Introduction

In late August of 2008, the new leftist government of the Republic of Cyprus announced a new educational objective, asking all state schools to aim for cultivating 'a culture of peaceful coexistence' between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, the two communities involved in a long conflict over the past fifty years. This new educational objective caused a lot of controversy with fierce reactions in the media and the press and was openly denounced by important Greek-Cypriot institutions such as the Greek-Orthodox Church and the primary school teachers' trade union POED. The introduction – for the first time – of a peace initiative in official Greek-Cypriot educational discourses and the heated public debates that ensued provided our motivation for embarking, a few months later, on this research journey, the outcomes of which we present in this book. Our interest in this educational development was triggered not only by our ethnographic curiosities to explore what teachers might actually think and do about this, but also by our long-term commitment to working towards peace and reconciliation through education.

As we begin narrating the 'story' of this book, we remember a particular discussion during a teacher workshop, where one of the teachers, Polina, became very emotional and expressed her intense disagreement with the fact that we – facilitators and some participants – could even entertain the possibility of engaging in peace education in Cyprus, while the conflict that kept our country divided still remained unresolved: "*No peace without justice first*", she would adamantly claim.

People (from both communities in Cyprus) were forced to become refugees in their own country; they fled to save their lives; they lost their land; they lost loved ones during the conflict; they carried the trauma while growing up. Many years later, as Polina faced a group of colleagues struggling to understand a new education policy promoting 'peaceful coexistence' in our divided country, she was to relive the traumatic experiences of a five-year-old Greek-Cypriot girl living through the war and

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displacement, with her grandfather living in an enclaved Greek-Cypriot community in the north. Polina's family was not allowed to visit her grandfather, who eventually died in the enclave; because of the precarious situation, her family was able to find out about this only a year later.

Despite the absence of violence between the two communities during the past decades, the memory of trauma always accompanies people who suffered it, while the collective traumas from the conflict are regularly rekindled in Greek-Cypriot public consciousness through everyday references in the press and the media on ongoing Turkish threats. And so you wonder: How can we involve teachers like Polina in considering *peaceful coexistence* and *reconciliation*,[1] when they have themselves suffered (or still suffer) from conflict and its consequences or from what they perceive as denial of justice? Of course, not all teachers carry Polina's traumas and resistances; there are teachers who can more easily embrace a peace initiative; there are others who are sceptical or ambivalent. How do you handle this, especially when organizing teacher training? And how can we – as researchers, policymakers and teacher educators – understand the different stances and reactions?

The overall aim of the book is to offer the reader an extensive overview of the 'life cycle' of a peace education policy initiative, from the stage at which it is designed and introduced, through its reception by teachers, its implementation (or not) in actual educational practice and the prospects for its transformations. We pay particular attention to the challenges that teachers face at different levels, the conflicting narratives and the emotional complexities involved, as we believe they form a crucial part in the process of negotiating, accepting or rejecting a different

[1] These two terms – *peaceful coexistence* and *reconciliation* – are certainly not the same and as we show in various chapters, they mean different things for different people. There is a valuable distinction made in the literature that we want to maintain for the most part throughout the book, unless it is pointed out otherwise. According to Bar-Tal (2004), "peaceful coexistence is understood as the conditions that serve as the fundamental prerequisites for the evolvement of advanced harmonious intergroup relations […] the very recognition in the right of the other group to exist peacefully with its differences and to the acceptance of the other group as a legitimate and an equal partner with whom disagreements have to be resolved in non-violent ways" (256). The literature defines 'peaceful coexistence' as closely related, but adequately distinct from the concept of 'reconciliation' (e.g. see Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004; Kriesberg, 1998). Specifically, 'peaceful coexistence' is seen as the rudimentary level of positive relations (Kriesberg, 1998) that serves as a preparation for the more difficult and demanding task of 'reconciliation', which involves deeper and longer psychological and political work that fundamentally transforms attitudes and emotions between the rival sides as well as the political structures involved in a conflict or post-conflict situation (Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004). In this schema, peaceful coexistence forms "an intermediate step that is easier to attain and […] a necessary phase in reaching the final goals [reconciliation]" (ibid.: 269).

