers at schools by developing a ‘bi-cultural’ educational program (In Greek: διαπολιτισμικό εκπαιδευτικό πρόγραμμα) for those schools where a high number of non-Greek speaking children appeared. Instead of opting for a comprehensive plan for multicultural education, the plan is for a kind of ‘ad hoc multiculturalism from below’.

In one study, analysed further down, (Trimikliniotis 2001a: 27) an expert involved in the design and teacher training of ‘bi-cultural’ educational program noted that the schooling structure is not conducive to a genuine response from below, but nonetheless does provide for “action research”. A deputy head-masters involved in the development of a ‘bi-cultural’ educational program at local level noted, “there is no planning from the Ministry… it is based on the private initiatives of the teachers to find the teaching material and read on their own” (see ibid: 26-28). The idea of the program however is not a genuine multicultural approach that recognises and values all cultures, but a practical allocation of teaching time for the non-Greek native speaking children to learn Greek. The presumption is that these children have a language or cultural deficiency and require ‘special assistance’ in language learning. This teaching is seen as mere extra curricula activities with no special weight or significance. The Minister of Education insists that there is a very clear educational policy on the matter, however most teachers interviewed in that study stated that if there is such a policy they have never been notified of it (ibid: 26-31).

Ultimately, there is a conflict between the notions of ‘bi-cultural education’ with the ethnocentric core of the educational system. In fact the former Education Minister, although quite adamant about the need for ‘bi-cultural education’, rejected vehemently any move to create a genuine multicultural system that treated all cultures as equal and valuable stating that he would never even consider taking steps to “discolour Cypriot education”, since Greek children of Cyprus need to know who they are and where they must go” (quoted in Trimikliniotis 2001a: 30-31).

Even with the knowledge that education is not a mechanistic model of reproduction and instruction, with pupils and students acting as passive recipients, but a negotiated, contested and active process (Willis 1977), Helleno-centrism and nationalism at schools certainly influences the production an reproduction of stereotypes and ideas. Education is indeed ideologically and nationally ‘coloured’ very strongly indeed and
as Spyrou (2000) vividly illustrates the essentialisation of identity occurs through a process of discursive construction, which mythologize the past and construct the ‘other’ in a demeaning and derogatory manner. In his research, Spyrou cites numerous examples where teachers, in the course of a history lessons, identify ‘Us’ with the ‘glorious’ Byzantine empire, and contrast us, who are ‘peace-loving’ to ‘Them’ (i.e. the Turks), who are ‘barbarians’, ‘wild’ and war-like. In such a context the idea of respecting other cultures and valuing other identities as equal disappears into thin air.

The educational system of Cyprus may declare on the one hand that it is based on humanistic, liberal and universal principles such as ‘freedom, democracy, equality, justice and international understanding” as set out by UNESCO, but at the same time it aspires to transmit, conserve and enhance the ‘Helleno-Christian’ or ‘Helleno-orthodox’ values. The latter leave little, if any, scope for other religions or indeed any questioning of these value-systems. Children from the recognised ‘religious groups’ are exempted from the lessons of religious education, and parents of other sects or even keen parents who object to the religious teaching may seek permission to have their children excepted from this lesson. Nonetheless there is little scope for pupils and children themselves questioning or challenging the fundamental value system that is the cement of the educational ideology of the Greek-Cypriots.

Discrimination, therefore, based on religious belief (or cultural practice) is inherent in the system, as the exception practice does not resolve the problem, though it may alleviate from some daily pressures. The ‘Helleno-Christian’ ideals spill over and are dispersed throughout the educational environment. The practice of Morning Prayer is a systematic feature and those students of a different belief or background may, and often are singled out. Other lessons, one can say key lessons, which aim at developing the critical mind, knowledge, understanding and judgement, such as Modern Greek (language and literature) as well as History and other lessons have curricula loaded with ethno-religious biases. National celebrations and anniversaries have also a religious bias many times: The most important school celebration is the 25th March, the day of Virgin Mary and the anniversary of the 1821 Greek revolution. However, this day is the national day of the school parades, where the top pupil gets to be the ‘flag-carrier’ (σημαιοθόρος), the Greek and the Cyprus flag. However, what happens if the top student happens to be non-Greek, non-Christian? Does he or she get to carry the Greek flag with the cross on it? If the teachers interviewed are correct and the non-Greek students are of the caliber to make them top class students (Trimikliniotis 2001a), we must conclude that this is likely to occur soon. Such an incident occurred in a Greek village recently and sparked a bitter debate in that community: The parents were divided, as some teachers and parents strongly objected to a Muslim flag carrier of the flag that depicts the Orthodox cross of Greekness. The matter may appear quite simple for the European ‘civic nations’ that have tolerance and multi-ethnicity, but such tolerance is not always abundant in Cyprus. In any case why should a child be faced with such dilemmas in the first place? It is undoubtedly discriminatory to single out and possibly stigmatize persons of a different ethnic, religious or cultural background. Given that in Cyprus education is communally organized such problems are inherent: discrimination unfortunately goes to the heart of the system. However, even secular societies such as France may well impose a kind of authoritarian republicanism as the recent cases with the girls who wished to ware the ‘hijab’ to school indicate17.
Structural Racism at Elementary Schools