view of 'us' and the 'others'. Despite the focus on the particular example of a conflict-affected society, the book's findings are of interest to those undertaking peace initiatives in other conflict-affected settings or those interested more broadly in the study of peace and conflict. The book situates carefully the Cypriot case study within wider theoretical and methodological debates around the field of peace education, and then critically discusses the implications of the findings of this research for theory and practice in peace education and beyond.

We have talked about different types of reactions to this policy initiative in Cyprus; it is also important for the reader to have an idea where we, the authors, stand and how we are positioned in this. All three of us come from families with a refugee background, who grew up and were educated within the conflict narratives and the collective trauma of the 1974 war, the family stories about our parents' occupied villages and our relatives' painful displacement from the north to the south part of Cyprus. Despite carrying and struggling with the emotional burden of the conflict, our studies and experiences of living abroad for an extended period of time (Michalinos in the United States and Constadina and Panayiota in London) have been formative influences in allowing us to develop a critical distance from the hegemony of conflict discourses and rethink our positioning within the Cypriot context. Therefore, our interest in peace education has been somehow inseparable from our own family histories and narratives as it stems from our own personal transformations. In the past ten years, all three of us have been involved separately and together in various projects that, in one way or another, have dealt with the legacy of nationalist discourses in Greek-Cypriot education – whether in relation to interethnic relations, emotions, literature education, or 'Other'-language learning.

In what follows, we begin by briefly outlining how we understand peace education and present our theoretical assumptions behind the way it is carried out in this book (we come back to a discussion of the growth in the field of peace education during the past century and clarify our own position in relation to this growth in Chapter 1). Then we provide the reader with a general presentation of the sociopolitical and historical realities of the setting in which our research is situated. This presentation provides the wider macro-historical context within which the peace education initiative that we study is situated. We return to these sociopolitical and historical realities at various points of our analysis in order to understand developments at the meso- and micro-levels of analysis (i.e. institutional level and the level of teachers' pedagogical practices). We end with a discussion of the aims and structure of the book.

How do we understand 'peace education'?

Over the past few decades *peace education* has seen considerable growth
both as a field of study and as an area of social education that is con-
cerned with war, conflict and violence, and with how to promote peace in
the world (Burns & Aspeslagh, 1996; Galtung, 1969; Harris & Morrison,
2003; Reardon & Cabezudo, 2002; Salomon & Nevo, 2002).[2] As an area
of social education, peace education programmes and interventions
have evolved in multiple geographical sites reflecting the struggles to
find peaceful, non-violent and reconciliatory solutions to various forms
of conflict (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009; Magendzo, 2005; Murithi, 2009;
Wintersteiner, Spajić-Vrkaš & Teutsch, 2003). As an academic field,
peace education is still in the process of forming and articulating itself as
a distinct area of research and practice and as an area which aligns and
fits neatly into a variety of other distinct educational fields (Bekerman
& Zembylas, 2014; Reardon, 2000). The scope of peace education has
expanded in recent years and has developed stronger links with other
domains in education such as human rights education, citizenship edu-
cation, multicultural education, environmental education and social
justice education (Bajaj, 2008; Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011; Brantmeier,
2011; Diaz-Soto, 2005).

Of course, sometimes it is difficult to differentiate peace education as
an academic field and peace education as an intervention programme or
a teaching practice (e.g. when peace education as practice is informed by
or designed as part of a research project); however, it is important to clar-
ify how one understands peace education when this term is being used.
On the one hand, peace education programmes and initiatives focus on
the interventions and practices that aim to promote peace, non-violence
and reconciliation. These programmes and initiatives are not necessarily
designed on the basis of research, but they mostly consist of activities
that aim to promote peace-related knowledge, skills and ideals such as
conflict resolution, non-violence and peaceful coexistence. On the other
hand, as an academic field, peace education may be developing itself as
a separate area of study, yet it draws on a variety of other disciplines and
fields such as psychology (e.g. see Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009; Hammack,
2011; Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005), sociology (e.g. Brock-Utne, 2009;
Levy, 2014), conflict resolution (Carter, 2010; Lederach, 1997), interna-
tional relations (e.g. Harris, 2011; Jenkins, 2013) as well as on theories

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[2] Here we make an important distinction between peace education as a research and aca-
demic field and peace education as an intervention programme or a teaching practice.

emerging out of these disciplines such as social, political, critical and anthropological theories.

Despite the growing recognition of peace education as a means of promoting non-violence, coexistence and reconciliation, the field is still dominated by ideas, programmes and practices that are often under-theorized (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2012) and tend to romanticize the role of peace education, while at the same time they underestimate the challenges and complexities involved in localized efforts to design, enact and evaluate peace education interventions (see Chapter 1). Especially, in long-standing conflicts, educational efforts to break the cycle of hostility face important challenges and obstacles at multiple and overlapping levels ranging from social, psychological and political challenges to pedagogical challenges of how to address these multiple levels and obstacles in the classroom. When a conflicting situation remains in limbo for decades, it is very likely that teachers –themselves educated in a 'conflict-based worldview' or a 'conflict ethos' (Bar-Tal, 2004) – will be negatively predisposed towards educational efforts to introduce initiatives that promote peace, and will meet those with suspicion, resistance or even hostility. It is not surprising, then, that when conflict discourses become routinized and institutionalized, attempts to introduce a different perspective can be perceived as threats (cf. Adamides, 2014; Rampton, Charalambous & Charalambous, 2014).

As individuals growing up in a conflict-affected society, we have experienced firsthand how the educational system within 'our' community (Greek-Cypriot community) has systematically promoted animosity towards the 'other' community (Turkish-Cypriot community). This animosity constructed feelings of perennial 'victimhood' and trauma and made rapprochement and reconciliatory efforts very difficult to even consider in schools (C. Charalambous 2012a, 2013, 2014; Zembylas, 2008, 2013, 2014, 2015; Papadakis, 2008). Over the past several years, during which we have been doing research in this context within the broader field of 'peace education', we have often wondered whether peace education initiatives could indeed have a chance to flourish in the Greek-Cypriot educational system. The predominance of educational policies that cultivated 'otherness' and for decades emphasized Greek-Cypriot sufferings resulting from Turkish animosity have essentially made any peace-related policy unthinkable. The dominant and ongoing educational policy of 'I Don't Forget and I Struggle' ('I Don't Forget' henceforth) – established a few years after 1974 – was largely based on the idea of cultivating in younger generations the remembrance of the occupied areas and a fighting spirit for the liberation of these territories (see Chapter 3). Although in 2002 a policy for Intercultural Education was introduced for the first

time in an attempt to address intercultural relations with other ethnic groups in schools and beyond, the 'I Don't Forget' policy remained a dominant one reflecting the monocultural assumptions underpinning the education system in the Republic of Cyprus. So, when a new education policy was announced in 2008 promoting 'peaceful coexistence' (Peaceful Coexistence when referring to the policy henceforth) between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, we were unsure whether or how this 'peace education initiative' would succeed. Although it was never named as a 'peace education initiative', we perceive it as such because of its clear orientation to a common future and its vision for a comprehensive settlement of the political problem that troubles Cyprus. Welcoming this new initiative, but at the same time realizing the potential challenges it would be met with, in the spring of 2009 we embarked on a two-year project trying initially (phase 1) to map, understand and study closely (phase 2) teachers' reactions and difficulties, and to support (phase 3) teachers' efforts to further reflect on and implement the new policy. But before explaining further these phases of the study, we provide the reader with a brief history of the Cyprus Conflict and its sociopolitical setting to contextualize our research project.