A study on the primary education of the children of Pontian migrants examined the kind of issues facing them and has found serious and systematic processes that discriminate against them (Trimikliniotis 2001a). It is ironic that the terms of reference of this study were loaded with the kind of racial prejudice that the findings eventually strongly criticise. From theMinutes of the meeting of the Parents Association that requested and sponsored the Association of Cypriot Sociologists to conduct the above-mentioned study, apparent are a number of racial stereotypes and attitudes of hostility and mistrust towards the Pontian migrants and their children: In areas with a high concentration of Pontians, the Parents Associations complain that the promise by the Minister of Education to disperse Pontian children among the different classrooms so that they are only a maximum of 5 in each class was not kept, resulting, as they allege, in an inability to cover the syllabus due to language difficulties of these children. As a consequence ‘Cypriot children’s educational attainment suffers’. Secondly, they allege that due to these problems, Cypriot parents enrol their children in other schools, leaving certain schools in a state of ‘imbalance’ (i.e. high number of non-Cypriots). Thirdly, apparently Pontians concentrate in poorer areas with affordable rent and so they are ghettoised in the neighbourhoods and at school. Also, there is, they allege, a tendency to criminal behaviour in children of the Pontians, who due to their problems at school drop out of school and resort to criminal acts (see ibid 2001a: 54-55). However, such behaviour is not attributed only to migrant workers, but to young ‘ghettoised’ Cypriots residing in blocks of flats designed as camps for the Greek-Cypriot displaced persons form the 1974 war (Frederic College Report 2002). Apparently these groups of youngsters are seen with suspicion and prejudice from the wider society, as are poor migrants who also reside in poor estates at different locations (see report Phileleftheros 27.3.01; Frederic College Report 2002).

The Study on the Pontian elementary education (Trimikliniotis 2001a) involved three schools with a high concentration of Pontian children: in Lemesos, Lefkosia and Pafos. The study found that the manner in which this community migrated and settled in Cyprus is indicative of the absence of Government policy with regard to the concentration of these groups in specific areas, lack of planning and lack of relevant in-depth research of how to offer a support infrastructure and how to combat racism.

The educational problems raised as regards the non-Cypriot children are the result of both the lack of a comprehensive and systematic policy on the question of multiculturalism as well as the lack of the necessary infrastructure. Teachers do not seem to have the necessary training and teaching material to offer a genuine multi-cultural education even when they are keen to do so.

The following issues have been raised by the teachers as regards the elementary education of Pontians, which may well be generalized to include other migrant communities: it seems that the knowledge and experiences (linguistic, cultural etc) of migrant children in particular are not considered to be of any value and to be built upon, a matter which clearly shows the institutional discrimination of the teachers of the hegemonic culture to recognize and therefore build upon those cultural experiences for educational purposes. There seems to be a social segregation of the children themselves who “naturally choose” to socialize with peers of a similar linguistic and cultural background. Parents of migrant children, particularly Pontian
parents, do not seem to trust the education authorities and therefore do not have the necessary contact with the teachers on the progress of their children.

It was found in the study referred to above that in the classroom there are problems with the quality of education even where the numbers of non-native Greek speakers were relatively ‘high’. The only difficulties faced by migrant children in the early classes are with the Greek language and arithmetic lessons, which in any case are taught separately. However, wherever there was a rise in the numbers of non-native Greek speakers in a particular class, Greek-Cypriot parents requested that their children be moved to another class or even to another school.

According to the evidence provided by the teachers, school attainment of Greek-Cypriot students does not seem to be affected negatively from being in the same classes with non-native speakers. In any case, teachers noticed that despite the difficulties and prejudices that certainly exist, the attainment of migrant children is not lower than that of Greek speakers. A point noted by teachers was that the only difficulty that migrants may have is related to the fact that the current learning environment may not be properly related to their previous knowledge and interests. Of course this is the impression of teachers interviewed and not the result of a systematic and comparative analysis of figures, grades and other relevant material.

There appeared to be some problems of discrimination and racism between children and by certain teachers but there is no system of properly monitoring the extent of the problem. The head-teachers of the schools assured that there is no such problem, however a number of specific incidents of racial abuse and some minor allegations of discriminatory practices were mentioned. In any case, it would have been rather unnatural to expect that the attitudes prevalent in society at large would not be reflected in the school environment and given that there is no anti-racist program at the school nor is there special training for teachers, one would expect discrimination of different sorts to take place. From the three schools studied, the school in Pafos faced most difficulties due to the fact that there exists a climate of antipathy and xenophobia towards Pontians in particular by the local community, something that is reflected in the school.

A clear example of the way in which the communities treat the Pontian migrants is the fact that they are many times referred to as ‘Russian-Pontians’ (In Greek: Ρωσσαπόντιοι), something the Pontians find quite offensive. Teachers interviewed in that study many times use the terms “Russian-Pontians” and some of them went as far as saying that for all they knew those persons are from Russia and they claim to be Pontians in order to gain entry into Cyprus but there is no way of checking, which illustrates a suspicion that they are in Cyprus perhaps illegally (Trimikliniotis 2001a).

As far as the question of violence at elementary schools is concerned, teachers and headmasters concurred that there is no such problem and that, if anything, it is the Cypriot children who are more violent. Finally it was found that one of the major problems facing Pontian children was the fact that their living conditions are poor, they are living in ghettosized communities and generally their contact with the Cypriot community is minimum.
However, attitudes of teachers as regards migrants vary considerably across the board. In the study by Frederic College it was found that teachers and head teachers, were more xenophobic than their students. The findings surprised the researchers, who if anything were more biased in favour of teachers and head teachers as they were for years in those posts. In a survey conducted as part of this study, where they were asked ‘if discrimination was ever justified’ it was found 67% and 68% respectively said it is ‘sometimes’ justified, whilst a significant number of teachers and head teachers considered that the causes of discrimination are due to the behaviour of the minority groups themselves. However, these findings are only based on the impression of teachers interviewed; it does not reflect a wider survey of teachers or any comparative examination of the educational attainment, therefore they need to be considered with caution. Nonetheless, the study deliberately collected data from schools with a high percentage of children of migrant workers.

**Education: Further Research**

So far we have no access to data on the extent to which there are differential patterns of access to higher education of children of migrants, who have been naturalised as Cypriot citizens. The reason for this is firstly that the presence of migrants is a very recent phenomenon and secondly that the vast majority of migrant workers are in Cyprus on a short-term basis. A research on this question would be extremely valuable. Educational policy on the question of minority and migrant persons requires closer analysis, particularly if one examines the attitudes of migrant parents and children themselves. Research on the question of ethnic and social background and educational attainment is also another subject needing further research. No research has been carried out at secondary level, or college and university level on the issue of migration, discrimination and attainment; such studies would be extremely valuable. Furthermore, an interesting study would be a comparative study of the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot education as regards the policies and practices to minority and migrant communities (Christophides and Pashiardis 2001).

**Final word**

The role of education is crucial in the production and reproduction of inequality, intolerance and social division, as is crucial in their alleviation and elimination even. Of course matters are never simple: The dialectic between struggle against inequality in a increasingly multi-cultural society is becoming one of the key challenges for the future of Cyprus: Anti-discrimination, equality and tolerance are key values and policy goals of a modern democratic educational system. If Cyprus is to approach a society that is open, democratic and tolerant is ought to address the question of discrimination and ethnocentrism inherent in the educational system – not just for the sake of Europe. For a solution of the Cyprus problem to work, we require a sound educational system that tackles effectively racism, discrimination and intolerance and promote the values of equality, tolerance justice and recognition of difference. Educational reform is imperative to make education fulfil a progressive and emancipatory function rather than reproduce and deepen inequality and discrimination in society. However, in order to inform policy-makers we badly need policy-orientated research, which makes the subject of racial, ethnic and religious discrimination in education, as required by the Law transposing the acquis (Directive 43/2000), the direct subject of investigation.
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This paper draws on the report for workpackage 1, written for the EU funded project under the 6th Framework Program, DG Research. It involves a comparative study in eight European countries under the title: *The European Dilemma: Institutional Discrimination and the Politics of Racism*.

Scientific Director for Cyprus, *The European Dilemma: Institutional Discrimination and the Politics of Racism*, Intercollege. Nicos Trimikliniotis is Director of the Cyprus Labour Institute, INEK-PEO and Director for the Cyprus National Focal Point, RAXEN.