The 'Cyprus Conflict' and its sociopolitical and historical context

The 'Cyprus Conflict' (also referred to as the 'Cyprus Issue' or the 'Cyprus Problem') refers to the interethnic conflict between Greek- and Turkish- Cypriots on the island. The conflict includes the intercommunal clashes of 1963 resulting in the creation of Turkish-Cypriot ethnic enclaves and culminates with the Turkish military operation in 1974 and the de facto partition of the island in a southern and northern part, controlled by Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, respectively. The collective narratives of both communities make different claims about Cyprus: Greek-Cypriots base their claims on the 'historical Greekness' of the island since its colonization by the Myceneans towards the end of the second millennium BC; Turkish-Cypriots base their claims on their centuries-long presence on the island, for which Turkish soldiers have shed their blood (Bryant, 2004). Historically speaking, the Ottomans conquered the island in 1571 and ruled until 1878, when the island was leased to Britain. The Muslims who stayed on the island formed later what became known as the Turkish-Cypriot community.

In the first half of the twentieth century, there was a gradual rise first of Greek nationalism and later of Turkish nationalism; both communities in Cyprus began to form strong attachments to their

respective 'motherlands' – Greece and Turkey – and, under the influence of Greek and Turkish nationalism as well as the historical burden of previous Greco-Turkish warfare, they developed antagonistic visions over the political future of Cyprus (Kizilyürek, 1999a). During the last half of the twentieth century in particular, there were certain events that marked the history of Cyprus and poisoned the relationships between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots. First, there was in the mid 1950s the guerrilla struggle by Greek-Cypriots (the majority, 80 per cent) and the organization EOKA (Εθνική Οργάνωση Κυπρίων Αγωνιστών – National Organization of Cypriot Fighters) against British colonial rule. The Greek-Cypriot rebellion against British Rule contributed to the development of antagonistic feelings between the two communities, as it did not aim towards independence but *enosis*, union with 'motherland' Greece (Kizilyürek, 1999a). During the same time, Turkish-Cypriots (18 per cent) set up TMT (Türk Mukavemet Teşkilati – Turkish Resistance Organization), in an effort to counteract EOKA; TMT aimed at *taksim*, that is, ethnic partition, followed by a union of part of the island with 'motherland' Turkey. The 1950s was a period of intense interethnic mistrust and fears between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots. The Zurich–London Agreements in 1959 gave birth to the Republic of Cyprus, a sovereign and independent state, in 1960. The independence document was drafted by Britain, Greece and Turkey (who were to act as guarantor powers of the sovereignty of the new state), leaving both communities' political aspirations – for union with Greece and partition of the island, respectively – unfulfilled.

Both ethnic groups continued to pursue their separate objectives during the 1960s, a decade in which Cyprus witnessed intense interethnic violence, primarily in the years 1963–4 and 1967 (Attalides, 1979; Calotychos, 1998). After disagreement over proposed constitutional changes by Greek-Cypriots, the Turkish-Cypriots decided to withdraw from the government and relocate into enclaves. Around one-fifth of the Turkish-Cypriot population was displaced and moved to areas that gradually became armed enclaves under their control. By 1964, hundreds of Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots had been killed or had gone missing, presumed dead. These events resulted in the creation of a 'Green Line', a dividing line in the capital Nicosia to keep the two factions apart; the line was patrolled by the UN Peacekeeping Force. During this period, the Turkish-Cypriots suffered the greater losses (Kizilyürek, 1999a). The enclave period significantly contributed towards further deterioration in relations between the two communities; Turkish-Cypriots became completely dependent on Turkey, both economically and culturally

(Morag, 2004). The Cyprus Republic is since then run exclusively by the Greek-Cypriots.