The Ombudsman, vested with power to investigate complaints against the public service and its public officers, including the Police, expressly covers investigation into complaints that acts or omissions violate human rights, and covers thus complaints as to racial or other related forms of discrimination and intolerance.

Table of Complaints to the Ombudsman

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Total Human Rights Complaints</th>
<th>Complaints on Immigration Matters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
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<td>21</td>
</tr>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>41</td>
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<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Report is illuminating: “It is enough to observe that the difficulties in implementing the Treaties began almost immediately after independence… The events which have taken place since December of 1963 have created a situation which makes it impossible to return to the previous situation”. (para 129) (see http://www.cyprus-conflict.net/galo_plaza_report.htm).

Whereas a ‘minority’ is a numerically smaller group of people in comparison to a majority in a State, who retain certain rights relating to identity, religion, schooling, language, a community is endowed with more rights. A ‘community’ in the sense employed by the Cyprus Constitution is the intermediary between a ‘minority’ and a ‘people’. A community is not a ‘people’. The people of Cyprus as set out in the Cyprus Constitution consist of both communities and the other religious minorities. The
problem of defining what is community and what rights should be endowed with each community is amongst the most bitterly contested issues in the Cyprus problem.

12 For more about the Armenians in Cyprus, see Ashdjian (2001).

13 Critiques of communitarian nationalism in Cyprus started from the 1970s (Kyriakides 1968, Loizos 1972, 1976; Attalides 1977, 1979; Kitromilides 1977; 1979, Pollis 1979, Anthias and Ayres 1979, 1983), very recently there has been a serious intellectual questioning of “the rigid communitarian norms and conventions that define the parameters of constitutional discourse within which claims to identity are asserted” from the vantage point of a diasporic and post-colonial perspective, utilising the poetics of Cavafy (Constantinou 1998). Such critiques are extremely useful in the debates over nationhood, racism and identity, as diasporic perspectives that de-essentialise ethnic identity utilising the poetics of the class and the subaltern can open up stale debates and provide for alternatives imaginings and futures.

14 The Report of the UN special envoy Mr Galo Plaza in the years 1960-65 provides an illuminating insight into this period. The Plaza Report refers to the underlying ethnic divisions and the failure to properly protect individual human rights, such as the right not be discriminated against. Under the heading “The protection of individual and minority rights”, Mr. Plaza notes the difficulty in applying the principle of equality of treatment and human rights without discrimination due to “the fact that the population of the island continues to consist of two principal ethnic communities, the further fact that they are unequal in numbers and finally the gravity of the conflict which has developed between them”. The same Report noted the difficulty of the task of rebuilding a “progressive re-birth of confidence and the re-establishment of social peace”, as the obstacles “are no less psychological than political”.

The way forward, according to the Report, is “the establishment of the most rigorous guarantees of human rights and safeguards against discrimination”, which goes to illustrate, if in an indirect manner, the prevalence of discriminatory practices that inevitably go hand-in-hand with the ethnic conflict and turbulence that existed, particularly during the period 1963-67, throughout the short life of the Cyprus Republic. One can expect to see widespread discriminatory practices, even if there is no study that illustrates this given the collapse of the Republic that was brought about by the Zurich –London accords (see Trimikliniotis 2003). Nonetheless, it is extremely valuable to attempt to view racism in Cyprus within the nationalist/ethnic conflict in a historical perspective in order to examine: (a) the links in the discourse of racism and nationalism, and particularly to view how these are articulated in the political arena; (b) the way in which the discourses and ideologies of nationalism develop over time, particularly how continuities and ruptures of belonging and exclusion materialise in specific contexts; and (c) whether there is process of “transformation” of nationalism into racism and vice-a-versa.

15 He was Director until 1986.

16 For a discussion of the recent debate over the head scurf see Loyd 1994; Webner and Yuval-Davis 1999; Bano 1999; Sahgal and Yuval Davis 1994; Dimoulis 2002.

17 The Pontians were given permit to come to Cyprus as Greek citizens and therefore do not count in the statistics of “foreign or alien workers”

18 For an analysis of how Cyprus Law deals with discrimination as provided by the two EU directives 43/2000 and 78/2000 see Trimikliniotis 2003. This report was written as part of a study into measures to combat discrimination in the candidate countries, funded by the European Community action programme to combat discrimination. The study, coordinated by MEDE European Consultancy and MPG, covers 13 countries. A summary of all reports and a comparison of the law in the 13 countries can be found in the publication Equality, Diversity and Enlargement.