As nationalist sentiments continued to rise, in 1974, with the support of the Greek junta, a Greek-Cypriot paramilitary organization (EOKA B) staged a coup against the elected president Archibishop Makarios. To this, Turkey reacted with a military operation which resulted in heavy Greek-Cypriot casualties (with thousands of dead and missing), the occupation of the northern part of the island, the de facto division of the island into two ethnically homogenous parts and the forced mass dislocation of a considerable part of the island's populations – 200,000 Greek-Cypriots (one-third of the total population) were displaced to the south (Hitchens, 1984; Mallinson, 2005) and 45,000 Turkish-Cypriots (one-fourth of the total population) to the north. After the declaration of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' in 1983 (considered legally invalid by the UN and recognized only by Turkey), there are in effect two rival states in situ (Constantinou & Papadakis, 2001), which lack any sort of substantial contact. Furthermore, soon after the division of 1974, the Turkish government began a policy of settling Anatolian Turks in formerly Greek-Cypriot villages (Morag, 2004), a practice which over the years changed significantly the demographic composition in the north, creating what has become known as 'the settlers' problem'.

Since the events of 1963 and 1974 the island is divided, separating the two communities and deepening further the status quo, feelings of mistrust and psychological distancing between the two communities. This decades-long physical and cultural separation rendered the division in Cyprus almost complete – socially, emotionally and politically – resulting in what Bryant (2004) described as 'ethnic estrangement'. Ethnic estrangement has also been reinforced by intensive processes of 'nation-building' after 1974 on both sides, which have heightened their respective 'Greekness' and 'Turkishness', while constructing the other community as the 'ethnic-Other' and 'arch-enemy' of the collective Self (Kizilyürek, 1999b; Papadakis, 2008). The contentious issues that form the backbone of the official adversarial narratives in the two communities – such as, for example, the unresolved constitutional problem, the settlers' problem, the militarization of the island and the violation of human rights – prevent the building of a peace culture based on mutual understanding and respect.[3] The situation in Cyprus started changing

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[3] In particular, the reinstatement of human rights is part of the Greek-Cypriot official rhetoric and a victimizing discourse which sees the Cyprus Conflict in terms of perpetrator–victim (instead of an interethnic conflict with responsibilities on both sides), a question of violation of Greek-Cypriot rights (and also unilateral, as there are no references to the violations of the other side) and so there are frequent references in

in the years 2003–4, during which 'Cyprus underwent a major trans-formation' (Panayiotou, 2006a: 278). In April 2003, the two hitherto isolated communities had for the first time (since 1974, or for some areas even 1963) the chance to cross the imposed 'borders'. The per-mission granted by the Turkish-Cypriot side for unfettered access across the dividing Green Line (with the requirement of showing passports or identity cards) rekindled hopes for a final settlement before Cyprus' accession to the European Union (EU) in May of 2004. In 2003, there were mass demonstrations of Turkish-Cypriots in the north in favour of a comprehensive UN proposal for reunification on the basis of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation – known as the Annan Plan. A few days before Cyprus' accession to the EU, the Annan Plan was put to simultaneous referenda on both sides, but led to failure, with a 65 per cent 'yes' vote by the Turkish-Cypriots but a 76 per cent 'no' vote by the Greek-Cypriots. This failure seemed to have strengthened the feeling that no solution was to be expected any time soon (see Varnava & Faustman, 2009). Finally, on 01 May 2004 Cyprus entered the EU.[4] Today, there are Cypriots from both communities who continue to cross the *Green Line* for various rea-sons (Dikomitis, 2005), but there are also those who consistently refuse to do so.

As to the ideological milieu within the Greek-Cypriot society in the second half of the twentieth century, the long-standing ideological polar-ity between *Hellenocentrism* and *Cypriocentrism* has been central in shaping collective orientations towards history and identity and guiding socio-political developments (Mavratsas, 1997, 1998, 1999; Papadakis, 1998). Hellenocentrism – traditionally associated with the political right – describes a form of *ethno-nationalism* which foregrounds the Greekness of Cyprus, constructs the Turks as 'Hellenism's arch-enemy' and stresses Greek-Cypriot victimization during the conflict. Cypriocentrism, on the contrary – traditionally associated with the Cypriot left – refers to a form of *civic nationalism* that focuses on the common Cypriotness of Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots with emphasis on locality and citizenship, proclaims Turkey as the aggressor (Mavratsas, 1997; Panayiotou, 2006a, 2006b; Papadakis, 2005), constructs the Turkish-Cypriots as 'brothers' and embraces the idea of social and political cohabitation.

The Cypriocentric ideology provides the ideological backdrop for the introduction of the new peace initiative for 'Peaceful Coexistence'. Historically, Cypriocentric ideas emerged in the context of the Cypriot

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public discourse to UN resolutions that recognize these violations (see Constantinou & Papadakis, 2001).

[4] The northern part is under the suspension of the European Law, since it is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus.

left[5], which has 'represented civil Cypriot patriotism' by openly denouncing nationalism and embracing members from both communities in its circles and leadership.[6] Cypriocentrism remained in the political margins during the period leading to the culmination of the conflict, but gained some ground after the catastrophic war of 1974 and the de facto division, which pushed for the marginalization of the *enosis* rhetoric and active reorientation towards a settlement that would reunify the island. Yet despite this short interval, soon Greek-Cypriot nationalism reaffirmed its hegemony in Greek-Cypriot public discourse, while Cypriocentrism remained restricted within the circles of the Cypriot left (AKEL), whose rhetoric adopts the narrative of past peaceful coexistence,[7] argues for the need for *rapprochement* and collaboration and supports the organization of bi-communal events (Loizos, 2006; Mavratsas, 1997; Papadakis, 1998). Of course, today the binary between Hellenocentrism and Cypriocentrism does not suffice anymore[8] to describe the complex realignments of political powers that have created new social cleavages – especially after the referenda for the Annan Plan in 2004 (Hadjidemetriou, 2006; Trimikliniotis, 2006). Yet notwithstanding recent developments and the ideological inheritance of the traditional dichotomy between left and right, Cypriocentrism and Hellenocentrism still hold strong within the Greek-Cypriot society, and this book discusses the complex ways in which these continue to shape educational discourses and practices.

Finally, it is important to mention that since the 1990s, Greek-Cypriot society has seen increasing migration waves, which have also been reflected in the composition of contemporary Greek-Cypriot classrooms. The last census (2011) revealed that around 23 per cent of the Republic of Cyprus' population comes from different countries. Migrant workers

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[5] Cypriocentric ideas emerged more clearly since the establishment of the communist party AKEL (Anorthotiko Komma Ergazomenou Laou – The Progressive Party of Working People) in 1941.

[6] Kavazoglou, who was assassinated by Turkish-Cypriot nationalists in 1965, was the last Turkish Cypriot involved in the leadership of AKEL.

[7] At the level of Greek-Cypriot historiography, Hatay and Papadakis (2012) discuss how in the post-1974 years the idea of 'past peaceful coexistence' between the two communities emerged as an alternative historical narrative that attempted to reconfigure the nationalist constructions of history, memory and belonging. These historical narratives stressed "the long coexistence of Muslims and Christians and the comparatively recent emergence of conflict", putting forward the argument that "the past proves that the two communities (or the Cypriot people) can live together in the future". As Hatay and Papadakis (2012) insist, this emerged also as a counter-argument to the Turkish-Cypriot narrative which emphasized the violent conflict in the 1963 arguing that coexistence between the two communities is inevitable.

[8] As Vural and Peristianis (2008: 56) argue, after these developments "the traditional one-dimensional left-right ideological axis is no longer sufficient in understanding attitudes relating to national issues".